Durham University

Durham E-Theses

Conversion and enlightenment in the life and works of Basil of Caesarea

Grant Gillespie Goble

How to cite:

Goble, Grant Gillespie (2004) Conversion and enlightenment in the life and works of Basil of Caesarea. Doctoral thesis, Durham University.

Use policy

The full-text may be used and/or reproduced, and given to third parties in any format or medium, without prior permission or charge, for personal research or study, educational, or not-for-profit purposes provided that:

- a full bibliographic reference is made to the original source
- a https://etheses.durham.ac.uk/id/eprint/1759/ is made to the metadata record in Durham E-Theses
- the full-text is not changed in any way

The full-text must not be sold in any format or medium without the formal permission of the copyright holders.

Please consult the full Durham E-Theses policy for further details.

Academic Support Office, The Palatine Centre, Durham University, Stockton Road, Durham, DH1 3LE
e-mail: e-theses.admin@durham.ac.uk Tel: +44 0191 334 6107
https://etheses.durham.ac.uk

CONVERSION AND ENLIGHTENMENT
IN THE LIFE AND WORKS OF BASIL OF CAESAREA

A copyright of this thesis rests with the author. No quotation from it should be published without his prior written consent and information derived from it should be acknowledged.

GRANT GILLESPIE GOBLE
Thesis for Ph.D.
University of Durham
Department of Theology
2004

1 3 JUN 2005

The copyright of this thesis rests with the author. No quotation from it should be published in any form, including electronic and the Internet, without the author's prior written consent. All information derived from this thesis must be acknowledged appropriately.

CONTENTS

Preface 6

Abbreviations 7

Introduction 8
Description and Overview of Thesis 8
Conversion in the New Testament and the Early Church 11

Part I: A Study of Basil's Conversion 23
Introduction 23
A. Historical Analysis of Basil's Conversion 26
1. Detailed Review of the First Half of Basil's Life (329-362) 26
a. Basil's Christian Heritage (329/30-350/1)
b. The Wisdom of the World: Athens (350/1-355/6)
c. Basil's Spiritual Awakening (355-358)
d. The Philosophic Life (358-359)
e. Basil's Call to Serve the Church (360-362)
f. Conclusion
2. Basil's Conversion in His Own Words 35
a. Basil's Spiritual Awakening: *Epistula* 223.2
b. Basil's Early Conception of God: *Epistulae* 223.3 and 204.6
c. Basil's Early View of His Conversion: *Epistulae* 1, 14 and 2
d. The Importance of Basil's Baptism: *De spiritu sancto* 10.24-26
e. Conclusion
3. Other Accounts of Basil's Conversion 45
a. Gregory of Nyssa
b. Gregory of Nazianzus
c. Socrates
d. Conclusion
B. Cultural Analysis of Basil's Conversion 57
1. The Background to φιλοσοφία, φιλόσοφος and φιλοσοφεῖν 57
a. Its Meaning and Use in the Greek Philosophical Tradition
b. Its Meaning and Use among Early Christian Writers
c. The Significance of the Christian Use of the Terms
2. The Cappadocian Fathers' Use of φιλοσοφία, φιλόσοφος and φιλοσοφεῖν 65
a. Their Use of the Terms in General
b. Basil's Use of the Terms
c. The Two Gregories' Use of the Terms to Describe Basil
3. Basil's Use of φιλοσοφία, φιλόσοφος and φιλοσοφεῖν as regards His Conversion 73
a. Basil on His Life – Epistles Dated 357-359
b. Basil on the Christian Life – Epistles Dated 360-370
4. Conclusion 85
C. Theological Analysis of Basil's Conversion 87
1. Conversion 87
2. Repentance 90
3. Faith 95
4. Baptism 97
5. Church, Brothers, Brotherhood 99
6. The Holy Spirit 101
7. The Word of God, The Gospel 105
8. Conclusion 106

Part II: A Survey of Basil's Teaching on Conversion 107
Introduction 107
A. Conversion 109
1. Definitions and Usages of Terms 109
2. Basil's Use of these Terms 109

a. Convert – Actively Converting Another
b. Convert – Turning to God
c. Convert – God Turns toward Those Who Turn to Him
d. Conversion – Repentance and Baptism
e. Convert – Returning to God after Falling into Sin
f. Convert – Turning from a Lesser Good to a Greater Good
g. Conclusion
B. Conversion-Initiation 117
1. Individual Human Steps in Conversion-Initiation 117
a. Repentance
b. Faith
c. Conclusion
2. The Ecclesial Context of Conversion-Initiation 135
a. Church
b. The Word of God
c. Baptism
3. The Holy Spirit: Divine Action and Gift in Conversion-Initiation 152
a. The Spirit of Truth
b. The Paraclete
c. The Holy Spirit
d. Creator Spirit
e. Conclusion

Part III: Basil's *De spiritu sancto* and the Doctrine of Enlightenment in the Greek Church 160

Introduction 160
A. The Roots and Beginning of the Doctrine of Enlightenment 162
1. Greek and Hellenistic Literature 162
a. Definitions of φωτίζειν and φωτισμός
b. Enlightenment in Platonic and Neoplatonic Philosophy
c. Enlightenment in the Greek Mysteries and Hellenistic Mystery Religions
d. Conclusion
2. Septuagint, Jewish Writings and Philo 169
a. Septuagint and Qumran Texts
b. *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* and Rabbinic Judaism
c. Philo of Alexandria
d. Conclusion
3. The New Testament: The Beginning of the Christian Doctrine of Enlightenment 175
a. God, His Angels and Enlightenment
b. The Son of God and Enlightenment
c. The Spirit of God and Enlightenment
d. The Church and Enlightenment
e. Conversion-Initiation and Enlightenment
B. The Doctrine of Enlightenment in the Greek Church from Justin to Cyril of Jerusalem 182
1. Theological Features of the Doctrine of Enlightenment 182
a. Origen: Enlightenment as the Work of God
b. Athanasius: Enlightenment Is Given by the Son and the Spirit
2. Sacramental/Liturgical Features of the Doctrine of Enlightenment 203
a. Justin: Enlightenment and Baptism in His *I apologia*
b. Cyril of Jerusalem: Enlightenment in the Catechumenate and Baptism
3. Spiritual Features of the Doctrine of Enlightenment 220
a. Human Reason
b. The Knowledge of God
c. The Scriptures
d. The Spiritual Life and Divinization
e. Conclusion
4. Conclusions to the Doctrine of Enlightenment in the Greek Church 232
C. Enlightenment in Basil's *De spiritu sancto* 233
1. The Son of God and Enlightenment 235
2. Sacramental/Liturgical Aspects of Enlightenment 239

a. The Confession of Faith
b. Baptism
3. The Holy Spirit, Spirituality and Enlightenment....241
a. Purity
b. Contemplation of the Holy Spirit and Theosis
c. The Spirit Gives Knowledge of the Father and the Son
4. Conclusion....251
D. Conclusion....254
1. The Theological Features of Enlightenment....254
a. The Analogy of the Sun
b. The Son of God
c. The Holy Spirit
2. The Sacramental/Liturgical Features of Enlightenment....256
a. The Catechumenate
b. The Confession of Faith
c. Baptism
3. The Spiritual Features of Enlightenment....258
a. Purity
b. Contemplation of the Spirit, Scripture and Theosis
c. Knowledge of the Triune God
d. Worship
4. Conclusion....260

Conclusion....261

Bibliography....267

PREFACE

I came to this thesis through an interest in the Greek Church Fathers and the sacrament of baptism. As my research progressed I came to the realization that what I was reading about better fit under the rubric of conversion. Since conversion is foundational to the religious experience of the evangelical Protestant tradition this topic was of particular interest to me. The process of trying to understand Basil in his own context has led me to a deeper appreciation of the importance of language and culture in the development of Christian thought and practice throughout the history of the Church.

I'd like to thank in particular my supervisor, Professor Andrew Louth, for his patience and guidance in this project and Dr. Lionel North for his help with my translations of segments of Basil's works. Also I want to thank the Patristic Seminar at the University of Durham in Fall of 2002 for their helpful feedback with a section of this thesis. I want to thank family and friends both in the U.S.A. and England for their love and support during this four year sabbatical. Thank you to my loving wife, Terry, who challenged and helped me to reach for the highest. Finally this thesis is dedicated to the loving memory of my grandfather, William Ivan Goble (1915-1996), "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his faithful ones" (Ps. 116:15).

ABBREVIATIONS

ANF	*Ante-Nicene Fathers*. Ed. by Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, A. Cleveland Coxe and Allan Menzies. 10 vols.
Bauer	Bauer, Walter. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. Second edition. Edited by W. F. Arndt, F. W. Gingrich, F. W. Danker. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979.
Deferrari	Deferrari, Roy J., trans. *Saint Basil, The Letters*. 4 vols. The Loeb Classical Library. London: William Heinemann; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1926-34. Reprint, London: William Heinemann; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1970, 1986, 2000, 2001.
Ds	*Dictionnaire de spiritualité*. Eds. Marcel Viller et al. Paris: Beauchesne, 1937–1995.
DSS	*De spiritu sancto*
GCS	*Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte*
Lampe	Lampe, G. W. H., ed. *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961.
LCL	The Loeb Classical Library
LS	Liddell, Henry G. and Robert Scott. *A Greek-English Lexicon*. 9th edition. Revised by H. S. Jones and R. McKenzie. With a revised supplement. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1940. New supplement added, 1996.
NPNF II	*Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Second Series. Ed. by Henry Wace and Philip Schaff. 14 vols.
Pruche	Pruche, Benoît, ed. and trans. *Basile de Césarée: Traité du Saint Esprit*. Sources chrétiennes 17. Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1947.
PG	*Patrologiae cursus completus, series Graeca*, ed. J. P. Migne. Paris, 1857-66.
RB	*Regulae brevius tractatae*
RF	*Regulae fusius tractatae*
SC	Sources chrétiennes
TDNT	*Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. Edited by Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich. 10 volumes, including index volume. Translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1964-76.
TLG	*Theasaurus Linguae Graecae*. Computer data bank. Professor Theodore F. Brunner, Director. Irvine, California: University of California. Version used for this thesis: TLG Workplace 7.0. Silver Mountain Software, 1993, 1998.
Ysebaert	Ysebaert, J. *Greek Baptismal Terminology: Its Origins and Early Development*. Nijmegen: Dekker & Van De Vegt N. V., 1962.

INTRODUCTION

Description and Overview of Thesis

The purpose of this study is to examine the topic of Christian conversion and the doctrine of enlightenment in the life and works of Basil of Caesarea in order to bring attention to various theological and cultural aspects of conversion in the Early Church. Part I reviews Basil's conversion in his words, especially his epistles, in the writings of his friends and family and in the account of a Church historian. The purpose of Part I is to describe and to analyze Basil's conversion from three perspectives: the historical, cultural and theological. Part II describes Basil's teaching on conversion both to the Christian faith and to the monastic life: the two were often synonymous in this period. According to Basil conversion is an ongoing process and conversion-initiation is primarily made up of individual human steps, the ecclesial context and the work of the Holy Spirit.

Part III traces the development of the Christian doctrine of enlightenment through a study of the words φωτίζειν and φωτισμός from its ancient Greek origins to the writings of Justin, Origen, Athanasius and Cyril of Jerusalem. The use of these terms follows three main streams of development in the Greek tradition: 1) the Christian understanding of the three persons of the Trinity and their operations; 2) the sacramental and liturgical life of the Church and 3) Christian spirituality. All three streams come together in a distinctive way within Basil's work *De spiritu sancto*. My conclusion draws together the discussion of Basil's conversion and teaching on conversion with a view towards the importance of the doctrine of enlightenment both for Basil as well as for the Greek tradition.

The methodology of analysis for this thesis is an examination of terms and their related themes which shape and define conversion in Basil's life and works. Part I begins with a historical study of Basil's conversion, comparing his autobiographical

reflections to the biographical excerpts found in the writings of Gregory of Nyssa, Gregory of Nazianzus and Socrates, the fifth century Church historian. Following upon this is a cultural analysis of Basil's conversion which traces the terms φιλοσοφία, φιλόσοφος, φιλοσοφεῖν and other related philosophical terms in the epistles of Basil from the period nearest his conversion. The third important aspect of this chapter is a theological analysis which examines Basil's conversion through the theological terms and themes associated with conversion in the works of Michael Green, Richard Peace, James D. G. Dunn and Alan Kreider. These terms and themes include: conversion (ἐπιστροφή, ἐπιστρέφω), repentance (μετάνοια, μετανοέω), faith (πίστις, πιστεύω), baptism (βάπτισμα, βαπτίζω), the Church (ἐκκλησία), brothers (ἀδελφοί), brotherhood (ἀδελφότης), the Spirit (πνεῦμα), the Word of God (λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ) and the Gospel (εὐαγγέλιον). In Part II I analyze Basil's teaching from the perspective of his use of these terms and themes especially in the context of his discussion of conversion and conversion-initiation.

Part III is a study which draws together a specific Greek tradition in theology revolving around the terms of enlightenment, most especially φωτίζειν and φωτισμός. The roots of the terms in their Greek and Jewish usage are reviewed followed by an examination of their adaptation to the primitive Christian experience of conversion in the New Testament. These terms are then followed through the works of Justin, Origen, Athanasius and Cyril of Jerusalem in order to show the three developing streams of thought about enlightenment which Basil then synthesized or drew from in his work *De spiritu sancto*. These Greek Christian writers are not the only ones to use these terms, but due to the limitations of space inherent to a Ph.D. thesis I chose only the most crucial contributions to what I consider was a developing doctrine of enlightenment in the Greek Church.

A few words about footnote style are in order before turning to the principal part of the thesis. The footnotes of this thesis follow the Chicago style as described by Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (6th edition) with a few additions.[1] When the notes refer to an ancient writer they will usually include three things: 1) the ancient writer's work in Latin or English, 2) the critical text or edition consulted and 3) the modern language translation quoted in the text or referred to in my research. The second important point about the footnotes is the use of abbreviations in order to conserve space and simplify very frequent or long references. Having explained these important details I now continue with the rest of the introduction.

---

[1] Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 6th ed. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996), 116-64, 185-213.

This thesis examines the topic of conversion in Basil's life and writings. The scholarship on the topic of conversion itself has increased greatly over the last 30-50 years expanding into many modern and contemporary fields of study such as anthropology, sociology and psychology.[2] The primary focus of this thesis is on the theological aspects of conversion while also taking into account certain cultural characteristics of Hellenism and the historical realities of conversion in the Early Church, especially the fourth century.

Theological Parameters

To describe more explicitly the theological parameters of this thesis I will explain the two main phases of my research. The first phase of my research was based on key theological terms related to conversion drawn from the Bible and explained clearly in the secondary literature.[3] From these studies and my own analysis of conversion in Scripture I created a paradigm of conversion that consisted of these specific theological and biblical terms: conversion (ἐπιστροφή, ἐπιστρέφω), repentance (μετάνοια, μετανοέω), faith (πίστις, πιστεύω), baptism (βάπτισμα, βαπτίζω), the Church (ἐκκλησία), brothers (ἀδελφοί), brotherhood (ἀδελφότης), the Spirit (πνεῦμα), the Word of God (λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ) and the Gospel (εὐαγγέλιον).

I will briefly summarize some of the basic biblical terms and concepts of conversion which I used as a grid for my investigation of Basil's conversion and his teaching on conversion. All of these concepts are further explained in the body of the

---

[2] Lewis R. Rambo, "Current Research on Religious Conversion," *Religious Studies Review* 8 (1982) : 145-59.

[3] The key terms and concepts taken to form my original grid of analysis came from especially these four studies: James D. G. Dunn, *Baptism in the Holy Spirit: A Re-examination of the New Testament Teaching on the Gift of the Spirit in Relation to Pentecostalism Today* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1970), 90-102; Michael Green, *Evangelism in the Early Church* (Guildford, Surrey: Eagle, 1995), 178-188; Alan Kreider, *The Change of Conversion and the Origin of Christendom* (Harrisburg, Penn.:

thesis. The idea of conversion in the Christian sense of the word goes back to the biblical witness of the Old and New Testaments. In the Old Testament the word שׁוּב (*shubh*) meaning "to turn back, return" is used by the prophets especially to speak of the conversion of the hearts of the people of Israel.[4] The prophets called the people to turn from idolatry to a renewed covenant loyalty to Yahweh alone to practice justice and mercy.[5] The concept of conversion in the New Testament, was based on the word ἐπιστρέφω, meaning "turn, turn around, turn back, return" which is the Greek equivalent of *shubh* in Hebrew.[6]

The heart of the New Testament paradigm of conversion is repentance from sin and faith in Jesus Christ or God. The word used by the Gospel writers for repentance was μετάνοια meaning "a change of mind."[7] In the New Testament conversion is first described by Gospel writers chronicling the ministry of John the Baptist who called the people of Judea to repentance and baptism as a preparation for the one who would come after him (Mk. 1:4). Repentance for John meant turning from sin and turning to righteous living (Mt. 3:8; Lk 3:8). Jesus and later his apostles proclaimed this same message of repentance (Mt. 4:17; Mk. 1:15; Acts 2:38; 3:19). Faith was first mentioned as necessary for the conversion of the human soul by Jesus when he called people to repent and to believe in the Kingdom of God (Mk. 1:15). In the ministry of the apostles faith is connected explicitly to Jesus, the Messiah (Acts 10:43; 11:17; 16:31; 20:21). In the letters of the apostle Paul it is faith in Christ which justifies and saves sinners (Rom. 3:25; 5:1; 10:9, 10).

Trinity Press International, 1999), xv; Richard V. Peace, *Conversion in the New Testament: Paul and the Twelve* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999), 25-26; 261; 346-353.

[4] Francis Brown, *The New Brown – Driver – Briggs – Gesenius Hebrew and English Lexicon*, with the cooperation of S. R. Driver and Charles A. Briggs (Peabody, Mass.: Henrickson Publishers, 1979), 997.

[5] For examples of the prophets' message of returning to God see Is. 1:27; 55:7; Jer. 3:11-14; 31:18-20; Hos. 3:1-5; 6:1; 12:6; Amos 4:6-11.

[6] Bauer, 301. See also Peace, *Conversion in the New Testament*, 346-349. Luke uses ἐπιστρέφω 8 times in Acts to refer to people turning to God or to the Lord (Acts 3:19; 9:35; 11:21; 14:15; 15:19; 26:18, 20; 28:27).

[7] Bauer, 512.

Beginning with the ministry of John the Baptist, baptism was a necessary expression of repentance and faith in Christ for the New Testament writers (Mt. 3:5, 6; Mk. 1:4; Lk. 3:3; Jn. 1:25-34). Christ was himself baptized by John (Mt. 3:13-17) and he later commanded his disciples to go out into all the world and to baptize those who believe (Mt. 28:19, 20; Mk. 16:15, 16). Therefore the apostles proclaimed a message of repentance and faith in Christ exhorting people to be baptized in the name of Jesus (Acts 2:38, 39; 10:47, 48).

Closely tied to baptism was the gift of the Spirit which was a part of the ministry of the Messiah and the expectation of the converts of the Early Church (Mt. 3:11; Jn. 1:33; 3:5; Acts 1:5; 2:38, 39). After the ascension of Christ and the descent of the Spirit at Pentecost, the gift of the Spirit became the key aspect of Christian conversion (Acts 2:38-39; 10:44-8).[8] According to the biblical accounts of the Early Church the sign of the new birth was the manifestation and presence of the Holy Spirit through godly living and charismatic service (1 Cor. 12:4-13; Ga. 5:22-3). It was the Spirit who worked with the apostolic proclamation, the Word of God, to bring people to faith in Christ.[9] The Spirit also formed those who believed in Christ into the Church. This was an important part of conversion, belonging to the Church, the body of Christ.[10] The new believers at the feast of Pentecost devoted themselves to their life together (Acts 2:41-7). It has been noted that one of the primary ways that members of the Early Church understood themselves after conversion was as a brotherhood.[11] This brotherhood formed the framework of the new life that the Christian lived after baptism.

In some respects this summary of terms emphasizes particular biblical themes and terms which arose out of specific studies which in general have some acceptance

---

[8] Dunn, *Baptism in the Holy Spirit*, 94.

[9] Green, *Evangelism in the Early Church*, 179-80.

[10] Kreider, *The Change of Conversion*, xv.

[11] Adolf von Harnack, *The Mission and Expansion of Christianity in the First Three Centuries*, edited and trans. by James Moffatt, vol. 1, 2d rev. ed. (London: Williams and Norgate, 1908), 405-7.

among evangelical circles of scholarship on conversion and evangelism.[12] Although this first step of research yielded insights into Basil's conversion and teaching, it remained incomplete. After a fresh look at Basil's writings and more reading of secondary literature, a second approach to the question of the theological aspects of conversion in Basil's writings emerged. This stage of my research was guided by some significant studies of the Ancient Church – A. M. Malingrey's study on the term "philosophia,"[13] J. Ysebaert's study of Greek baptismal terminology[14] and Pierre Hadot's essays on philosopher's spiritual exercises and Christianity.[15] All this resulted in two very important studies on the two terms "philosophy" (φιλοσοφία, φιλόσοφος, φιλοσοφεῖν) and "enlightenment" (φωτισμός, φωτίζειν). The latter is not a stranger to the New Testament understanding of conversion. The Greek word for enlightenment (φωτισμός) was used in the New Testament to describe the enlightenment of the soul with the knowledge of God (Eph. 1:17-18). Enlightenment is particularly related to conversion by the writer of the book of Hebrews (Heb. 6:4; 10:32). These two studies in Part I and Part III in my opinion are the most crucial and important parts of the thesis in terms of establishing a more cogent understanding of Basil's conversion, his teaching on conversion and the understanding and practice of conversion in the Early Church.

One final note on theological parameters has to do with baptism and the Holy Spirit. The foundational argument in this thesis related to Basil's conversion, his teaching and to conversion in general in this time period is the significance of baptism as the defining moment of conversion when the gift of the Holy Spirit was given to the baptizand. An orthodox baptism in the catholic Church was the key to salvation in

---

[12] Two prime examples of this are Michael Green, *Evangelism in the Early Church* and Peace, *Conversion in the New Testament*, where conversion is studied within the wider context of evangelism.

[13] Anne-Marie Malingrey, *"Philosophia": Étude d'un groupe de mots dans la littérature grecque, des Présocratiques au IV^e siècle après J.-C.*, Études et commentaires XL (Paris: C. Klincksieck, 1961).

[14] J. Ysebaert, *Greek Baptismal Terminology: Its Origins and Early Development* (Nijmegen: Dekker & Van De Vegt N. V., 1962).

Christ. Without it a person was neither saved nor made a part of Christ and his Church. This sacrament defined orthodox views of conversion for the catholic Church and is crucial in understanding Basil's theology of conversion as well as his own conversion. On this note I will now turn to the historical context of conversion in the Early Church.

Historical Context

In this section on the historical context I will review the first four centuries of the Early Church and the important aspects of conversion in each of these centuries. During the first century conversion to Christianity was marked by the presence and workings of the Holy Spirit through the ministry of the apostles.[16] A very important event in the Early Church that affected conversion was the council of apostles and elders that met at Jerusalem and decided not to demand Gentile converts be circumcised (Acts 15:1-31).[17] This enabled the Gentiles to accept Christ on their own terms within the spirit of the apostolic teaching.

One of the most important conversions of the first century was the conversion of Saul of Tarsus, who was later known as Paul (Acts 9:1-19).[18] His conversion began with an experience of the voice of Christ speaking to him from a very bright light that blinded him. A few days later he was healed of his blindness by a Christian through the laying on of hands and Paul then received baptism. This encounter with Christ on the road to Damascus led to a revolution in his thinking about the true identity of Jesus Christ and a commission to preach the gospel of Christ to the Gentiles. It could be said

---

[15] Pierre Hadot, *Philosophy as a Way of Life: Spiritual Exercises from Socrates to Foucault*, edited with an introduction by Arnold I. Davidson, trans. Michael Chase (Oxford and Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell Publishing, 1995).

[16] Robin Lane Fox, *Pagans and Christians* (London: Viking, 1986), 312-4. Green, *Evangelism in the Early Church*, 178-81.

[17] Henry Chadwick, *The Early Church* (London: Penguin Books, 1967), 18-20.

[18] Whether Paul's Damascus road encounter with Christ was a truly a conversion experience or a calling is an issue of debate among New Testament scholars. Peace makes a strong case against interpreting Paul's Damascus road experience as a call. Cf. Peace, *Conversion in the New Testament*, 27-29.

that both Paul's conversion and his vocation were wrapped up in this one life-changing experience.[19]

Christian conversion in the Early Church was usually challenged by persecution. As early as the New Testament times persecution caused some people to give up their faith and return to their previous life in the world (Heb. 6:4-6; 10:25, 29-39). In the book of Revelation and other Apocalyptic passages in the New Testament the intensity of persecution was always a threat to one's conversion to Christ and warnings and exhortations were given to the saints so that they would remain steadfast in their faith.[20] At the beginning of the second century it was recorded that there were a number of people who had left the Christian faith.[21] This reversal of Christian conversion, the sin of apostasy, would be a problem in the Church for the next two hundred years and be a source of controversy and division.

Conversion in the second and third centuries was known by similar traits, but it is distinguished by the influence of Hellenistic culture. One example is the conversion of Justin, a philosopher and seeker of truth who, impressed by the witness of the martyrs, took up Christianity as his philosophy after a life-changing conversation with an old man.[22] Another example of conversion interacting with Hellenistic culture is found in the life of Gregory Thaumaturgus who while on his way to Berytus with his brother was persuaded by Origen to come and study "philosophy" with him.[23] His stay ended up to be five years long and included studying Greek philosophy and Christian theology under Origen's tutelage. He left that experience with a new faith in Christ and returning home to Pontus was soon appointed bishop over the region.

---

[19] Peace, *Conversion in the New Testament*, 29.

[20] Revelation 12:17-14:12; Mark 13:9-13; Luke 21:12-19.

[21] Pliny *Epistula* 10, 96; J. Stevenson, ed., *A New Eusebius: Documents illustrating the history of the Church to AD 337*, New edition revised by W. H. C. Frend (London: SPCK, 1987; reprint, 1999), 18-20.

[22] Kreider, *The Change of Conversion*, 2-4.

[23] W. H. C. Frend, *The Rise of Christianity* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), 312.

Some historians have concluded that the success of Christianity in these two centuries was a result of Christianity's ability to take on Hellenistic religious traits and philosophic ideas without losing its core belief system.[24] Adolf von Harnack has suggested that Christianity's success was due to its so-called syncretistic nature – its ability to take Hellenistic syncretistic religious thought and forms of worship and incorporate them into its theology and cult.[25] One of the powerful methods of conversion in the Early Church was the sacrament of baptism which in Harnack's estimation is an example of the power of Christianity to take a Christian ritual and imbue it with Hellenistic characteristics thus making it a mystery that appealed to the masses.[26]

During the second and third centuries Christianity grew through natural channels of relationships among friends and family and in more public arenas through the witness of those who were persecuted for their faith.[27] For the most part we do not have many records of evangelistic proclamation as a norm in these two centuries as it was in the first.[28] Rather the Church grew quietly, but steadily and primarily in the urban areas, less so in the rural areas of the empire.[29] One reason for this was that conversion during this period was a process – sometimes lasting up to three years – of learning and preparation for baptism.[30]

The increase in number of converts to Christianity, especially in the third century, was also matched by the number of those who fell away during the persecutions under emperors Decius (250) and Valerian (257). The problem presented by the quantity of those who lapsed from the Christian faith challenged a rigorist view

---

[24] Frend, *The Rise of Christianity*, 904-905.

[25] Harnack, *Mission and Expansion*, vol. 1, 24-35, 312-18, 398, 510-13, vol. 2, 336-7.

[26] Harnack, *Mission and Expansion*, vol. 1, 387-91.

[27] Lane Fox, *Pagans and Christians*, 314-7.

[28] Ramsay MacMullen, *Christianizing the Roman Empire (A.D. 100-400)* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1984), 35, 40. Lane Fox, *Pagans and Christians*, 314-5.

[29] Justo L. González, *The Story of Christianity: The Early Church to the Present Day* (New York: HarperCollins, 1984, 1985; reprint, Peabody, Mass.: Prince Press, 2004), 98-99.

of absolution held by Novatian and a minority in Rome that said "to those guilty of murder, adultery and apostasy the Church had no power to grant remission but only to intercede for divine mercy at the Last Judgment."[31] The problem of the number of lapsed was further complicated by the question: who, if any, was able to grant them forgiveness for such a grave sin? In Carthage the confessors who awaited execution were prepared to exercise their powers of intercession on behalf of those who had apostatized, thus challenging the authority of the bishops. The argument of the bishops, such as Cyprian of Carthage, was that they held the ultimate authority in the Church to forgive sins, even grave sins.[32] The problem of the lapsed and penance for sins was thus recovered from a rigorist interpretation and placed squarely in the hands of the pastoral leadership of the bishops. Henry Chadwick has characterized this struggle over the authority to forgive sins as a "conflict between the primitive conception of the Church as a society of saints and the now growing view ...that it should be a school of sinners."[33]

The number of converts and the cultural overtones to Christianity in the second and third centuries challenged the Church's demand for a genuine conversion to Christ. A. D. Nock and Gustave Bardy have emphasized Christianity's uniqueness among religious movements and sects in the Roman Empire because it insisted upon an exclusive worship of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.[34] The fact that conversion to Christianity remained exclusive in the second and third centuries may be one reason why it continued to be persecuted throughout this period. Nevertheless, the nature of conversion to Christianity was changing. These changes would be seen more clearly in

---

[30] Edward Yarnold, S. J., *The Awe-Inspiring Rites of Initiation: The Origins of the R.C.I.A.*, 2d ed. (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1994), 6. Lane Fox, *Pagans and Christians*, 316-317.

[31] Chadwick, *The Early Church*, 119.

[32] Chadwick, *The Early Church*, 118-9. Frend, *The Rise of Christianity*, 322-3.

[33] Chadwick, *The Early Church*, 119.

[34] A. D. Nock, *Conversion: The Old and the New in Religion from Alexander the Great to Augustine of Hippo* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1933), 7. Gustave Bardy, *La Conversion au christianisme durant les premiers siècles* (Paris: Aubier, 1949), 9.

the fourth century when Christianity would become the dominant religion in the empire and the monastic movement would pick up speed as a viable rigorist alternative within the Church.

The primary historical context for this thesis is the fourth century which saw some important changes in the nature of conversion to Christianity when the emperor began to favor the Christian Church rather than persecute it. After the Edict of Milan in 313 and the imperial favor shown by Constantine to the Church during his reign as emperor, conversion became more attractive to the masses.[35] Constantine's shift in attitude toward the Church began with his so-called conversion in 312 A.D. According to the historical witnesses Constantine received divine help through a vision and a dream before the battle against Maxentius at the Milvian bridge on the outskirts of Rome. After this very important victory which consolidated his power in the western half of the empire, Constantine understood his continuing victories and successes to be the result of the favor showed to him by the Christian God. Though still a pagan in many ways, Constantine honored the Christian God through his imperial edicts, gifts to the Church and favor to its leaders. He also took it upon himself to make certain the well-being and unity of the Church in the face of the threats by the schismatic Donatists in North Africa and the divisive teachings of Arius in Alexandria.

The scholarly assessment of Constantine's conversion or non-conversion demonstrates a range of interpretations from the sympathetic to the highly critical. Alan Kreider takes the view that Constantine was a Christian only *in extremis*, that is, he was not fully a Christian until he had submitted to baptism at the end of his life.[36] MacMullen views Constantine's conversion to the god who gave him military success as a genuine decision to acknowledge the Christian God and to obey him.[37] A. H. M. Jones sees in Constantine's conversion a genuine acceptance of the Christian God, but

---

[35] Kreider, *The Change of Conversion*, 33-42.

also maintains that it was confused with an integration of worship of the Sun God.[38] Andrew Alföldi's assessment of Constantine's conversion experience in 312 was that it was genuine and is substantiated by his readiness as emperor to fight "for the cause of Christ and his church" from that point onward.[39] Adolf Harnack described Constantine's so-called conversion as a political move, an acceptance of the inevitable, a harnessing of the largest social movement in the empire that was soon to dominate.[40]

Whatever the motivation one may ascribe to Constantine's actions as emperor, the point remains that conversion to Christianity shifted after his acceptance of the religion and the subsequent legacy of favor shown to Christianity by his three sons during their imperial careers.[41] Conversion to Christianity was no longer seen as subversive to state authority, but as supporting the emerging status quo of religious conformity. The period of organized state persecution of the Church had ended under Constantine's reign and therefore the stakes for converting to Christianity were much lower. In fact, after Constantine's time, conversion to Christianity increasingly became a means to other ends especially within the political world which subsequently presented new challenges to the Church.

Conversion also became easier, even within the Church. The rigorous process of conversion and assimilation through the catechesis of the Church was shortened in order to handle the greater number of people who desired the gift of baptism and entrance into the Church.[42] Some of the bishops of the fourth century tried to both accommodate this new social phenomenon and yet preserve the holiness of the Church and the sacredness of the sacraments as much as possible. Their strategy was both to appeal to the masses'

---

[36] Kreider, *The Change of Conversion*, 33-37. See also González, *The Story of Christianity*, 121.

[37] MacMullen, *Christianizing the Roman Empire*, 43ff.

[38] A. H. M. Jones, *Constantine and the Conversion of Europe* (Toronto, Buffalo and London: University of Toronto Press in association with the Medieval Academy of America, 1978), 73-90.

[39] Andrew Alföldi, *The Conversion of Constantine and Pagan Rome*, trans. by Harold Mattingly (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1948), 18.

[40] Harnack, *The Mission and Expansion*, vol. 2, 334-5.

[41] Kreider, *The Change of Conversion*, 38-9.

[42] Kreider, *The Change of Conversion*, 40-2.

ideas of religious worship and ceremony and yet try to maintain the authenticity and power of the Christian rites. They did this by emphasizing the awe-inspiring nature of the rites of initiation, baptism, much like the pagan mysteries.[43]

Another important aspect of conversion in the fourth century was the status of baptism. Now more than ever baptism became a sacrament of importance that brought cleansing from sin for salvation. The importance of this sacrament prevented many people from receiving it immediately because of the fear of tarnishing the purity of one's baptism and losing the efficacious blessings it imparted.[44] Therefore delaying adult baptism was still common in the fourth century and created a huge number of people like Constantine who were drawn to the Church, attended the liturgy of the catechumens yet stopped there. They were what Kreider has called "the large, amorphous group of unbaptized 'Christians' hesitating and temporizing, deferring the time when they would be willing to submit themselves to the rigors of conversion."[45] Some of these lived lives of compromise and infidelity to the faith they adhered to, easily swayed by the pressures of life and society.

Another response to the imperial favor given to the Church and the view of the Church as "the school of sinners" was the growth of the ascetic and monastic movement in the deserts of Egypt, Syria and Mesopotamia.[46] Some of the converts of the fourth century were inspired by the lives of hermits, such as Antony of Egypt, who had already begun to live very secluded lives in the wilderness outside the confines of the local congregation in order to pursue holiness and devotion to God. The emergence of viable ascetic communities, both male and female, throughout the eastern empire transformed the ideas of conversion to Christianity. Monasticism or organized asceticism provided a

---

[43] Yarnold, *The Awe-Inspiring Rites*, 59-66. See also Edward Yarnold, S. J., "Baptism and the Pagan Mysteries in the Fourth Century," *The Heythrop Journal* 13 (1972) : 247-67.

[44] Yarnold, *The Awe-Inspiring Rites*, 6.

[45] Kreider, *The Change of Conversion*, 41.

[46] González, *The Story of Christianity*, 136-7. Chadwick, *The Early Church*, 119, 175-7.

more radical response to the Gospel in distinction to the culturally accepted forms of Christianity beginning to have a dominance in the major cities.

The historical context of Basil's conversion was the Constantinian era in which there were no longer state legislated persecutions against the Christian Church. It was the beginning of the golden era of Christendom that brought with it many new changes in the Church and society. The monastic movement as a response to these new changes was one of the defining influences upon Basil's conversion and vocation as a Monk-Bishop. In Part I we will explore the importance of philosophy as a way of life that was a cultural parallel in some ways to this new monastic movement and an inspiration to some of the forms of its disciplines.

PART I: A STUDY OF BASIL'S CONVERSION

Introduction

In 1990 Philip Rousseau in his article, "Basil of Caesarea: Choosing a Past," suggested that:

> choosing of a past may be the typical component of the conversion experience. It is only when alternative pasts are clearly visible, only when one past is chosen above others, that real conversion can be said to have taken place. In the case of Basil, that clarity of vision, that deliberation of choice, seems to have come surprisingly late in life, and under the impact of severe personal crisis. The reality of the conversion was then projected backwards, in this case from 375 to 357; but the ability to see one's youth in that light will depend upon the experience of many intervening years.[47]

What Rousseau wants to suggest is that for Basil his later interpretation of his life in *Epistula* 223 to Eustathius in 375 is representative of his real conversion, when he chose the past that would define his life and orthodoxy. Rousseau suggests further that this may be an appropriate approach to understanding Augustine's conversion and his later writing about the event described in his *Confessions*. Later, in 1994, in his well received biography *Basil of Caesarea*, Rousseau wrote more decisively:

> The real conversion in Basil's life may well have been the experience that produced those later letters – the need to distance himself finally from Eustathius, and, in so doing, to reject a past that he had been happy hitherto to identify as his own: the great classical tradition of philosophic self-improvement, more particularly defined within the Church by leading ascetics such as Eustathius himself.[48]

These two works by Rousseau on Basil and his conversion have in part given rise to this thesis, especially Part I. I would hesitate to say that this thesis is a rebuttal of Rousseau's points *per se*, but, *contra* Rousseau, it definitely identifies Basil's own testimony of his "conversion" as his real conversion.

---

[47] Philip Rousseau, "Basil of Caesarea: Choosing a Past," in *Reading the Past in Late Antiquity*, ed. Graeme Clarke with Brian Coke, Alanna Emmett Nobbs and Raoul Mortley (Rushcutters Bay, N.S.W.: Pergamon Press for Australian National University Press, 1990), 54.

[48] Philip Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea*, The Transformation of the Classical Heritage 20 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 24.

The aim of Part I is to come to a clearer understanding of Basil's conversion during the period of 355-8. This thesis argues that Basil did convert to the Christian faith and become a member of the Christian Church during the period after his return from Athens in 355. Basil's conversion can be understood on three levels: the historical, the cultural and the theological. All three levels help explain the meaning and significance of this event and period of his life.

The first analysis is an historical analysis of the events of Basil's life according to his own words and the testimony of others. The purpose of this section is to elucidate the differences in the various stories about Basil and yet to find where the witnesses agree on the topic of Basil's conversion after his return from Athens. The second perspective, the cultural, investigates the possibility that Basil's conversion was not only a conversion to the Gospel of Christ, but it was also a response to the culture of his day, specifically classical culture and the conflict of rhetoric and philosophy. This perspective is examined through the use of the group of words φιλοσοφία, φιλόσοφος and φιλοσοφεῖν in Basil's works and his reference to the period of time associated with his conversion.

The final analysis is the theological perspective which establishes the theological shape of Basil's conversion, that is his steps of repentance, faith and initiation into the Church through baptism as well as looking at the important aspects of the role of the Church, the Word of God and the Holy Spirit in his conversion. The role of the Holy Spirit may be quite speculative in one sense, but it is an important enquiry since the person of the Holy Spirit was an important topic to Basil's view of the Christian faith and life.

Through these three lenses, the historical, the cultural and the theological, this section of the thesis aims to elucidate the issues in Basil's conversion in order to

indicate its complexity, historical validity, culturally imbedded characteristics as well as genuinely Christian qualities.

A. Historical Analysis of Basil's Conversion

1. Detailed Review of the First Half of Basil's Life (329-362)

This section gives a detailed historical account of Basil's early life until his ordination to the priesthood. It focuses special attention on the question of Macrina's influence upon Basil's conversion, Basil's brief career as a teacher of rhetoric, his baptism and his trip to the Orient in search of Eustathius. Basil's life can be most easily divided into the following sections: his family heritage, birth and youth; his education in Athens; his "awakening" and subsequent Christian "philosophic" retirement and finally his call by the Church to serve as a shepherd and teacher.

a. Basil's Christian Heritage: Family, Birth and Early Education (329/30-350/1)

It is not through Basil that we have information about his family, but through the panegyric given by Gregory of Nazianzus after Basil's death.[49] In his panegyric, *Oratio XLIII*, Gregory tells his audience about the nature of Basil's family. Their special characteristic according to Gregory was their piety.[50] His paternal grandmother, Macrina the elder, taught her grandchildren the stories and teachings of Gregory Thaumaturgus of Pontus.[51] Basil testified to the formative role that her teaching had on his life and faith.[52] Macrina the elder and her husband had fled into the hills for seven years during the persecution of Maximinus.[53] During the persecution they lived in the nearby woods and hunted for their food. Basil's parents, Basil and Emmelia, had a reputation of great

---

[49] In the introduction to Gregory's Funeral Orations, the date of his oration in honor of Basil is given an uncertain date, possibly three years after Basil's death. Cf. Leo P. McCauley, S. J., John J. Sullivan, C. S. Sp., Martin R. P. McGuire, Roy J. Deferrari, trans., *Funeral Orations by Saint Gregory Nazianzen and Saint Ambrose*, Fathers of the Church 22 (New York: Fathers of the Church, Inc., 1953; reprint, Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1988), 3. J. Bernardi suggests three years to the date of Basil's death – January 1, 382 – based on the dating of his brother's funeral oration by J. Daniélou as being possibly 381. Cf. Jean Bernardi, ed. and trans., *Grégoire de Nazianze: Discours 42-43*, SC 384 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1992), 27 and note 1.

[50] Gregory of Nazianzus *Oratio XLIII* 4; Bernardi, *Discours 42-43*, 124-5; McCauley, et al., *Funeral Orations*, 30.

[51] Basil *Epistulae* 204.6; 210.1; 223.3; Deferrari, III, 168-9, 196-7, 298-9.

[52] Basil *Epistulae* 204.6; 210.1; 223.3; Deferrari, III, 168-9, 196-7, 298-9.

[53] Gregory of Nazianzus *Oratio XLIII* 5-8; Bernardi, *Discours 42-43*, 124-33; McCauley, et al., *Funeral Orations*, 30-33.

virtue.[54] They were generous to the poor and hospitable, living a life of discipline and purity. Although they were rich, they dedicated a portion of their property to God. Gregory concludes that the greatest distinction of Basil's parents was their children who all lived pious lives whether as priests, virgins or married Christians.

Basil's father was a teacher of rhetoric in Neocaesarea where the family lived at various times until his death.[55] Basil's mother Emmelia was a very devout woman from Cappadocia who also played a significant role in the spiritual formation of her children. Basil the elder and Emmelia had ten children, four sons and five daughters, one of which died at birth. The eldest child of the family, Macrina the younger, was 12 years old when her fiancé died and from that point on she assumed the status of a widow refusing to marry.[56] According to Gregory of Nyssa's *Vita s. Macrinae*, she committed herself instead to a life of manual labor and strict Christian devotion providing her mother help in managing a large household which became more burdensome after the death of Basil the elder.[57]

Basil was born around 329 or 330 in Caesarea of Cappadocia.[58] Basil's childhood was marked according to Gregory by his education, his skill at rhetoric and

---

[54] Gregory of Nazianzus *Oratio XLIII* 9; Bernardi, *Discours 42-43*, 132-5; McCauley, et al., *Funeral Orations*, 33-34.

[55] Gregory of Nazianzus *Oratio XLIII* 12; Bernardi, *Discours 42-43*, 140-3; McCauley, et al., *Funeral Orations*, 36-7.

[56] Gregory of Nyssa *Vita s. Macrinae*; Werner Jaeger, John P. Cavarnos and Virgina Woods Callahan, eds, *Gregorii Nysseni Opera Ascetica*, vol. 8, pt. 1 of *Gregorii Nysseni Opera*, ed. Werner Jaeger (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1952), 375. Virginia Woods Callahan, trans., *Saint Gregory of Nyssa: Ascetical Works*. The Fathers of the Church: A New Translation 58 (Washington, D. C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1967), 166.

[57] Gregory of Nyssa *Vita s. Macrinae*; Jaeger, Cavarnos and Callahan, *Opera Ascetica*, 375-7. Callahan, *Ascetical Works*, 166-7. Macrina according to Gregory was secretly named Thecla through a vision that Emmelia received before the child was born. See Gregory of Nyssa, *Vita s. Macrinae*; Jaeger, Cavarnos, Callahan, *Opera Ascetica*, 371-3. Callahan, *Ascetical Works*, 164.

[58] Paul J. Fedwick, "A Chronology of the Life and Works of Basil of Caesarea," in *Basil of Caesarea: Christian, Humanist, Ascetic: A Sixteen-Hundredth Anniversary Symposium*, vol. 1 (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1981), 5. According to Blomfield Jackson whether Basil was born in Caesarea or in Neocaesarea is not conclusively known (Blomfield Jackson, "Prolegomena," in NPNF II, 8, xiii). This is because of the diverse uses of the term πατρίς, fatherland, to mean "place of birth," "place of residence and occupation" (Jackson, "Prolegomena," xiii, xiv). See Jackson, "Prolegomena," xiv, note 1 for the use of the term by the Cappadocians Fathers. Although Jackson's point is compelling, I have taken the traditional view that Basil's place of birth was Caesarea in Cappadocia.

his training in piety.[59] Basil's early education was begun by his father[60] but then furthered by attending schools in Caesarea and Constantinople where he might have studied under the famous rhetor Libanius. From Constantinople Basil went to study at Athens under the best teachers and philosophers of the day.

b. The Wisdom of the World: Athens (350/1-355/6)

In Gregory of Nazianzus' oration, we learn that Basil went to Athens some time after his friend Gregory of Nazianzus had already been there. When Basil arrived Gregory watched over him and helped him become accustomed to the pagan environment of the university. Gregory and Basil avoided the vices of university life and were united in their friendship by the common pursuit of the "philosophic life," the Christian life of discipline and perfection in virtue.[61] Gregory describes himself and Basil as forming a famous pair known throughout Greece.[62] During this time Basil heard the renowned teachers Himerius and Prohaeresius. Despite the camaraderie that the two friends enjoyed, Basil decided to leave Athens in 355 in order to seek after the Christian ascetic teacher and philosopher Eustathius. According to Basil's *Epistula* 1 to Eustathius he "left Athens, scorning everything there."[63]

---

[59] Gregory of Nazianzus *Oratio XLIII* 12; Bernardi, *Discours 42-43*, 140-3; McCauley, et al., *Funeral Orations*, 36-7.

[60] Gregory of Nazianzus *Oratio XLIII* 12; Bernardi, *Discours 42-43*, 140-3; McCauley, et al., *Funeral Orations*, 36-7. Gregory says that Basil's father gave him a general education and instruction in the worship of God. Basil the elder is considered to be a 'teacher of virtue' in Pontus. Fedwick identifies Basil the elder as a "sophist-rhetorician." Cf. Paul Jonathan Fedwick, *The Church and the Charisma of Leadership in Basil of Caesarea*, Studies and Texts 45 (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1978), 133.

[61] Gregory of Nazianzus *Oratio XLIII* 19; Bernardi, *Discours 42-43*, 162-5; McCauley, et al., *Funeral Orations*, 43-44.

[62] Gregory of Nazianzus *Carmen de vita sua*, line 228; Carolinne White, ed. and trans., *Gregory of Nazianzus: Autobiographical Poems* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 26-7.

[63] Basil *Epistula* 1; Deferrari, I, 3. This Eustathius the philosopher became bishop of Sebaste in 356. Cf. J. Gribomont, "Eustathe le Philosophe et les voyages du jeune Basile de Césarée," *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique* 54 (1959) : 115. According to Basil's *Epistula* 244 to Bishop Patrophilus, he had known Eustathius even when he was a young boy (Deferrari, III, 448-51). This gives added weight to Gribomont's view that Eustathius was venerated by Emmelia and her household and that his teaching had a great influence on the family as a whole. Cf. J. Gribomont, "Eustathe de Sébaste," in Ds, vol. 4, pt. 2 : 1709. Basil was a devoted disciple and friend of Eustathius and even defended him and his cause against the accusations of others for a time. See Basil *Epistulae* 79 and 119; Deferrari, II, 86-89, 240-245.

c. Basil's Spiritual Awakening (355-358)

There are a series of events which took place either before or after this trip that are difficult to order: his brief stint as a teacher of rhetoric, his visit to his family where it is reported by Gregory of Nyssa that he was converted to the philosophic life by Macrina and finally his baptism. *Epistula* 1 explains that he left Athens in order to find Eustathius which took him first to Cappadocia and then through the East and back. The trip took approximately one and one-half years to complete. Then we know from *Epistulae* 14 and 2 that he took up the philosophic life of quietness and study in Pontus after this trip and that this was related to leaving the life of the city and the business of civic life.

After Basil's return to Cappadocia he might have taught rhetoric for a brief period of time[64] before he followed after Eustathius, "the Philosopher" in his tour of the monastic settlements in Syria, Palestine and Egypt in 356 or even afterward in 357. Fedwick and others are convinced that Basil taught rhetoric and Fedwick places Basil's brief career as a teacher of rhetoric in Caesarea from fall 355 through to the spring 356.[65] This is based on primarily Gregory of Nyssa's testimony in *Epistula* 13 where he explains to Libanius that he was taught the art of rhetoric by his brother for a brief time.[66] Also Gregory of Nazianzus' description of Basil in *Oratio XLIII* 25 (which says that the city of Caesarea had taken Basil and made him their second founder and protector) could lend itself to some type of formal civic status, possibly as a teacher of their youth. Contra Fedwick, Rousseau and others, Gribomont puts most interpretive weight on Basil's epistles, especially *Epistulae* 1 and 223 which have led him to

---

[64] Basil *Epistulae* 2, 210; Deferrari, I, 8-9; III, 196-7, 198-9. Fedwick, *Church*, 135. While he is a teacher of rhetoric in Caesarea, the men of Neocaesarea try to persuade Basil to teach the young men of their land.

[65] Fedwick, "Chronology," 7. Cf. Fedwick, *Church*, 135; Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea*, 40-1, 61-2. Cf. Jackson, "Prolegomena," xvi, "At Caesarea he was welcomed as one of the most distinguished of her sons, and there for a time taught rhetoric with conspicuous success."

[66] Gregory Nyssa *Epistula* 13.4-6; George Pasquali, ed., *Gregorii Nysseni Epistulae*, vol. 8, pt. 2 of *Gregorii Nysseni Opera*, ed. Werner Jaeger (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1959), 45, l. 15 - 46, l. 12; NPNF II, 4, 533. *Epistula* 13 is called *Letter* 10 in NPNF.

conclude that Basil left Athens in pursuit of Eustathius, following his trail through the eastern Mediterranean world. He discerns from these epistles as well as the witness of Gregory of Nazianzus that a career in the world was not in Basil's mind when he left Athens but he had already by the end of his time at Athens established his course.[67]

The point of time at which Basil taught rhetoric is to me uncertain. According to Gregory his brother, he taught for a brief time. It could be possible that Basil went, as Gribomont holds, straight from Athens to Caesarea to his journey in the Orient. But it could also be that when he returned to Caesarea after his trip he was briefly involved in the civic life there, primarily through the teaching of rhetoric, yet then decided to be baptized and escape to Pontus. This is a very possible scenario because of Basil's stated reasons why he went to Pontus: to escape "the disturbances of the city,"[68] "living in the city"[69] and the "the troubles of civic life."[70] Either way I believe Basil did indeed teach rhetoric based on Gregory of Nyssa's testimony, but whether he did so before his trip to the Orient or directly after is uncertain.

Most scholars generally agree that Basil followed Eustathius, while never seeing him, through the regions of Coele-Syria, Mesopotamia, Palestine and Egypt observing the monastic settlements throughout these regions.[71] From Egypt he wrote *Epistula* 1 to Eustathius and then soon returned to Caesarea.

At some point either before his trip to the Orient or afterward, according to Gregory of Nyssa, Basil visited his family at Annesi where his sister Macrina persuaded him to pursue the philosophic life.[72] Basil was described by his brother Gregory as being puffed up with his rhetorical abilities and reputation. Macrina's persuasive

---

[67] Gribomont, "Eustathe le Philosophe," 121-2.
[68] Basil *Epistula* 14.2; Deferrari, I, 110-1.
[69] Basil *Epistula* 2.1; Deferrari, I, 8-9.
[70] Basil *Epistula* 210; Deferrari, III, 196-7.
[71] Fedwick, "Chronology," 6. Cf. Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea*, 73; Jackson, "Prolegomena," xi, xvii. For the evidence in Basil's epistles see Basil *Epistulae* 1.2; 207.2; 223.2 in Deferrari I, 4-5; III, 184-5, 292-3.

arguments brought Basil to the point of leaving his labors in rhetoric and taking up the philosophic life in pursuit of virtue. If this event actually took place, it is difficult to pinpoint a specific time when it could have happened. It could have taken place during his time teaching rhetoric in 355-6 and before his subsequent trip to the Orient and adoption of the philosophic life. A less likely time could have been after Basil's baptism in 357 or 358 but before his life of solitude in Pontus near his family's house in Annesi.[73] Not only is this event difficult to place chronologically it is difficult to reconcile with Basil's account of his conversion to the philosophic life under the influence of Eustathius which has led some like Rousseau to doubt its historical validity.[74]

Basil's baptism is the last event of this time that is difficult to date. One could posit a much broader period (355-360) when Basil could have been baptized. All that is known is that Dianius the bishop of Caesarea baptized him and ordained him to the service of the Church as a reader.[75] Fedwick places Basil's baptism in 357 or 358 *after* he returns from his trip to the Orient and *before* his retreat to Pontus and further dates Basil's ordination as a reader in 360 after his attendance with Dianius at the Synod of Constantinople.[76] Blomfield Jackson and Anthony Meredith both place Basil's baptism in 357 *before* his trip to the Orient and Jackson dates Basil's ordination as a reader soon after his baptism in 357.[77] Rousseau dates Basil's baptism in 357 *after* his trip to the Orient, following Fedwick's chronology.[78] Even though there is no verifiable evidence

---

[72] Gregory of Nyssa *Vita s. Macrinae*; Jaeger, Cavarnos and Callahan, *Opera Ascetica*, 377. Kevin Corrigan, trans., *The Life of Saint Macrina, By Gregory, Bishop of Nyssa* (Toronto: Peregrina, 1997), 24-5.

[73] Fedwick, "Chronology," 6.

[74] Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea*, 10.

[75] Basil *DSS* 29.71; NPNF II, 8, 45.

[76] Fedwick, "Chronology," 6-7.

[77] Jackson, "Prolegomena," xi, xvi-xvii. Anthony Meredith, S. J., *The Cappadocians* (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1995), 21. Jackson places Basil's baptism and ordination as a reader in close succession. See Jackson, xi, xvii.

[78] Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea*, 16-8, 66-7, 84. For a further example of the difficulty in dating this event compare Fedwick, *Church*, 136 and Fedwick, "Chronology," 6.

of the dating of Basil's baptism and ordination as a reader, we do know that they occurred and were administered by Dianius to Basil before Dianius' death in 362.[79]

d. The Philosophic Life (358-359)

After Basil's return to Caesarea from his trip to the Orient he joined his family on their estate in Annesi in Pontus along the Iris river.[80] Basil chose a secluded and quiet place to live across the river from his family in a beautiful area of the river bank which he described in *Epistula* 14 to Gregory of Nazianzus.[81] Another reason for why Basil chose this specific place to establish his new life of philosophic retirement may be because his brother Naucratius had already established a *mone* (μονή) in this general location.[82] About the time of Basil's return, his brother Naucratius who had been living as an ascetic in the woods of Annesi died with a servant in a hunting expedition.[83] Susanna Elm has suggested that Basil took up the philosophic life and chose this place because of the death of Naucratius.[84]

During Basil's time in Annesi he began to correspond with Gregory of Nazianzus who had returned from Athens and was living near his own parents so that he might take care of them.[85] Basil urged Gregory to come and join him at Annesi. After a second and possibly a third epistle Gregory gave in and spent some months with Basil

---

[79] Basil *DSS* 29.71; NPNF II, 8, 45.

[80] After the death of Basil the elder and the marriages of the four younger daughters, Emmelia moved with Macrina, Naucratius, Peter and the servants to Annesi possibly by 352 while Basil was in Athens. It is considered by some such as Gribomont that Eustathius the Philosopher was a strong influence on the family and that Basil might have heard of Eustathius from the family while he was in Athens (Gribomont, "Eustathe de Sébaste," 1709. See Basil *Epistulae* 1, 223, 244 which Gribomont cites).

[81] Basil *Epistula* 14; Deferrari, I, 106-11.

[82] Gregory of Nyssa, *Vita s. Macrinae*; Jaeger, Cavarnos and Callahan, *Opera Ascetica*, 378, l. 21 - 379, l. 4; Callahan, *Ascetical Works*, 168-9.

[83] Gregory of Nyssa, *Vita s. Macrinae*; Jaeger, Cavarnos and Callahan, *Opera Ascetica*, 380, ll. 5-9; Callahan, *Ascetical Works*, 169.

[84] Susanna Elm, *'Virgins of God': The Making of Asceticism in Late Antiquity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 83-4, 90.

[85] Basil *Epistulae* 2, 14; Deferrari, I, 6-25, 106-11. Gregory of Nazianzus *Epistulae* 1, 2, 4-6; NPNF II, 7, 446-8. A general chronology of the exchange of epistles between Basil and Gregory can be found in Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea*, 66-7.

and a few others who lived in the little dwelling by the Iris.[86] At Annesi Gregory and Basil shared a common life of prayer and work.[87] They formed a list of rules for the Christian life of virtue[88] and edited a collection of excerpts of Origen's sermons and writings called the *Philocalia.*[89] While Basil was at his dwelling along the Iris he met with Eustathius and took journeys with him to visit other groups of Christian ascetics and monks in the region.[90] Although Basil lived apart from his family he had contact with them and spent time with them in the company of Eustathius, Gregory of Nazianzus and others.[91]

e. Basil's Call to Serve the Church (360-362)

In early 360 Basil attended the Council of Constantinople with his bishop Dianius as well as Eustathius of Sebaste and Basil of Ancyra.[92] Basil might have publicly debated the Anomoeans (Aetius and Eunomius) in the council and it was most likely at this time or later in 360 that Dianius ordained Basil as a reader.[93] When Basil heard that Dianius signed the Homoean formula of Nicé-Constantinople, he broke off

---

[86] Gregory of Nazianzus *Epistula* 6; PG 37, 29C-32B; NPNF II, 7, 447-8. In this epistle there seems to be implied the presence of others who took part in the activities of the monastic dwelling. Whether or not these people were permanent residents or visiting Gregory and Basil is not certain. Gribomont's theory is that this was the primitive monastery of Pontus that inherited the Pontus Corpus of the *Asceticon.* See J. Gribomont, *Histoire du texte des Ascétiques de s. Basile*, Bibliothèque du Muséon 32 (Louvain: Publications universitaires/Institut orientaliste, 1953), 160.

[87] Gregory of Nazianzus *Epistula* 6; PG 37, 29C-32B; NPNF II, 7, 447-8.

[88] Gribomont considers these rules most likely to be the *Regulae morales*, a list of 80 moral rules for the Christian based on Scripture texts. See Gribomont, *Histoire du texte*, 256-9.

[89] Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea*, 82-4. Rousseau sees this work as an insight into Basil's thinking at Pontus which included clerical aspirations. For Gregory's witness to the *Philocalia* see Gregory of Nazianzus *Epistula* 115; NPNF II, 7, 472.

[90] Basil *Epistula* 223.5; Deferrari, III, 302-3. Basil here describes his dwelling as a μονή, a small dwelling or in a Christian context by the 4th and 5th century it meant a home for one or more solitaries, monks or nuns (Lampe, 880). Basil describes Eustathius as visiting him while Gregory was there living with him. He also describes visiting his mother with Eustathius who lived across the river in a little village. Basil says that at this time Eustathius and he visited Silvanus possibly of Tarsus. See Deferrari III, 303 note 1 and Basil *Epistula* 34.

[91] Basil *Epistula* 223.5; Deferrari, III, 302-3.

[92] Fedwick, "Chronology," 7; Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea*, 84; Jackson, "Prolegomena," xi, xviii.

[93] Gregory of Nyssa *Contra Eunomium* I.9; Werner Jaeger, ed., *Contra Eunomium Libri: Liber I et II (Vulgo I et XII B)*, vol. 1 of *Gregorii Nysseni Opera* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1960), 24, line 26-25, line 6; NPNF II, 5, 43-4. For the probable dating of Basil's ordination as a reader in 360 see Fedwick, "Chronology," 7. For an earlier dating see Jackson, "Prolegomena," xi, xviii. Jackson admits that "The date of the ordination to this grade is unknown" (Jackson, xviii).

communion with him and returned to his secluded dwelling in Annesi.[94] Upon hearing of Dianius' illness Basil went and was reconciled to his bishop who confessed his orthodoxy and the mistake he made in signing the formula of Nicé-Constantinople. After Dianius' death Eusebius was elected bishop of Caesarea and Basil was ordained a priest either in 362 or possibly a few years later in 364-5 after his final retreat in Pontus.[95]

f. Conclusion

What this brief biographical sketch establishes are the important dates and times of Basil's early life, especially the period around his baptism and commitment to the philosophic life. What emerges is the influence of his family on his early development both in relation to his faith and to his academic pursuits. These two aspects of Basil's life flow together until his return from Athens and then a shift takes place which involves the pursuit of wisdom through the Greek philosophers and writers exchanged for the life of "philosophy" according to the teaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

On a bigger scale what is at stake is Basil's relationship and response to Christianity and the cultural artifacts of Hellenism. Both of these streams in Basil's life shaped his decisions and the direction his life took. Built into Basil's childhood was the harmony of classical culture and Christianity, represented in part by each of his parents. While in Athens or afterward there seems to be a conflict between the two which precipitates his conversion. This overview also shows that Basil's relationship with Eustathius of Sebaste was central to his conversion. He leaves Athens in search of his Christian "philosopher" who is seen as an alternative to the philosophy of the world. The following sections will pursue the question of Basil's response to classical culture, but first the next step is to go in-depth into Basil's own view of his conversion.

---

[94] Basil *Epistula* 51; Deferrari, I, 320-7.

[95] Fedwick places Basil's ordination to the priesthood as early as 362 (Fedwick, "Chronology," 7) and Gribomont dates it closer to 364 or 365 when he returned to Caesarea permanently. Cf. J. Gribomont, "Basil, St.," in *New Catholic Encyclopedia* 2 : 144.

2. Basil's Conversion in His Own Words

The key sources for Basil's conversion and early spiritual development are in his correspondence, especially *Epistulae* 1, 2, 14, 204, 210 and 223. The following section will look at these epistles as well as a brief allusion to his baptism in *De spiritu sancto* to discern the shape of Basil's conversion and early spiritual development based on his testimony. Four categories for Basil's early exposure to Christianity and his conversion rise to the surface: 1) his awakening to the gospel; 2) his conception of God planted in him by his mother and paternal grandmother; 3) the view of his life during his awakening taken from the epistles at the time and 4) the importance of his baptism. All four are necessary features to understand Basil and his conversion in the 350's.

a. Basil's Spiritual Awakening: *Epistula* 223.2

The source of greatest significance for understanding Basil's own description of his conversion is *Epistula* 223. This epistle was addressed to Eustathius of Sebaste in 375 and was the response Basil made after a period of silence in which he was being wrongly accused by Eustathius of heresy and an alleged correspondence with Apollinarius of Laodicea.[96] In this highly emotional epistle Basil gave his interpretation of his past in reference to both his relationship with Eustathius and the accusations against himself. In order to defend his orthodoxy Basil recalls his awakening to "the light of the truth of the gospel," admits that he was guided by Eustathius in this new life but states that his faith or conception of God ultimately came from his family and not from Eustathius. Thus his doctrine was not something which he received from Eustathius so that in this way he was not Eustathius' disciple.

In his epistle Basil describes his awakening to the wisdom of God which may be considered a turning point or conversion experience that changed the course of his life:

---

[96] Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea*, 242 note 38. The dating of this epistle as Rousseau attests is for certain in the year 375.

> Having lavished much time in vanity,[97] and having consumed almost all my youth in the vain labor, which were mine while I occupied myself with the acquirement of the precepts of that wisdom made foolish by God,[98] when one day, arising as from a deep sleep, on the one hand I looked out upon the marvelous light of the truth of the gospel (ἀπέβλεψα μὲν πρὸς τὸ θαυμαστὸν φῶς τῆς ἀληθείας τοῦ εὐαγγελίου), and on the other hand I beheld the uselessness of the wisdom "of the rulers of this age who are doomed to pass away,"[99] having wept much over my piteous life, I prayed that there be given me a guidance to the initiation of the teachings of piety. And before all things my care was to make some amendment in my character, which had for a long time been perverted by association with the wicked.[100] And accordingly, having read the Gospel, and having perceived therein that the greatest incentive to perfection is the selling of one's goods[101] and the sharing of them with the needy of the brethren,[102] and the being entirely without thought of this life,[103] and that the soul should have no sympathetic concern with the things of this world,[104] I prayed that I might find some one among the brethren who had taken this way of life, so as to traverse with him this deep and rough water of life.[105]

The distinctive phases to this part of Basil's life can be summarized. He had spent his youth in the occupation of gaining wisdom which refers undoubtedly to his education in the schools of Caesarea, Constantinople and then Athens. Then at some point, either while he was in Athens or upon his arrival to Cappadocia, he had an awakening to "the marvelous light of the truth of the gospel." Basil recognized the surpassing value and glory of the gospel in comparison to the wisdom of humanity and the futility of his pursuit of it. He then wept over his life and prayed for guidance to be given him so that he could be introduced into the teaching of the Christian faith. Next, he began to amend his own character and changed the way he had been behaving because of his association with wicked people. As he read the gospel he learned how a Christian ought to live so as to move on to perfection in godliness. First, he saw the need to sell his belongings and share what he had with those who were in need. Then he observed that he should

---

[97] Cf. Ecclesiastes 1:2, 12-18
[98] Cf. 1 Corinthians 1:20.
[99] 1 Corinthians 2:6 (RSV).
[100] Cf. 1 Corinthians 15:33.
[101] Cf. Matthew 19:21.
[102] Cf. Acts 2: 44-5, 4: 32-35; Eph. 4: 28.
[103] Cf. Matthew 6:25-34; Luke 12: 31; Colossians 3:1, 2.
[104] Cf. Luke 14: 26-7, 33; 1 John 2:15-6.

not give a thought about his life nor should his soul be turned toward the things of this world. He again prayed for a guide who could be a companion on this path. This person eventually became Eustathius of Sebaste whom Basil saw as a teacher and exemplar of the life of perfection according to the manner of other ascetics and monks in the Orient.[106]

b. Basil's Early Conception of God: *Epistulae* 223.3 and 204.6

Basil relates some other significant points about his faith which bear upon his conversion in the next section of the epistle. He wrote:

> ...yet this one matter I dare make boast of before the Lord, that I never held erroneous opinions about God (ὅτι οὐδέποτε πεπλανημένας ἔσχον τὰς περὶ Θεοῦ ὑπολήψεις), or, being otherwise minded, unlearned them later. Nay, the conception of God (ἔννοιαν περὶ Θεοῦ) which I received in childhood from my blessed mother and my grandmother Macrina, this which has been developing I have held within me; for I did not change from one opinion to another with the maturity of reason, but I perfected the principles handed down to me by them (ἀλλὰ τὰς παραδοθείσας μοι παρ' αὐτῶν ἀρχὰς ἐτελείωσα). For just as the seed, in developing, becomes larger instead of small, but is the same in itself, not changing in kind but being perfected in development, so I consider that also in me the same doctrine has been developed through progress, and what now is mine has not taken the place of what existed in the beginning.[107]

Basil here adds to this description of his life the account of his upbringing by his mother and his grandmother who deposited in him an orthodox "conception of God" (ἔννοιαν περὶ Θεου). He did not change his views of God from what they were, but they developed naturally as a plant grows from a seed. In other words, his conception of God was not given to him primarily by Eustathius, but from his parents and grandparents. This seed of understanding God grew and developed through his progress.

Basil's spiritual awakening and conversion to the Christian life of perfection was in the context of his spiritual heritage given to him by his family, specifically his grandmother Macrina and his mother Emmelia. He did not convert from a pagan family,

---

[105] Basil *Epistula* 223.2; Deferrari, III, 290-293. This translation is primarily that of Roy J. Deferrari with a few alterations. Compare to B. Jackson's translation in NPNF II, 8, 263.

but his faith developed or grew like a seed planted in him from his earliest years in the context of a family of faith. This seed of faith he often traced back to Gregory Thaumaturgus, the famous bishop of Neocaesarea in the third century. The importance of his family's faith and their orthodox heritage through the teaching of Gregory Thaumaturgus is a theme in other epistles at this time of crisis as well and served to help strengthen Basil's identity as an orthodox bishop born to an orthodox family.[108] One of these epistles was *Epistula* 204 "to the Neocaesareans" in which Basil explains more about his spiritual heritage that came from Gregory Thaumaturgus down to him through his grandmother Macrina. He describes his heritage like this:

> And what indeed could be a clearer proof of our faith than that we were brought up by our grandmother, a blessed woman who came from amongst you? I mean the illustrious Macrina, by whom we were taught the sayings of the most blessed Gregory (as many as she herself retained, preserved to her time in unbroken memory), and who moulded and formed us while still young in the doctrines of piety.[109]

By bringing in the influence of his family upon his doctrine and conception of God Basil is establishing himself within a respected tradition in Pontus and Cappadocia. While this early deposit of faith may seem to be at odds with his awakening, it need not be if understood in the terms of Basil's own words in *Epistula* 223.3:

> For just as the seed, in developing, becomes larger instead of small, but is the same in itself, not changing in kind but being perfected in development, so I consider that also in me the same doctrine has been developed through progress, and what now is mine has not taken the place of what existed in the beginning.[110]

Two main points can be drawn from *Epistula* 223.2-3. The first point is that Basil's doctrine, conception of God, the seed of faith was something which he was given within his family life from an early age. It was like a seed which grew to maturity.

---

[106] Basil *Epistula* 223.2, 3; Deferrari, III, 292-7.

[107] Basil *Epistula* 223.3; Deferrari, III, 298-9. Deferrari's translation with some amendments.

[108] The other two epistles in which Basil mentions his spiritual heritage of faith are *Epistulae* 204, 210. Deferrari, III, 168-9, 196-7. For other references to the importance of his family in the development of his faith see *De iudicio dei* 1; PG 31, 653A; W. K. L. Clarke, trans., *The Ascetic Works of St. Basil* (London: S.P.C.K., 1925), 77. For the early influence of Eustathius of Sebaste even in Basil's childhood see *Epistula* 244.1, Deferrari, III, 448-451.

Secondly, despite this knowledge of God's truth he was pursuing the wisdom of the world as a young man and then was awakened spiritually to the greater truth of the gospel. What we have is an example of the parable of the lost son from Luke's gospel, Basil having gone over to a "far country" returned to the truth of the gospel after he came to his senses.[111] Another important point that arises from *Epistula* 223 is that truth was central to Basil's life: his upbringing in the doctrines of Gregory Thaumaturgus taught to him by his mother and grandmother, his awakening after his pursuit of the wisdom of Greece and his splitting from Eustathius over the orthodox doctrine of the Trinity.

c. Basil's Early View of His Conversion: *Epistulae* 1, 14 and 2

Epistulae 1, 14 and 2 – Basil's earliest correspondence that we possess today – record the events he described later in *Epistula* 223. These three epistles reflect the perspective of a highly educated convert without the theological language of a bishop. *Epistula* 1 is addressed to Eustathius, the philosopher, whom we believe to be Eustathius of Sebaste.[112] Basil says in this epistle, "Owing to the repute of your philosophy, I left Athens, scorning everything there."[113] When Basil left Athens he went to Caesarea in search of Eustathius. Although Eustathius had already left for Syria, Basil decided to follow in hopes of meeting up with him. Then he followed him from Syria to Egypt. When he arrived at Egypt he found that Eustathius had gone to Persia. Basil, tired, stayed in Alexandria until he recovered and while he was there wrote to Eustathius explaining the long journey he had taken in order to find Eustathius. This epistle indicates the importance of Eustathius' influence on Basil's conversion. Basil sought after his philosophy of the Christian life. According to *Epistula* 223 he sought

---

[109] Basil *Epistula* 204.6; Deferrari, III, 168-9.
[110] Basil *Epistula* 223.3; Deferrari, III, 298-9. Deferrari's translation with some amendments.
[111] Luke 15:11-24.
[112] For the various arguments for Eustathius' identity see Gribomont, "Eustathe le Philosophe," 117-20.
[113] Basil *Epistula* 1; Deferrari, I, 2-3.

out guidance for his decision to live a godly life in accordance with the Gospel. Eustathius was the teacher in his own land who lived according to a strict discipline of faith and captured what Basil saw as the fundamentals of the Christian life that he wanted to emulate.

Basil wrote to Gregory of Nazianzus in *Epistula* 14, written in 357 or 358, describing the picturesque environment of his riverside retreat. In the beginning of the epistle he gives some information about himself describing his own restlessness and desire to "cease my wandering."[114] Basil wrote another epistle (*Epistula* 2) to Gregory of Nazianzus in 358 about his retreat along the Iris river in Pontus near Annesi. In this epistle Basil admitted that although he now was living in solitude the disturbances which he had experienced in the city continued. He wrote: "For indeed I have left my life in the city, as giving rise to countless evils, but I have not yet been able to leave myself behind."[115] And a little further on he says, "Consequently we have derived no great benefit from our present solitude."[116]

What *Epistulae* 1, 14 and 2 reveal is the *process* of conversion that was involved for Basil as he began to move toward the philosophic life. According to *Epistula* 223.3 this process began in his childhood with the seed of faith and the instruction in godliness by his grandmother and parents. Then while in Athens he heard of Eustathius and his way of life in the Christian faith as an ascetic and teacher.[117] After coming home from Athens and not finding him, Basil took a trip through Syria and Egypt where he stayed in Alexandria for a period of time before returning home. Once at home he had a "life in the city" which he believed was not leading him in the path of godliness that he wanted to be on, so he abandoned this life and went to Pontus. It seems that he had hopes of Gregory joining with him before he left, but was unable to wait any longer and

---

[114] Basil *Epistula* 14; Deferrari, I, 106-7.
[115] Basil *Epistula* 2; Deferrari, I, 8-9.
[116] Basil *Epistula* 2; Deferrari, I, 8-9.

began to live along the Iris river in a small abode. Basil began to live a life of self-renunciation, manual labor, prayer and meditation on the Scriptures toward the goal of perfection in Christ.

Basil's rule during his retreat along the Iris appears to be Matthew 16:24 – Christ's command to his disciples to deny themselves, pick up their cross and follow him.[118] But Basil's more immediate desire in this new life was tranquility of mind, *hesychia* (ἡσυχία).[119] In order to possess *hesychia* Basil wrote that one must withdraw from the world, not bodily, but in every other way. Basil described the kind of self-renunciation needed to obtain *hesychia*:

> But withdrawal from the world does not mean bodily removal from it, but the severance of the soul from sympathy with the body, and the giving up city, home, personal possessions, love of friends, property, means of subsistence, business, social relations, and knowledge derived from human teaching; and it also means the readiness to receive in one's heart the impressions engendered there by divine instruction. And making the heart ready for this means the unlearning of the teachings which already possess it, derived from evil habits.[120]

Within this quote of *Epistula* 2 we can see what to his mind it was necessary to separate himself from in order to prepare his soul for the impressions made by divine teaching and a quiet mind. This was a process of purification in which solitude itself played a major role in obtaining tranquility. For Basil this withdrawal was the necessary

---

[117] Basil in *Epistula* 1 alludes to Eustathius as a shepherd and says that he heard of his philosophy which could refer to his life of asceticism as well as his teaching on the philosophic life.

[118] Basil *Epistula* 2.1; Deferrari, I, 8-9. This quote seems almost an afterthought in the flow of Basil's *Epistula* 2. This could possibly be a later gloss in order to strengthen the Christian nature of Basil's endeavors.

[119] The word ἡσυχία means silence, tranquility, quietness for contemplation and tranquility = solitude (Lampe, 609-10). It can also mean rest, quiet and stillness (LS, 779). Here it is used by Basil to mean both tranquility of mind for contemplation and solitude – thus the need to withdraw from the world. Tranquility is the needed means of obtaining a clear conception of the truth and contemplation of God which can be assisted by the constant memory of God through prayer. Basil does not use much biblical language in this epistle. Rather his language is primarily Platonic and he uses it to describe the mystical experience. Here in primitive form is the essence of Basil's spirituality which has as its goal the transformation of human nature by the glory of God and the obtaining of eternal things such as the virtues.

[120] Basil *Epistula* 2.2; Deferrari, I, 10-11.

preparation for quietness of soul which would allow one to grow in godliness and to hold God in the heart through constant memory of Him.[121]

Epistula 2 stands as a clear sign of Basil's earliest thought on the philosophic life that he was choosing. In this epistle he articulates the consequences of the gospel for himself and in the epistle he expresses his own difficulty in coming to terms with the Word of God. It is clear that for Basil the conversion of the heart was a process of separating from the world and obtaining quietness of mind in order to have communion with God. Basil's three epistles taken together are examples of a heart converting, turning away from the world and turning toward God. They also give insight into a form of conversion in the fourth century which was a total and complete renunciation of the past, leaving the city life and going into the country, leaving the active life of commerce and pursuing quietness of mind in the solitude of the wilderness.

d. The Importance of Basil's Baptism: *De spiritu sancto* 10.24-26

A much later writing which also provides insight into Basil's conversion is *De spiritu sancto*. In chapter 10, Basil lays out his defense of the divinity of the Spirit of God and the doxology which he was using through an argument drawn from the profession of faith and the baptismal liturgy. Through this Basil states the integral relationship of the confession of faith and doxology to Christian salvation. He makes his argument in the first person plural when suddenly he changes to first person singular. What follows is his view of his baptism and its significance to him:

> For if to me my baptism was the beginning of life, and that day of regeneration the first of days, it is plain that the utterance uttered in the grace of adoption was the most honourable of all. Can I then, perverted by these men's seductive words, abandon the tradition which guided me to the light, which bestowed on me the boon of the knowledge of God, whereby I, so long a foe by reason of sin, was made a child of God? But, for myself, I pray that with this confession I may depart hence to the Lord, ...[122]

---

[121] Basil *Epistula* 2.2-3; Deferrari, I, 8-19.

[122] Basil *DSS* 10.26; Pruche, 152; NPNF II, 8, 17.

At this time Basil is declaring his position in regard to the Trinity and specifically his position on the divinity of the Holy Spirit. He has been attacked by Eustathius of Sebaste who holds that the Holy Spirit is not divine but is a ministering spirit severed from the Godhead. The doctrine of the Holy Spirit is related for Basil to the liturgy of the Church and this is especially important at baptism through which he declares that Christians are saved. But if Christians are baptized in the names of the three persons of the Trinity how can someone say that the Spirit is not God? This for Basil is to abandon the Christian tradition of faith, to reject the confession made at one's baptism and nullify its power to save.

This description of baptism is important for understanding Basil's conversion because it puts another perspective on the events of that time and reveals his thoughts about the significance of his baptism. According to Basil the words he spoke at his baptism are the most precious words ever spoken and mark the beginning of his new life as a child of God. These words were the confession of faith in God the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit. Basil makes clear in this passage the seriousness of the confession of faith in the Triune God and his refusal to abandon this saving confession.

This personal reflection on the significance of baptism reveals more clearly his thoughts about his own salvation. Salvation through baptism is seen as a gift – it comes from God. Basil, in the midst of all his striving in the philosophic life for Christian perfection, in the midst of controversies, personal and ecclesial, finally falls back on the grace of God given to him in baptism. Basil's confession of faith in the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and his baptism in the three names of the Trinity define the foundation which he cannot move from without denying his own salvation. This personal statement of Basil's baptism must be taken into consideration when assessing the important ingredients of his conversion.

e. Conclusion

The above four perspectives taken from Basil's epistles and *De spiritu sancto* point to the complexity of Basil's conversion. What Basil understood and emphasized at an early time in his epistles was not what he seemed to lay primary importance upon in other contexts later in life. In the first perspective described above, *Epistula* 223.2, written in 375, Basil recorded his awakening from the wisdom of this world to "the light of the truth of the gospel" and the new life according to the gospel which he subsequently embraced. In this same epistle he also recalled his family and their impact on his earliest spiritual development and especially his conception of God. In *De spiritu sancto* written at the same time, 375, Basil stressed the importance of his baptismal confession in the Trinity which was the foundation of his faith.

These various accounts are not necessarily at odds, but they demonstrate different aspects of the complexity involved in conversion. Using Basil's analogy of the seed we can understand his life and its growth: the seed was planted, but there was an awakening as an adult that resulted in his course of life in the gospel both as a disciple and later as a leader. Basil's emphasis upon his family as the source of his orthodoxy should not be read as a rejection of a past for a new personal self-history as Philip Rousseau has suggested.[123] Rather, the two seemingly contradictory versions of his life are complementary and offer a more true and complex picture of Basil's conversion and growth as a leader in the Church.[124] What Rousseau's work has helped us see is that there was a shift in Basil's description of his past during his episcopate which emphasized new aspects of his early life and conversion. Rousseau's analysis of this shift enables us to identify the ways in which the crisis of his episcopate was of such

---

[123] Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea*, 21-6. Cf. Rousseau, "Basil of Caesarea: Choosing a Past," 37-58.

[124] Frederick W. Norris, review of *Basil of Caesarea*, by Philip Rousseau, *Church History* 65, no. 1 (1996) : 63.

magnitude that it too could be seen within the rubric of conversion even though it was long after his awakening and baptism.

The analogy of the seed is helpful in that it provides a way of putting together the various aspects of Basil's life as he has related them in his writings. What arises is that there was a seed planted, but there was more to his Christian life than just his family's teaching. He had to make his own decision to embrace this faith. The following section will be an examination of those who knew Basil best and their recollection of his conversion which points out the importance of decisions which Basil made that changed the course of his life.

3. Other Accounts of Basil's Conversion

The purpose of this section is to establish other accounts of Basil's life and conversion which can shed light from a different perspective on this event. First Gregory of Nyssa's account of Basil's conversion in his *Vita s. Macrinae* will be examined. Next Gregory of Nazianzus' account of Basil's life from his *Oratio XLIII* will add another perspective. Gregory of Nazianzus' personal testimony to his own homecoming will offer some further reflection of the importance of decisions and this will be further confirmed by the historical account of Socrates in his *Historia ecclesiastica.* The witnesses of Basil's life together affirm the importance of his conversion in terms of his choice for the Christian philosophic life rather than a career in rhetoric. This provides a basis for further reflection in the section on the cultural analysis of Basil's conversion.

a. Gregory of Nyssa

According to Basil's brother Gregory, Basil was led into the philosophic life by their older sister Macrina. Gregory's account of it most likely came from Macrina

herself since Gregory was not present at Annesi during the relevant period of time.[125] But later he spent time visiting with her, especially after his ordination to the priesthood in the 370's and his appointment as the bishop of Nyssa in Cappadocia. It must be remembered though that this epistle is about the life of a saint – his sister Macrina, not Basil. Basil is only mentioned insofar as he is an example of her influence to the philosophic life which she led and taught.

Gregory writes that after the death of her fiancé Macrina refused to marry and instead dedicated herself to living with and serving her mother. The two were of great help to each other – Macrina served her mother by aiding her with the demands of running a large household without a husband and Emmelia cared for her daughter's soul.[126] But over time Macrina began offering her mother "impressive leadership to the same goal" that is the goal of the philosophic life.[127] Basil had returned from Athens and was apparently "puffed up" over his rhetorical ability, absorbed with his own self-importance and reputation. But Macrina quickly led him to renounce his worldly life and take up the pursuit of philosophy. Gregory relays the story like this:

> Moreover she took Basil – who was excessively arrogant concerning his rhetorical ability and despised all those of rank and considered himself of greater importance above all the illustrious men in the sovereignty – and lured him so quick to the aim of philosophy (πρὸς τὸν τῆς φιλοσοφίας σκοπὸν) that he put away worldly notoriety and despising the wonder which comes through rhetoric he came over of his own accord to the life which is distinguished by diligent labor with one's

---

[125] Although Gregory might not have been a witness to this event, it is fair to suggest he might have seen the change that came over Basil. It is generally accepted by those who think Basil spent time teaching rhetoric immediately after his return from Athens that Gregory was one of his pupils in Caesarea (Gregory of Nyssa *Epistula* 13; Numbered as *Letter* 10 in NPNF II, 4, 533). If this may be held to be true or at least that Gregory would have seen Basil at this time, he could still be a credible witness to any change in attitude and priorities which Basil made after his return home from Athens. For a brief discussion of Basil's career in teaching rhetoric see Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea*, 61-2. The arguments for or against are briefly put by Fedwick, *Church*, 135.

[126] Gregory of Nyssa *Vita s. Macrinae*; Jaeger, Cavarnos and Callahan, *Opera Ascetica*, 376; Callahan, *Ascetical Works*, 168. Gregory tells us that the job of Emmelia included raising four sons and five daughters and managing properties which spanned three provinces. She paid taxes for her land to three different governors.

[127] Gregory of Nyssa *Vita s. Macrinae*; Jaeger, Cavarnos and Callahan, *Opera Ascetica*, 377; Callahan, *Ascetical Works*, 168.

> hands, preparing for himself through complete poverty the life without hindrance which leads to virtue.[128]

Probably the greatest contrast of the Basil before and after is the issue of Basil's self-importance, his high view of himself emphasized by Gregory's use of the phrases ὑπερφυῶς ἐπηρμένον τῷ φρονήματι and ἐπηρμένον τῷ ὄγκῳ – which resulted in his low regard of others (πάντα περιφρονοῦντα τὰ ἀξιώματα and ὑπερ τοὺς ἐν τῇ δυναστείᾳ λαμπροὺς) which Gregory then contrasts with his putting away of worldly notoriety (ἀποστάντα τῆς κοσμικῆς περιφανείας), his despising the wonder he gained through his rhetorical ability (ὑπεριδόντα τοῦ διὰ τῶν λόγων θαυμάζεσθαι), his humble life of complete poverty (τῆς τελείας ἀκτημοσύνης) and manual labor (τὸν ἐργατικὸν τοῦτον καὶ αὐτόχειρα βίον).[129]

Gregory's emphasis upon Basil's "complete poverty" in the phrase τῆς τελείας ἀκτημοσύνης may imply that Basil lived a life of poverty by selling his property since the root of the word ἀκτήμων means "without property."[130] This seems to be further implied by Gregory's use of the word τελεία to emphasize the completeness of Basil's poverty. Whether Basil sold his property is not known.[131] We know from his own testimony in *Epistula* 223 that he sold his possessions to give to the poor and share with those in need. It may be that Basil sold some of his property and continued to divest himself of it over time.

This passage is significant because it provides another account – besides Basil's own – of the dramatic change precipitated by his conversion. The aspect that distinguishes this account from that of Basil's is that it does not mention the influence of Eustathius in Basil's life, but this need not necessarily contradict Basil's story of his

---

[128] Gregory of Nyssa *Vita s. Macrinae*; Jaeger, Cavarnos and Callahan, *Opera Ascetica*, 377, ll. 11-19; Corrigan, *Life of Saint Macrina*, 24-5; Callahan, *Ascetical Works*, 167-8. This translation is my own.

[129] Gregory of Nyssa *Vita s. Macrinae*; Jaeger, Cavarnos and Callahan, *Opera Ascetica*, 377, ll. 11-18.

[130] LS, 58. See Elm, *'Virgins of God'*, 89-91.

awakening in *Epistula* 223 since this took place before his search for a guide which eventually became Eustathius of Sebaste. What is also different is that Gregory puts Macrina the younger in the center of Basil's conversion whereas from Basil himself we never hear of his sister; rather he writes of the importance of his mother and his grandmother, Macrina the elder, in his spiritual development. What we have here is a telling of part of Basil's beginning of living the philosophic life. Other versions of his life remain to be investigated.

b. Gregory of Nazianzus

It is difficult to discern any kind of conversion in Basil's life in the witness of Gregory of Nazianzus. Gregory in his *Oratio XLIII*, *in Basilium*, delivers the picture of a man who went from childhood to adulthood to his death bed and beyond from one glory to the next. As Rousseau put it Gregory's account gives a picture of Basil's life as one "of virtually unbroken development."[132] Gregory's assessment of Basil's life may not necessarily be wrong, but merely limited. It is one viewpoint seen by a lifelong friend.

First in paragraphs 3-10 of *Oratio XLIII* Gregory tells of Basil's rich spiritual heritage which came from his ancestors and parents. Gregory goes on in paragraphs 11-14 to elaborate upon Basil's early education, his desire for pursuing philosophy and how he used rhetoric as a tool for this purpose. Then the panegyric moves to a lengthy description of Basil's time in Athens and their friendship (paragraphs 14-24). At Athens, Basil was the picture of purity and Christian devotion as Gregory and he came to know each other and pursue their common aim in the life of philosophy. They lived out their Christian faith within the context of a pagan university life and committed

---

[131] Fedwick says that Basil used his property in Caesarea to develop the "Basiliada" or "The New City" for assistance to the poor during the famine in 369. Cf. Fedwick, *Church*, xvii.

[132] Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea*, 18.

themselves to the philosophic ideal. As they came back from Athens, Gregory describes their return in section 25:

> We obliged a little the world and the stage, only just to satisfy the desire of the many. ...We very quickly became independent adults; having left the stage of beardless boys we matured into men and ascended with more manliness by means of the philosophy. We were not with one another; for envy did not allow us; but we were with one another in our common desire.[133]

According to Gregory Basil was taken by the city of Caesarea as a "second founder and patron,"[134] but he was also absent on trips abroad from time to time because of his pursuit of philosophy. From this point on in Gregory's oration Basil advances from one ecclesial position to another – first as reader, then priest and finally to bishop (paragraphs 26-27).

Gregory's account establishes three sources for Basil's spiritual development – his spiritual heritage from his grandparents and parents, his early upbringing in a Christian and classical *paideia* (παιδεία) and then his education at Athens where he committed himself with Gregory to pursue the philosophic life. These three things lent themselves to Basil's success in the next phase of his life – that of being a second patron of Caesarea, his philosophic retirement and spiritual advancement in the leadership of the church of Caesarea. Whether there was any change of trajectory in Basil's life from a patron of Caesarea as a sophist-rhetor like his father to that of a commitment to the philosophic life of Christian perfection, is not clear. Only intimations can be made based on other sources.

---

[133] Gregory of Nazianzus *Oratio XLIII* 25; Bernardi, *Discours 42-43*, 180, 182. English trans. my own. It is hard to know what "We obliged a little the world and the stage" refers to. Is it related to a brief display of their rhetorical abilities and skills to the people they returned home to? Gregory does attest to such an event for himself in his poem, *Carmen de vita sua*. In line 265 he says, "When I arrived home I gave a sample of my eloquence to satisfy the excessive desire of those demanding this of me as if it were a debt." A little later he adds that he "danced before his friends." (White, *Autobiographical Poems*, 28-31). Maybe after a certain display of his skills and abilities Basil likewise was urged to teach rhetoric.

[134] Gregory of Nazianzus *Oratio XLIII* 25; NPNF II, 7, 404. This may refer to a brief stint as a teacher of rhetoric in Caesarea or maybe it refers to his future ecclesial career in the city. It is known that at some point when Basil was eligible to teach rhetoric he was heavily recruited by the leaders of the city

It is in paragraph 25 that Gregory speaks about their return from Athens. But there are several problems with this account. Gregory of Nazianzus was himself absent at Basil's homecoming and only returned to Cappadocia a year or two later. When Gregory returned to Nazianzus it was to help his parents in their old age and he avoided coming to join Basil in his life of philosophy at Pontus. In this section there is no specific recording of Basil's travels in Syria and Egypt, his sister Macrina's influence nor of Eustathius' role in Basil's life.[135] The first and third of these may be left out of Gregory's panegyric due to the fact that they involved Eustathius of Sebaste who was known as a heretic and whose party the Pneumatomachians had been condemned at the council of Constantinople in 381. Gregory most likely leaves these two points out of his story in order to protect Basil's honor and orthodoxy.

What *Oratio XLIII* 25 does tell us specifically about Basil is that he was taken by the city of Caesarea and made a "second founder and protector."[136] This may refer to some participation in the civic life of the city as a teacher of rhetoric. Then Basil "went abroad on voyages which were necessary and in full keeping with his philosophical resolutions."[137] These phrases may refer either to Basil's trip to Egypt and Syria or to his leaving Caesarea for Pontus or both.

One striking thing about Gregory's panegyric is the constant praise of Basil's rhetorical skills. In Gregory's description of his early education at Caesarea he describes Basil's purpose for his development of his skills of eloquence:

> He was an orator among orators, even before the lecturer's chair, a philosopher among philosophers even before advancing doctrines. And,

---

of Neocaesarea. Basil was a son of Cappadocia and yet the people of Pontus felt a kinship and bond to his family and thus to Basil. See Basil *Epistula* 210; Deferrari, III, 198-9.

[135] The fact that neither Gregory of Nazianzus nor Gregory of Nyssa mentions Eustathius probably reflects their desire to dissociate Basil from Eustathius because of Eustathius' heretical views of the divinity of the Spirit. Gregory of Nyssa was very defensive of his brother's reputation and sought to uphold his brother's legacy. For example see Gregory of Nyssa *Against Eunomius* I.1-12; NPNF II, 5, 35-49.

[136] Gregory of Nazianzus *Oratio XLIII* 25; Bernardi, *Discours 42-43*, 182, ll. 9-10;McCauley, et al., *Funeral Orations*, 49.

[137] Gregory of Nazianzus *Oratio XLIII* 25; Bernardi, *Discours 42-43*, 182, ll. 9-11; McCauley, et al., *Funeral Orations*, 49.

> what constitutes the highest tribute in the eyes of Christians, he was a priest even before the priesthood. In such wise did all defer to him in everything. With him, eloquence was only an accessory, and he culled from it only what would be helpful for our philosophy, since its power is necessary for the exposition of thought. ...But philosophy was his pursuit, as he strove to break from the world, to unite with God, to gain the things above by means of the things below, and to acquire, through goods which are unstable and pass away, those that are stable and abide.[138]

According to Gregory Basil's purpose for studying rhetoric was for the exposition of the Christian faith, "our philosophy."[139] Rhetoric was a means to a greater end. That greater end was the pursuit of philosophy which ultimately meant for Basil "to break from the world" (τὸ ῥαγῆναι κόσμου) and "to unite with God" (μετὰ Θεοῦ γενέσθαι).[140] There is in Gregory's oration a clear emphasis on the usefulness of rhetoric for the Christian faith and that that is why Basil developed this skill so greatly.

Another source for Gregory's and Basil's life together is Gregory's poem *Carmen de vita sua.* In this long autobiographical poem Gregory describes a particular process that he went through as he returned from Athens that may give understanding to the decisions both Basil and Gregory had to make in reference to their previous commitments to the philosophic life. When Gregory returned from Athens he says that he had made up his mind to pursue the philosophic life and that this meant to "cast everything before God, including my attempts at oratory, like those who gave up their land to be grazed by sheep, or who threw their gold into the depths of the sea."[141] But as the time came for him to choose his course he wavered between desires to live a completely retired life of solitude or a life of study and contemplation on the Scriptures which in his mind was a more active life. Gregory resolved this dilemma according to the following reasoning: those who live a practical life, *bios praktikos* (βίος

---

[138] Gregory of Nazianzus *Oratio XLIII* 13; Bernardi, *Discours 42-43*, 146, ll. 22-34; McCauley, et al., *Funeral Orations*, 38.

[139] Gregory of Nazianzus *Oratio XLIII* 13; Bernardi, *Discours 42-43*, 146, ll. 27-8; McCauley, et al., *Funeral Orations*, 38.

[140] Gregory of Nazianzus *Oratio XLIII* 13; Bernardi, *Discours 42-43*, 146, l. 31; McCauley, et al., *Funeral Orations*, 38.

πρακτικός), are on the one hand useful to those around them although they are not unaffected by the presence of the wicked as well. But on the other hand those who live a life of solitude and quiet only benefit themselves, their love is limited and their life is difficult. So Gregory chose a middle way between the solitary life and the active life. He wrote: "So I chose a middle path between solitude and involvement, adopting the meditative ways of the one, the usefulness of the other."[142] This decision also agreed with Gregory because he wanted to serve his parents in their old age and in this way render honor to them.[143]

What emerges from Gregory's poem is that he had decided to pursue the philosophic life, but upon his return to home he had to decide how he was going to live this life out. It could be pursued by a path of contemplation and solitude, *bios theoretikos* (βίος θεωρητικός) or an active life of service in the world, *bios praktikos*. Gregory chose a middle way, especially out of his desire to aid his parents in their old age. But this dilemma between the *bios praktikos* and the *bios theoretikos* would remain with him for the rest of his life as he struggled with his calling to serve the Church and his desire for solitude.[144]

Gregory said when he got back to his fatherland that it was time to make some "manly decisions" (ἀνδρικῶν βουλευμάτων).[145] These decisions had to do with Gregory's vocation in life. This has some import on our view of Basil at the time of his return from Athens and the understanding that he needed to make some decisions about his future. The path that he chose was only taken by cutting off hopes or dreams that lay elsewhere.

---

[141] Gregory of Nazianzus *Carmen de vita sua*, lines 271-3; White, *Autobiographical poems*, 31.

[142] Gregory of Nazianzus *Carmen de vita sua*, lines 310-1; White, *Autobiographical poems*, 33. Cf. Basil's teaching on the dangers of the solitary life in *RF* 7; PG 31, 928B-933C; Clarke, *Ascetic Works*, 163-6. See also Gregory's description of Basil's monastic organization in *Oratio XLIII* 62; NPNF II, 7, 415-6.

[143] On the theme of Gregory's duty to help his parents and the impact of this on the direction of his life see *Oratio XLIII* 25 and *Epistula* 1 to Basil.

[144] Rosemary Radford Ruether, *Gregory of Nazianzus: Rhetor and Philosopher* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969), 32-3.

Basil when he returned was taken by the city of Caesarea as a second founder and patron. This remark by Gregory implies that Basil was a man who was being sought after by his countrymen to serve the city, most likely by educating their young men. Basil also wrote in *Epistula* 210. 2 that he was sought out by the dignitaries of Neocaesarea to come and teach rhetoric and virtue to *their* young men.[146] Basil came back to Caesarea and at some point came to a crisis – a moment of decision whether to fulfill his commitment to his ideals of philosophy or to enter into a life of teaching rhetoric which would have offered him honor among the people of the city of Caesarea.

c. Socrates

The need for a decision after his education in Athens to determine his path in life also comes to the fore in the historical account given by Socrates many years after Basil's death. Socrates' *Historia ecclesiastica* gives a record of the lives of Gregory and Basil which emphasizes two things – first, their rhetorical abilities and possible careers in the civic arena and secondly their renunciation of these options and choosing a solitary life. Socrates described Basil's and Gregory's choice in the following way:

> In their youth they were pupils at Athens of Himerius and Prohaeresius, the most celebrated sophists of that age: subsequently they frequented the school of Libanius at Antioch in Syria,[147] where they cultivated rhetoric to the utmost. Having been deemed worthy of the profession of sophistry, they were urged by many of their friends to enter the profession of teaching eloquence; others would have persuaded them to practice law: but despising both these pursuits, they abandoned the profession of sophistry, and chose the monastic life. [148]

Socrates mentions their studies at Athens and the considerable rhetorical abilities that they both demonstrated. After their studies they were judged worthy of the profession of sophistry, in other words qualified to teach rhetoric. A Sophist (ὁ σοφιστής) in the 5th

---

[145] Gregory of Nazianzus *Carmen de vita sua*, line 277; White, *Autobiographical Poems*, 30-1.

[146] Basil *Epistula* 210.2; Deferrari, III, 196-9.

[147] Socrates errs in sending them to Antioch to study under Libanius. Basil might have studied with Libanius in Byzantium. Gregory did not study with Libanius.

[148] Socrates *Historia ecclesiastica* 4.26; Robert Hussey, ed., *Socrates' Ecclesiastical History*, with an introduction by William Bright (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1878), 201; English trans. from NPNF II, 2, 110-1 with some changes. Compare with Sozomen *Historia ecclesiastica* 6.17; NPNF II, 2, 356.

century B.C. was a title of someone who "gave lessons in grammar, rhetoric, politics, and mathematics for money."[149] By the fourth century A.D. it could also be applied to rhetors who taught the craft and skill of public speaking and argument.[150] Socrates says that some encouraged them to teach rhetoric and others encouraged them into a career of practicing law. In the midst of the possible paths these two highly educated men had before them, they both chose the monastic life, what Gregory and Basil called the philosophic life.

This historical picture of Basil and Gregory brings into focus the possible careers that were obvious to all and the paths that they decided not to take for the sake of Christ and the Gospel. They chose a life of self-renunciation, seeking heavenly things. Although Socrates' history gives an idealized view of Basil and Gregory it does one important thing – it highlights their choices and their actions. They chose the life of the solitary and eventually put their skills and talents to work for the usefulness of the Church when called upon to do so. Socrates' account of Basil's life is unique among other Church historians because it emphasizes the great rhetorical skills which he had. He is remembered for this in later generations and it is important in understanding Basil and his conversion to the philosophic life.

d. Conclusion

The importance of Gregory's account in the *Vita s. Macrinae* lies in that it is an outside testimony to a change of heart and life direction of Basil. The problem of Basil's arrogance in his rhetorical abilities was Gregory's emphasis and reveals the change of heart Basil experienced as he took up the humble life of philosophy much as his own family was already living in Annesi.[151] The *Vita* also indicates why Basil would

---

[149] LS, 1622. Cf. Malingrey, *"Philosophia"*, 39-40; Ruether, *Gregory of Nazianzus*, 1-3.

[150] LS, 1622.

[151] Gregory of Nyssa was not the only one to attest to Basil's arrogance. Gregory of Nazianzus speaks of Basil's superiority complex that appeared after Basil became a bishop. Cf. *Carmen de vita sua*, lines 398-403, 414; White, *Autobiographical Poems*, 38-41. See also *Epistula* 48; NPNF II, 7, 453.

move there in his philosophical retreat – it was not only his family's land but also where his family was living.

All three of these accounts emphasize the decision between pursuing a career in rhetoric or choosing a Christian version of the life of philosophy. Gregory of Nazianzus may be the most ambiguous on this point but I believe the connection can be made from *Oratio XLIII* 25 as noted above. What Gregory's account in his oration states is that Basil stayed on the course of philosophy rather than taking up a career in rhetoric as a second founder and patron of Caesarea. Gregory of Nyssa also speaks of Basil's choice in terms of rhetoric vs. philosophy, philosophy being the ideal which is definitely equated with the Christian life of ascetic discipline and pursuit of virtue. Socrates emphasizes the options of a career in rhetoric and this seems to coincide with Gregory of Nazianzus and Gregory of Nyssa's versions. The options were open to Basil but he chose philosophy. In this Christian circle of friends the higher ideal is represented by the term philosophy. Rhetoric is for the purposes of philosophy.

The third important point that these stories give is the necessary decisions that Basil made after his time in Athens. As Socrates put it "they abandoned the profession of sophistry and preferred the solitary life." Gregory of Nazianzus' own recollection of the need to make "manly decisions" was for him between the *bios praktikos* and the *bios theoretikos.* What Basil decided upon was not so much between the active or contemplative Christian vocation, but between the life surrendered to the gospel of Christ (the philosophic life of Christian perfection) and the life of rhetoric and renown in the world.

One of the results of the Church's contact and interaction with the Hellenistic culture of late antiquity was imbibing various aspects of philosophy as a model of an alternative way of life in society. The next section of this thesis will now present Basil's

conversion as an embracing of the philosophic life, what this meant to him and those around him who witnessed this change.

B. Cultural Analysis of Basil's Conversion

This section will investigate the cultural aspects of Basil's conversion to the Christian faith, that is, his pursuit of what was called in certain Christian circles of the fourth century, "the philosophic life." Drawing from the works of Anne-Marie Malingrey, A. D. Nock and Pierre Hadot I will demonstrate that Basil's conversion had points of reference within the culture of late antiquity especially in terms of Platonic and Stoic philosophy. To examine this cultural aspect I will attempt to summarize the background and significance of the term φιλοσοφία and its forms as it came to be used in the Greek Christian tradition. Then I will examine briefly how the Cappadocians used the term, especially focusing on Basil's use and the references to Basil as a philosopher given by Gregory of Nazianzus and Gregory of Nyssa. Following this I will trace Basil's own use of φιλοσοφία and other terms related to Stoic and Platonic philosophy in relation to his conversion ending with some conclusions about Basil's conversion as a response to classical culture.

1. The Background to φιλοσοφία, φιλόσοφος and φιλοσοφεῖν

a. Its Meaning and Use in the Greek Philosophical Tradition

According to Anne-Marie Malingrey the origin of the word φιλοσοφία goes back to Pythagoras who distinguished σοφός from φιλόσοφος, the sage being the one who has reached perfection in wisdom and the philosopher as someone who loves and desires wisdom.[152] The title of sage was considered a distinction of divinity and Plato thought it above what anyone could personally claim, but that they could speak of being a philosopher, a lover of wisdom.[153] The work of Isocrates was to give φιλοσοφία the meaning of eloquence and moral practice which became the basis of the *paideia* of

---

[152] Malingrey, *"Philosophia"*, 29-30. Cf. Diogenes Laertius *De clarorum philosophorum vitis, prologus* 12; R. D. Hicks, trans., *Diogenes Laertius: Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, vol. 1, LCL (London: William Heinemann; New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1925), 12-3.

[153] Malingrey, *"Philosophia"*, 31-2. Cf. Plato *Phaedrus* 278 D; Harold N. Fowler, trans., *Plato: Euthyphro, Apology, Crito, Phaedo, Phaedrus*, with introduction by W. R. M. Lamb, vol. 1, LCL (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press; London: William Heinemann, 1914; reprint, 1971), 574-5.

Hellenistic culture – rhetoric and morality.[154] Plato's contribution to the meaning of φιλοσοφία was to imbue it with the meaning of "metaphysical research" and "moral effort" that is a "conversion of the soul" from the sensible world of becoming to desiring, seeing, contemplating and ascending to the invisible world of the Good or Beautiful.[155]

Malingrey summarizes Aristotle's use of φιλοσοφία as a "science" or an "investigation of the truth" which involved or was equated with the "contemplation of the cosmos," "scientific research" and the "ensemble of knowledge."[156] Another important meaning to the word φιλοσοφία that goes back to Aristotle is the phrase βίος φιλόσοφος.[157] According to Aristotle, the philosophical life is a life of renouncement of exterior activity – a life of liberation from all the responsibilities imposed by society upon a person to live a life participating in the activities of the *polis*.[158] On the positive side it is a life of contemplation and development of one's spirit or inner life.[159] For Aristotle the philosophic life is the highest form of human life, living a divine life.[160] Aristotle differs from Plato in that Plato's conception of the φιλόσοφος included both a contemplative and active side, whereas Aristotle's view of the philosophic life (θεωρητικός) was only that of contemplation.[161] Thus according to Aristotle the division between *bios theoretikos* (βίος θεωρητικός) and *praktikos*

---

[154] Malingrey, *"Philosophia"*, 43-44. Cf. Ruether, *Gregory of Nazianzus*, 1-4.

[155] Malingrey, *"Philosophia"*, 50-54.

[156] Malingrey, *"Philosophia"*, 56-61. Cf. Aristotle *Metaphysica* II.1 or 933a 30; Hugh Tredennick, trans., *Aristotle: The Metaphysics Books I-IX*, vol. 1, LCL (London: William Heinemann; New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1933), 84-7. Cf. Aristotle *Ethica Nicomachea* 6.6.1 - 6.7.6; H. Rackham, trans., *Aristotle: The Nicomachean Ethics*, vol. 19, LCL (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press; London: William Heinemann, 1975), 340-345.

[157] Malingrey, *"Philosophia"*, 61.

[158] Malingrey, *"Philosophia"*, 61. Cf. Aristotle *Ethica Nicomachea* 10.7.1-7; Rackham, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 612-17.

[159] Malingrey, *"Philosophia"*, 61.

[160] Malingrey, *"Philosophia"*, 61. Cf. Aristotle *Ethica Nicomachea* 10.7.8-9; Rackham, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 616-9.

[161] Malingrey, *"Philosophia"*, 61.

(πρακτικός) – both are necessary but only the former can designate the life of a philosopher.[162]

In Hellenistic philosophy Epicurus adds to the understanding of φιλοσοφία by teaching that it is "state of life organized for the purpose of acquiring happiness."[163] The deepest happiness a human can find according to Epicurus was in the salvation of one's soul.[164] It is through Epicurus that philosophy comes to focus upon the ideas of the health or sickness of the soul and its primary objective becomes the health and salvation of the soul rather than acquiring knowledge.[165] Malingrey also points out that within Epicurean philosophy the importance of the relationship of the master and the disciple is stressed because it is through this relationship that wisdom and experience could be passed on.[166] This coincided with Epicurus' emphasis on the communal life of the philosopher and his disciples and the delight of friendship within this community as an aspect of the happiness of the soul.[167]

The other important figure for the use of the word "philosophy" in the Christian tradition was Philo of Alexandria. It is through Philo that much of the synthesis between faith and philosophy was taken up by the later Christian community, especially those in Alexandria in the 2nd and 3rd century. Philo's work is summarized under the following headings by Malingrey: 1) Philosophy as a spiritual formation of the person for acquiring wisdom; 2) Philosophy as the contemplation of the cosmos; 3) Philosophy as moral effort oriented toward God; 4) Philosophy as revelation of God to Israel and 5) Philosophy as the practice of the Law of Moses.[168] The phrase πάτριος φιλοσοφία is

---

[162] Malingrey, *"Philosophia"*, 61. Cf. Aristotle *Ethica Nicomachea* 10.8.1; Rackham, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 618-9.

[163] Malingrey, *"Philosophia"*, 64.

[164] Malingrey, *"Philosophia"*, 64.

[165] Malingrey, *"Philosophia"*, 64.

[166] Malingrey, *"Philosophia"*, 65.

[167] Malingrey, *"Philosophia"*, 65-6.

[168] Malingrey, *"Philosophia"*, 77-91. Cf. Philo *De posteritate Caini* 100-2; F. H. Colson and G. H. Whitaker, trans., *Philo*, vol. 2, LCL (London: William Heinemann; New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1929), 384-87.

a common phrase that Philo used to refer to the content of the Law.[169] In the writings of both Philo and Josephus Moses is designated as a philosopher whose teaching is the basis for the work of Greek philosophers who came after him.[170] Philo describes in *De vita contemplativa* a possible source for the Christian monastic movement in Egypt current at the time of Jesus Christ's life and ministry in Galilee and Judea. The "Therapeutae" is the name of this group whom Philo calls "philosophers."[171] They lived celibate lives of poverty in a community practicing contemplation and living a common life of worship. A final aspect of Jewish adaptation and use of philosophy which is important for the Christian development and use of the term comes from the fourth book of the Maccabees where the author associates philosophy with εὐσέβεια, piety and the worship of God.[172]

b. Its Meaning and Use among Early Christian Writers

The Apologists of the second century because of their context and situation were both seeking to defend the Christian faith from the criticisms of society and to present it in an understandable way to the public. One of the ways the Apologists chose to do this was by stating that Christianity was the greatest *philosophy*. Through this strategy the Apologists tried to both relate Christianity to the Hellenistic culture of their day and yet show Christianity's uniqueness and superiority.[173] The Apologists' use of φιλοσοφία in its various forms was both pejorative and positive. In their pejorative use of these terms φιλοσοφία was associated with their ridicule of classical philosophers and the weakness of their systems of thought.[174] In their positive use the Apologists associated the Christian faith and worship with philosophy by the use of both φιλοσοφία together

---

[169] Malingrey, *"Philosophia"*, 88. Hadot, *Way of Life*, 129. Cf. Philo *De vita contemplativa* 28; F. H. Colson, trans., *Philo*, vol. 9, LCL (London: William Heinemann; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1941), 128-9.

[170] Josephus *Contra Apionem* II.168; H. St. J. Thackeray, *Josephus: The Life, Against Apion*, vol. 1, LCL (London: William Heinemann; New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1926), 358-9 and note e.

[171] Philo *De vita contemplativa* 2; Colson, *Philo*, vol. 9, 112-3.

[172] Malingrey, *"Philosophia"*, 95. Cf. 4 Maccabees 1:1; 5:7, 11, 22, 35; 7:9, 21; 8:1, 15.

[173] Malingrey, *"Philosophia"*, 128.

with εὐσέβεια.[175] Probably the most important contribution was the use of the term λόγος with φιλοσοφία which enabled the Apologists to connect Christ, the *Logos* in John's Gospel, to human reason (λόγος) and thus establish the foundation of their interpretation of Christianity as *the* philosophy.[176] Pierre Hadot puts their accomplishment like this:

> The Apologists considered Christianity a philosophy, and to mark its opposition to Greek philosophy, they spoke of Christianity as "our philosophy" or as "Barbarian philosophy." They did not, however, consider Christianity to be just one philosophy among others; they thought it as *the* philosophy. They believed that that which had been scattered and dispersed throughout Greek philosophy had been synthesized and systematized in Christian philosophy. Each Greek philosopher, they wrote, had possessed only a portion of the *Logos*, whereas the Christians were in possession of the *Logos* itself, incarnated in Jesus Christ. If to do philosophy was to live in accordance with the law of reason, then the Christians were philosophers, since they lived in conformity with the law of the divine *Logos*.[177]

Malingrey's survey of Clement and Origen reveals further development of the Christian use of the words φιλοσοφία. An important contribution to its Christian use given by Clement was the association of φιλοσοφία with ἀλήθεια. Christianity was a way of life shaped by the truth of the faith. Φιλοσοφία comes to mean the "knowledge of the truth but the truth leads to Christ and is Christ."[178] Clement uses many new phrases to refer to Christianity one of which is "the philosophy according to Christ."[179] This, for Malingrey, is the Christian baptism of the word φιλοσοφία. Origen, although different from Clement in that he was not a pagan philosopher before becoming a Christian, adds some important meanings to the Christian usage of the terms φιλοσοφία. Origen uses the verb φιλοσοφεῖν to designate both the practice of the moral law with the help of God and commentating upon Scripture under the inspiration

---

[174] Malingrey, *"Philosophia"*, 113.

[175] Malingrey, *"Philosophia"*, 124-6.

[176] Justin Martyr *I apologia* 46; *II apologia* 6, 8, 10, 13; André Wartelle, ed. and trans., *Saint Justin, Apologies* (Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1987), 160-1, 204-5, 208-11, 214-17; Malingrey, *"Philosophia"*, 127.

[177] Hadot, *Way of Life*, 128.

[178] Malingrey, *"Philosophia"*, 145.

of the Holy Spirit.[180] In Origen's thought the noun φιλοσοφία comes to mean spiritual knowledge of God.[181]

Eusebius of Caesarea also used the terms φιλοσοφία for the purposes of Christianity in his writings. In Eusebius the term φιλοσοφία is associated under the greater umbrella term of θεολογία, theology. Another important term associated with φιλοσοφία by Eusebius is ἀρετή, virtue. Also Eusebius uses the pair εὐσέβεια and φιλοσοφία to convey the importance of philosophy being oriented to the personal God who has the wisdom that people seek.[182] In Eusebius' writings the perfect philosopher is the emperor Constantine, Christ is the philosopher *par excellence* and Christianity is synonymous with φιλοσοφία.[183] One last important contribution made by Eusebius was the application of the use of the term βίος φιλόσοφος to the Christian life of ascetic withdrawal from the world and obedience to the commands of Christ.[184] It was not simply a term for monasticism, but was more broadly applied to the Christian life in general.

c. The Significance of the Christian Use of the Terms

Besides the process of Christianizing the terms φιλοσοφία, φιλόσοφος and φιλοσοφεῖν, philosophy was in many ways a point of cultural reference by which Christianity interacted with the Hellenistic culture of late antiquity. Probably the most important point is that Christianity like philosophy offered a way of life that had a similar appeal to the culture. Nock, in his work *Conversion: The Old and the New in Religion From Alexander the Great to Augustine of Hippo*,[185] shows why philosophy was so dominant in late antiquity and how conversion to philosophy from a cultural perspective had some similarities to conversion to Christianity. Through the discussion

---

[179] Malingrey, *"Philosophia"*, 150.
[180] Malingrey, *"Philosophia"*, 173-4, 177.
[181] Malingrey, *"Philosophia"*, 174-5.
[182] Malingrey, *"Philosophia"*, 194.
[183] Malingrey, *"Philosophia"*, 196-8.
[184] Malingrey, *"Philosophia"*, 202-6.

of conversion he shows the relevant relationship between the philosophical schools and the Church, the philosophical life and the Christian life. As Nock points out one of the strengths of philosophy was that it presented a way of life, an ἀγωγή – "a way of teaching and a way of living"[186] and "adhesion to such ideas meant something like conversion."[187] Philosophy was successful because it produced "some of the most striking ideal types, the saints of antiquity" – Plato, Pythagoras, Epicurus, Diogenes, Apollonius of Tyana, Epictetus and many others.[188] Nock defines conversion to philosophy as "the turning from luxury and self-indulgence and superstition...to a life of discipline and sometimes to a life of contemplation, scientific or mystic."[189] Some important words for conversion in philosophy included ἐπιστρέφω, μετανοέω and μετάνοια which are also found in Christian Scripture.[190] The goal of conversion to a philosophy was a form of deliverance, salvation or more generally a better and happier life.[191] One of Nock's conclusions is that there is more literary evidence of conversion to philosophy than conversion to religion in antiquity.[192]

An important aspect of the idea that philosophy was a "way of life" was that those who were philosophers or disciples of philosophers followed certain spiritual exercises. These spiritual exercises Hadot has defined as consisting of "inner activities of the thought and the will."[193] Hadot has categorized these exercises practiced by philosophers since ancient times in four basic teachings which define the philosophic life – 1) learning how to live; 2) learning how to dialogue; 3) learning how to die and 4) learning how to read.[194] These spiritual exercises were called the ἄσκησις, discipline, and it is this ἄσκησις that Christians adapted to the Christian life, especially in its

---

[185] Nock, *Conversion*, 164-86.
[186] Nock, *Conversion*, 167.
[187] Nock, *Conversion*, 169.
[188] Nock, *Conversion*, 175.
[189] Nock, *Conversion*, 179.
[190] Nock, *Conversion*, 179-80.
[191] Nock, *Conversion*, 180-1.
[192] Nock, *Conversion*, 185.
[193] Hadot, *Way of Life*, 128.

monastic forms in the 4th and 5th century. Thus monks and other devoted people who lived according to this ἄσκησις were called philosophers, especially among more educated Hellenistic Christians. A sample of the spiritual exercises can be found in Philo's writings under two lists which provide a "fairly complete panorama of Stoico-Platonic inspired philosophic therapeutics."[195] These exercises Hadot organizes into three groups: the first, attention (*prosoche*), meditations (*meletai*) and "remembrances of good things"; secondly the more intellectual exercises, reading (*anagnosis*), listening (*akroasis*), research (*zetesis*), and investigation (*skepsis*); and finally the more active exercises, self-mastery (*enkrateia*), accomplishment of duties and indifference to indifferent things.[196]

This brief survey of the use of the terms φιλοσοφία, φιλόσοφος and φιλοσοφεῖν indicates that the development of Christianity and its relationship with the Hellenistic culture was intricately linked to its adaptation of the terms and ideas of the culture, but that this process was done with a specifically Christian interpretation. Christianity thus found points of contact with the culture through philosophy and actually presented itself as a philosophy and its followers as philosophers. Again this became more prevalent by the fourth century and so establishes a cultural and historical milieu with which to look at Basil's conversion and early Christian faith. Before I discuss this I will introduce some general points about the Cappadocians and their use of the terms φιλοσοφία, φιλόσοφος and φιλοσοφεῖν, especially as they relate to Basil and his life.

---

[194] Hadot, *Way of Life*, 82-109.
[195] Hadot, *Way of Life*, 84.
[196] Hadot, *Way of Life*, 84.

2. The Cappadocian Fathers' Use of φιλοσοφία, φιλόσοφος and φιλοσοφεῖν

a. Their Use of the Terms in General

The Cappadocian Fathers, Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nazianzus and Gregory of Nyssa, used the terms φιλοσοφία, φιλόσοφος and φιλοσοφεῖν much in the same ways as their predecessors. They drew a distinction between Christianity and pagan philosophers and referred to Christianity as *the* philosophy, or "our philosophy" (ἡ ἡμετερα φιλοσοφία).[197] Their general outlook toward philosophy was one of ambivalence and caution, but never of total rejection. Malingrey has written about Gregory of Nazianzus' *Oratio XXV* as the prime example of how the Cappadocians synthesized pagan language and gave it Christian meaning.[198] Rosemary Radford Ruether interprets *Oratio XXV* as an example of the way in which the Cappadocians took the best from philosophy and used it to promote Christianity.[199] Malingrey points to two main sources for the Cappadocian use of φιλοσοφία – the classical period of Greek literature and the Christian tradition, especially Clement and Origen.[200] The terms are found approximately 58 times in Basil's corpus including dubious and spurious writings.[201] In Gregory of Nyssa they occur some 210 times and Gregory of Nazianzus used it most frequently for an approximate total of 407 times.[202]

Malingrey, in her discussion of the use of φιλοσοφία, φιλόσοφος and φιλοσοφεῖν, emphasizes the positive way the Cappadocians integrated these words into their Christian writings and thought. One of the developments of Cappadocian theology that made this possible was their doctrine of the "image of God."[203] The image of God, εἰκὼν Θεοῦ, from Genesis 1:26 was central to the Cappadocian anthropology

---

[197] For a complete discussion of the Cappadocian use of the terms φιλοσοφία, etc. see Malingrey, *"Philosophia"*, 207-261.

[198] Malingrey, *"Philosophia"*, 211.

[199] Ruether, *Gregory of Nazianzus*, 171-2.

[200] Malingrey, *"Philosophia"*, 222.

[201] TLG data base search of "φιλοσοφ" in Basil's corpus, excluding the dubious and spurious occurrences, comes to approximately 40 times.

[202] TLG data base search of "φιλοσοφ" in Gregory of Nyssa and Gregory of Nazianzus.

and enabled them to approach philosophy and more broadly Greek literature in a positive light based on the God-given and God-like rational capacities of the human mind, νοῦς. This doctrine, as Malingrey observes, functions much as the doctrine of the λόγος did for Justin and the Apologists.[204] It was a bridging concept that enabled the Cappadocians to see the rational capacity of humanity, especially the human mind, as the image of God in humanity that gave to human beings a degree of reason and wisdom. It was a form of Christian humanism that made the ideal of philosophy tenable in the Christian tradition.

Based on this foundational Christian doctrine the Cappadocians first took on board similar meanings of φιλοσοφία that were consistent with Greek philosophy and secondly innovated some of their own concepts for the word. For the Cappadocians φιλοσοφία meant the entire group of moral values, a method of perfection through detachment from this life, bravely facing suffering, and a φιλόσοφος was defined as someone who recognized and gave honor to the dignity of their nature by recovering the image of God within themselves.[205] These were the ways that the Cappadocian Fathers took φιλοσοφία and its cultural meanings for their own, but they also, as already mentioned, innovated some new ideas based on the Christian faith. Malingrey lists the following uses under this category: 1) the term "my philosophy" as developed by Gregory of Nazianzus; 2) φιλοσοφεῖν as a way of attaining religious knowledge and 3) φιλοσοφία as spiritual teaching and interpretation.[206] Finally the Cappadocian contribution is crowned by the use of φιλοσοφία as a form of Christian commitment, the highest form of Christian life founded on "the desire for perfection which surpasses the average."[207] This phrase, βίος φιλόσοφος, was first used to refer to the Christian life by Eusebius of Caesarea but it was not given the qualitative difference from the so-

---

[203] Malingrey, *"Philosophia"*, 223.
[204] Malingrey, *"Philosophia"*, 223-4.
[205] Malingrey, *"Philosophia"*, 225-33.
[206] Malingrey, *"Philosophia"*, 242-55.

called average Christian life as the Cappadocians saw it.[208] Gregory of Nazianzus in his funeral oration in praise of Basil exalts him as the ideal model of the "philosophic life" as shown by his frequent references to Basil's "philosophy" and way of life.

b. Basil's Use of the Terms

Basil's use of the terms for philosophy is not as common as his brother's or best friend's as revealed by the word count totals above, but his use is in keeping with those found in their writings. Basil speaks favorably of philosophy and uses the terms in a favorable manner especially in his address to young men on the right use of Greek literature, *Ad adolescentes*. In this address he wrote about the importance of Greek literature for developing a Christian life of virtue:

> And since it is through virtue that we must enter upon this life of ours, and since much has been uttered in praise of virtue by poets, much by historians, and much more still by philosophers (φιλοσόφοις), we ought especially to apply ourselves to such literature.[209]

For Basil and the other two Cappadocians one of the important benefits provided by Greek philosophers was their teaching on the life of virtue and the virtues themselves. For Basil the goal in this life is to live virtuously so that one may enter into the next life. The philosophers thus become guides and teachers on the way to the next life. Basil did not consider all of what Greek literature had to offer as beneficial for the Christian. His advice to his audience was to guard themselves against what is harmful, to take what is beneficial for the pursuit of virtue and leave the rest.[210] The philosophers and the characters in the literature become examples of virtue and their wisdom is to be taken to heart and practiced. Basil's theory of education was that the Greek literature was in a sense a primer for study of the Scripture. It taught, through more simple means, the life

---

[207] Malingrey, *"Philosophia"*, 256.

[208] Malingrey, *"Philosophia"*, 256. Ruether presents a little different picture of the philosophic life according to the Cappadocians. It was not a higher form of the Christian life as much as it was the fulfillment of what the Christian life ought to be and what was required of all baptized Christians. See Ruether, *Gregory of Nazianzus*, 139-40.

[209] Basil *Ad adolescentes* 5.1; Deferrari, IV. 392-3.

[210] Basil *Ad adolescentes* 4.8-10; Deferrari, IV, 390-393.

of virtue that would mold and guide the life of young people who were not ready for the doctrines and teachings of Scripture. Thus Greek literature, censored, of course, but still used, became a part of the Christian *paideia*, the formation and education of Christian young men, along with the instruction that came from Scripture.

Other than the instances of Basil's use of the terms for philosophy in *Ad adolescentes*, he uses them often in his correspondence, especially when addressing those on the outside of the Church. For example, in *Epistula* 112 to Andronicus the General, Basil is appealing for mercy on behalf of a friend named Domitian. Basil encourages Andronicus not to take vengeance upon Domitian, but to overcome his wrath and show mercy. Basil appeals to Andronicus through the example of those who by philosophy (φιλοσοφίᾳ) overcame wrath and are still remembered today for their great virtue.[211] Later on he places Andronicus among the philosophers (φιλοσοφησάντων) of the past as one who studies human life and knows the reward for those who help people in need.[212] Here philosophy and philosophers are portrayed as exemplars of virtue, those who have overcome human passions in order to do good, those who study human life and are remembered for their good deeds and will be rewarded in the future. Here in so many words Basil paints a picture of a virtuous person under the name of philosopher that could easily be applied to any person, whether pagan or Christian.

Basil and the other Cappadocians were ambivalent toward Greek philosophy at best and had not only positive ways they related to this tradition, but also spoke in negative terms of philosophers and their teachings. A good example in the works of Basil can be found in his sermon series the *Hexaemeron.* Although Basil draws upon the teachings of philosophers quite freely to give a contemporary explanation of some of

---

[211] Basil *Epistula* 112.2; Deferrari, II, 216-7.

[212] Basil *Epistula* 112.3; Deferrari, II, 220-1. For other examples of Basil's use of the practice of philosophy to overcome anger see *Homilia adversus eos qui irascuntur* 3, 5; PG 31, 360A-B and 31,

the mysteries of nature, he also contrasts the truth of Scripture with the false teachings of philosophers. An example of the clash between Christian doctrine based upon the revelation of Scripture and the teachings of philosophers can be found in his third sermon, "On the Firmament" where Basil draws a distinction between philosophical ideas of heaven and the Christian belief about heaven based on his text in Genesis:

> In the second place, does the firmament that is called heaven differ from the firmament that God made in the beginning? Are there two heavens? The philosophers, who discuss heaven (Ὅπερ οἱ τὰ περὶ οὐρανοῦ φιλοσοφήσαντες), would rather lose their tongues than grant this. There is only one heaven, they pretend; and it is of a nature neither to admit of a second, nor of a third, nor of several others.[213]

Basil compares in other places as well the difference between the false teachings of the philosophers and Christian teaching which comes from Scripture. Where there is a conflict and philosophers are at odds with Christian revelation, their dogmas are to be rejected. An example of this primacy of Scripture over philosophy can be found further on in the same sermon "On the Firmament":

> And do not any one compare with the inquisitive discussions of philosophers upon the heavens, the simple and inartificial character of the utterances of the Spirit; as the beauty of chaste women surpasses that of a harlot, so our arguments are superior to those of our opponents. They only seek to persuade by forced reasoning. With us truth presents itself naked and without artifice. But why torment ourselves to refute the errors of philosophers, when it is sufficient to produce their mutually contradictory books, and, as quiet spectators, to watch the war?[214]

Basil here makes clear his view of the superiority of the Scriptures – which he calls the "utterances of the Spirit" or "spiritual words" (τῶν πνευματικῶν λόγων) which contain the naked truth – to the "inquisitive discussions" and "forced reasoning" of philosophers.[215]

364C-365A; M. M. Wagner, C. S. C., trans., *St. Basil: Ascetical Works*, Fathers of the Church 9 (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1962), 451, 456.

[213] Basil *Hexaemeron* 3.3; Emmanuel Amand De Mendieta and Stig Y. Rudberg, eds., *Basilius von Caesarea: Homilien zum Hexaëmeron*, GCS, new series, 2 (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1997), 41, ll. 10-16; NPNF II, 8, 66.

[214] Basil *Hexaemeron* 3.8; Mendieta and Rudberg, *Homilien zum Hexaëmeron*, 53, ll. 5-13; NPNF II, 8, 70.

[215] Basil *Hexaemeron* 3.8; Mendieta and Rudberg, *Homilien zum Hexaëmeron*, 53, ll. 5-6, 8-10; NPNF II, 8, 70.

Later in his eighth sermon on "The Creation of Fowl and Water Animals" Basil exhorts his audience:

> ...avoid the non-sense of those arrogant philosophers (τῶν σοβαρῶν φιλοσόφων) who do not blush to liken their soul to that of a dog; who say that they have been formerly themselves women, shrubs, fish. Have they ever been fish? I do not know; but I do not fear to affirm that in their writings they show less sense than fish.[216]

In this last example he calls the pagan Greek philosophers "arrogant philosophers" and in *De spiritu sancto* he ridicules his opponents by calling them "students of vain philosophy" (οἱ περὶ τὴν ματαίαν φιλοσοφίαν ἐσχολακότες).[217] These are typical of the negative connotations for philosophy given by the Cappadocians and other early Christian writers.[218] A general rule seems to be formed from these examples of how Basil and the two Gregories approached philosophy and other forms of literature.[219] Where Greek literature supports and strengthens the Christian life and teaching they are to be read and respected, but where they offer contrary ideas or theories of life, especially when contradicted by the "truth" of Scripture, then they are to be left to one side and rejected as false.[220] Basil and the other two Cappadocians also used such opportunities in their sermons and teaching to educate their audiences about the false teachings of philosophy and in so doing differentiated Christian doctrine from the ideas of those "outside" thus warning their flocks about them.

c. The Two Gregories' Use of the Terms to Describe Basil

Both Gregory of Nazianzus and Gregory of Nyssa refer to Basil as either a philosopher or living a philosophic life. Gregory of Nazianzus is the most prolific in his positive references to Basil and philosophy. In the funeral oration of his friend he uses

---

[216] Basil *Hexaemeron* 8.2; Mendieta and Rudberg, *Homilien zum Hexaëmeron*, 120, ll. 5-10; NPNF II, 8, 95-6.

[217] Basil *DSS* 3.5; Pruche, 113; NPNF II, 8, 4.

[218] Malingrey, *"Philosophia"*, 211-16.

[219] For an example of Gregory of Nyssa's view of philosophy see *De Vita Moysis* 2.37-41 in Everett Ferguson and Abraham J. Malherbe, trans., *Gregory of Nyssa: The Life of Moses*, with a preface by John Meyendorff, The Classics of Western Spirituality (New York: Paulist Press, 1978), 62-3.

the terms φιλοσοφία, φιλόσοφος and φιλοσοφεῖν some 36 times.[221] Gregory tells us that Basil was a philosopher of philosophers even before he reached the university at Athens. He developed his rhetorical skills for the purpose of philosophy, to expound the teachings of Scripture. He was, even at this young age, set upon the philosophic life – breaking away from the world and being made one with God.[222] Gregory and Basil became good friends because, as Gregory puts it, "philosophy was the object of our zeal."[223] In Athens Basil learned philosophy and subjects related to it such as medicine.[224] Then Gregory tells us that Basil, after his return from Athens, "went abroad on voyages which were necessary and in full keeping with his philosophical resolution."[225] When Basil left Caesarea during the upheaval in the church over Eusebius' appointment to the episcopate Gregory describes his retreat in Pontus as an emulation of "those perfect philosophers" – Elijah and John the Baptist.[226] As someone who wrote rules for communities of monks and solitary ascetics, Gregory says Basil "reconciled and united the two in the most excellent way" – referring to the philosophic life of solitude with the communal life.[227] At the end of the encomium Gregory declares

> For was not Basil a visible image of the philosophy of John? He also dwelt in the desert and wore at night a garment of hair, concealing it from men and avoiding display. He was also content with the same kind of food, purifying himself for God by abstinence. He was also deemed worthy to be a herald, if not a precursor, of Christ. And there went out to him not only all the country round about but also that beyond its boundaries. He, also, standing between the two Testaments, abolished the letter of the one by publishing abroad the spirit of the other, and, by

---

[220] The belief that Scripture revealed the truth is paramount to the Church Fathers. Basil has been characterized as becoming more focused on the authority of Scripture as he matured as a Bishop, the *Hexaemeron* being a primary example of this trend. Cf. Fedwick, *Church*, 152.

[221] TLG data base search of "φιλοσοφ."

[222] Gregory of Nazianzus *Oratio XLIII* 13; Bernardi, *Discours 42-43*, 146, ll. 23-33; McCauley, et. al., *Funeral Orations*, 38.

[223] Gregory of Nazianzus *Oratio XLIII* 19; Bernardi, *Discours 42-43*, 162, ll. 1-2; McCauley, et. al., *Funeral Orations*, 43.

[224] Gregory of Nazianzus *Oratio XLIII* 23; Bernardi, *Discours 42-43*, 174, ll. 13-24, 176, lines 29-34; McCauley, et. al., *Funeral Orations*, 47.

[225] Gregory of Nazianzus *Oratio XLIII* 25; Bernardi, *Discours 42-43*, 182, ll. 9-11; McCauley, et. al., *Funeral Orations*, 49.

[226] Gregory of Nazianzus *Oratio XLIII* 29; Bernardi, *Discours 42-43*, 192, l. 10; McCauley, et. al., *Funeral Orations*, 52.

[227] Gregory of Nazianzus *Oratio XLIII* 62; Bernardi, *Discours 42-43*, 260, ll. 24-5, 29-30; McCauley, et. al., *Funeral Orations*, 80.

> the dissolution of the visible law, bringing about the realization of the law which was hidden.[228]

For Gregory of Nazianzus Basil represented an ideal model of what the philosophic life was, that is the perfect Christian life seeking unity with God. This kind of life is especially characterized by the life of solitude and contemplation. This is why Gregory's favorite biblical personage with which he compares Basil is John the Baptist.

This general description of Basil as living a philosophic life was used by Gregory of Nyssa in his brief description of what seems to be a conversion or turning point in Basil's life. According to Gregory, Basil had returned from Athens and was arrogant in his view of himself and his rhetorical skills.[229] When he visited his family Macrina, their older sister, "took Basil... and lured him so quick to the aim of philosophy."[230] Macrina had already been serving as an example of the philosophic life to her mother according to Gregory. What the philosophic life included for Gregory in its most basic form was a life centered on simplicity and the immaterial world.[231] For Naucratius, another brother in the family, this life meant despising "the opportunities at hand," leaving to enter a life of "monasticism and poverty" and serving others with the skills of his own hands.[232] For Basil this meant despising worldly notoriety, living a life of poverty, working with one's hands and pursuing virtue.[233] Gregory in this description makes explicit Basil's new attitude about himself and others as well as his new actions which are those of the "philosopher."

---

[228] Gregory of Nazianzus *Oratio XLIII* 75; Bernardi, *Discours 42-43*, 292, ll. 13-23; McCauley, et. al., *Funeral Orations*, 93-94.

[229] For a description of Basil's propensity to arrogance see Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea*, 41-44.

[230] Gregory of Nyssa *Vita s. Macrinae*; Jaeger, Cavarnos and Callahan, *Opera Ascetica*, 377, ll. 14-5; Callahan, *Ascetical Works*, 167. Translation my own.

[231] Gregory of Nyssa *Vita s. Macrinae*; Jaeger, Cavarnos and Callahan, *Opera Ascetica*, 377, l. 6; Callahan, *Ascetical Works*, 167.

[232] Gregory of Nyssa *Vita s. Macrinae*; Jaeger, Cavarnos and Callahan, *Opera Ascetica*, 378, ll. 15-18; 379, ll. 4-6; Callahan, *Ascetical Works*, 168-9.

[233] Gregory of Nyssa *Vita s. Macrinae*; Jaeger, Cavarnos and Callahan, *Opera Ascetica*, 377, ll. 15-19; Callahan, *Ascetical Works*, 167.

3. *Basil's Use of* φιλοσοφια, φιλόσοφος *and* φιλοσοφεῖν *as regards His Conversion*

Basil's use of the words φιλοσοφία, φιλόσοφος and φιλοσοφεῖν has been reviewed generally, but now I will examine his use of these words and other references to philosophy in his epistles. My aim is to uncover the language Basil used to describe *himself* and what he was doing during the probable time of his conversion somewhere from 355-8. This section will reveal Basil's culturally imbedded ideas by showing the philosophical language he used to describe his life either before or directly after his baptism. In order to do this I have chosen *Epistulae* 1, 14, 2, and 4 which are fairly certain to have been written from 357-358. They give us, the readers, a view to Basil's own thoughts and actions about himself and his life around the time he had a spiritual awakening as he described it in *Epistula* 223. *Epistula* 1 written in 357 was possibly written right before his baptism if one dates his baptism as occurring after his return from the Orient. *Epistulae* 14, 2 and 4 most likely represent epistles directly after his baptism. The more theological perspective of this time of his life, described in *Epistula* 223, will be examined later.

a. Basil on His Life – Epistles Dated 357-359

While Basil was searching for Eustathius in the Orient he wrote an epistle to him from Alexandria. This epistle, *Epistula* 1, was addressed to Eustathius, "the philosopher," held today by most scholars to be Eustathius of Sebaste, although according to Roy J. Deferrari he was a pagan philosopher.[234] If we consider the word φιλοσόφῳ in the title to refer to the ascetic Christian life seeking virtue and perfection then "the philosopher" would be an appropriate title for Eustathius the teacher of ascetic Christianity in Asia Minor who became bishop of Sebaste.

---

[234] Basil *Epistula* 1.title; Deferrari, I, 2-3. Cf. n. 1 on p. 2 and n. 1 on p. 3. Deferrari identifies Eustathius as a pagan philosopher based on Basil's words, "Is not all this the hand of Fate, as you yourself would say, and the work of Necessity?" Deferrari seems to have followed the Benedictine editors' notes on this text.

In this first epistle of Basil's, his earliest extant piece of writing, there is an important dialogue between Stoic philosophy and Christianity. Basil's epistle to Eustathius says that he was "disheartened by the spite of what men call Fortune (τύχης)" because he failed after several attempts to find Eustathius.[235] Basil then says that his circumstances seem to be directed by the power of Necessity (ἀνάγκη) or Fate (εἱμαρμένη).[236] The events which led to such conclusions were that Basil had been seeking after Eustathius and had left Athens based on the "report of his philosophy" (κατὰ φήμην τῆς σῆς φιλοσοφίας) arriving in Cappadocia. When Basil did not find Eustathius there he followed after him in a tour of the eastern Mediterranean world only to be disappointed at each new location of Eustathius' reported whereabouts.

Besides his reflection upon the powers of Necessity and Fate being responsible for the circumstances of his life, Basil also ends his epistle with a conclusion based on the providence of God which was suggested by Eustathius' letter to him. "But, as I said, I have been put at ease by the receipt of your letter, and I no longer hold the same opinion. I now say that I ought to give thanks to God when He gives benefits, and not be vexed with Him when He dispenses them grudgingly" and concludes that "He administers our affairs better than we should if the choice were ours."[237]

This epistle illustrates a possible change in Basil's life with regard to his allegiances and thinking. He wrote about leaving Athens to seek after Eustathius which demonstrates one shift of allegiance from the philosophy of Athens to the philosophy of Eustathius. This transition was so strong that Basil traveled through the Orient for about a year and a half in an unsuccessful attempt to meet with Eustathius. Another change is apparent in his thinking: from entertaining the Stoic doctrines of Fortune, Necessity and

---

[235] Basil *Epistula* 1.1; Deferrari, I, 6-7.

[236] Basil *Epistula* 1.1; Marcella Forlin Patrucco, ed. and trans., *Basilio di Cesarea, Le lettere*, vol. 1, Corona Patrum 11 (Torino: Società Editrice Internazionale, 1983). Greek text: p. 58, ll. 5 and 7; commentary: pp. 250-1. The philosophical terms ἀνάγκη (necessity), εἱμαρμένη (fate) and τύχη (chance, fortune) have their source in Stoic philosophy. Cf. *Le lettere*, 250-1.

Fate to, instead, considering the providence and consolation of God's grace which calls for thanksgiving and the patient bearing of loss. Thus Basil moves from Athens and Stoicism to Eustathius, the philosopher, and Christian doctrines all under the same word of φιλοσοφία.

At this early time in Basil's literary career he also wrote two important epistles to his friend Gregory of Nazianzus, *Epistulae* 14 and 2, about his new life in Pontus. The first epistle, *Epistula* 14, dated around 357-8, was written when Basil was locating a place where he might "cease wandering."[238] Basil wrote that, more than the beauty of the place, the reason he preferred this particular site in Pontus was because of its tranquility (ἡσυχία):

> The highest praise, however, which I can give to the place is that, although it is well adapted by its admirable situation to producing fruits of every kind, for me the most pleasing fruit it nourishes is tranquility (τήν ἡσυχίαν τρέφει), not only because it is far removed from the disturbances of the city (τῶν ἀστικῶν θορύβων), but also because it attracts not even a wayfarer, except the guests who join me in hunting.[239]

In this epistle Basil is speaking about his motivations for leaving the disturbances of the city (τῶν ἀστικῶν θορύβων) and bringing an end to his wanderings. This might be a reference to his trip in the East, but it could also include his attempt at a career in civic life that was not satisfying to his ideals.[240] We have the sense of Basil's restlessness to leave Caesarea and to begin, with or without Gregory his friend, the philosophic life.[241] Basil's hope is that this move will bring an end to a specific stage of wandering. Basil is at this point seeking, looking for a new mode of life and a place to live that will offer him tranquility. It involves living close to the natural world with opportunity for contemplation of its beauty.

---

[237] Basil *Epistula* 1.2; Deferrari, I, 6-7; Patrucco, *Le lettere*, Greek text: p. 60, ll. 24-6, 28-9; commentary: p. 254.

[238] Basil *Epistula* 14.1; Deferrari, I, 106-7; Patrucco, *Le lettere*, Greek text: p. 120, l. 6; commentary: pp. 314-5.

[239] Basil *Epistula* 14.2; Deferrari, I, 110-1; Patrucco, *Le lettere*, Greek text: p. 122, ll. 29-31; commentary: p. 317.

[240] Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea*, 77-8.

After this first epistle to Gregory there came another to try and persuade his friend to come and join him in this remote place in the wilderness of Pontus. *Epistula* 2 was written probably in 358 and represents both a personal look at Basil's life in Pontus but also some of his own ascetic theory which was beginning to develop through the experience. In the beginning part of the epistle Basil allows us to understand that Gregory of Nazianzus has inquired about his mode of life and Basil is going to oblige with a description of what he is doing. Apparently hesitant to describe the practical aspects of his daily life in this deserted area Basil begins, rather, by detailing the inner struggle he experienced: "For I have indeed left my life in the city, as giving rise to countless evils, but I have not yet been able to leave myself behind."[242] What Basil finds as his remedy for dealing with the "self" is to "keep close to the footsteps of Him who pointed the way to salvation; for He says, 'If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me.'"[243] Again the inner restlessness found in *Epistula* 14 and even in *Epistula* 1, if his search for Eustathius could be read in such light, is also found here in *Epistula* 2. Basil has begun his regimen, but the inner work of transformation is still to be experienced.

In the following sections of the epistle, Basil explains his present way of life which includes a description of certain practices or as Hadot has labeled them "spiritual exercises."[244] These spiritual exercises arose from the Greek philosophic tradition and were especially passed down through such writers as Philo who sought to bring a synthesis of Jewish piety with Greek philosophic practice and thought.[245] Indeed this is what Basil calls his mode of life in Pontus, an *askesis* (ἄσκησις), a training or

---

[241] Basil *Epistula* 14.1; Deferrari, I, 106-7.

[242] Basil *Epistula* 2.1; Deferrari, I, 8-9.

[243] Basil *Epistula* 2.1; Deferrari, I, 8-9.

[244] Basil *Epistula* 2.2-6; Deferrari, I, 8-25. Cf. Hadot, *Way of Life*, 81-2, 107.

[245] Hadot, *Way of Life*, 84, 129; For the list of the spiritual exercises practiced by philosophers, especially in the Hellenistic period, see Philo *Quis rerum divinarum heres* 253; F. H. Colson and G. H. Whitaker, trans., *Philo*, vol. 4, LCL (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press; London: William Heinemann, 1932; rev. ed., 1939; reprint, 1949), 412-3 and *Legum allegoriae* 3.18; F. H. Colson and G.

discipline, or *askesis eusebeias* (ἄσκησις εὐσεβείας), discipline of piety.[246] The following is a detailing of some of these spiritual exercises and their purposes according to Basil.

The objective of the spiritual practices of Basil in Pontus is to maintain tranquility or quietness (Ἐν ἡσυχίᾳ τὸν νοῦν ἔχειν πειρᾶσθαι προσήκει).[247] Just as in *Epistula* 14 Basil describes seeking a place in which he could find *hesychia* (ἡσυχία), so now that he has come to the wilderness he is seeking to maintain an inner quietness and stillness of mind and he has found that it requires more than just relocation to a quiet place. The goal of a tranquil mind is freedom from worldly cares (τῶν κατὰ τὸν κόσμον φροντίδων) in order to "focus itself distinctly on the truth" and to "ascend to the contemplation of God."[248] In order to obtain *hesychia* (ἡσυχία) one must begin by a complete separation from the world (ὁ χωρισμὸς ἀπὸ τοῦ κόσμου παντός).[249] This means for Basil a change of life from the city to a place of solitude (ἡ ἐρημία) which enables the next step – severing the passions from the soul by power of reason (λόγος).[250]

According to Basil the *askesis* of piety "nourishes the soul with divine thoughts" which includes the practice of singing anthems to God the Creator at dawn. The practice of prayer during work is also maintained through the singing of songs and hymns. The quietness of the solitary allows for the soul to ascend to "the contemplation of God" since "the mind is not dissipated upon extraneous things."[251] This contemplation draws the soul up into a holy illumination by the glory of God and it forgets its own earthly

---

H. Whitaker, trans., *Philo*, vol. 1, LCL, (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press; London: William Heinemann, 1929; reprint, 1949), 312-3.

[246] Basil *Epistula* 2.2; Deferrari, I, 12-3. See Hadot, *Way of Life*, 82, where he defines *askesis* not as asceticism, but as "the practice of spiritual disciplines."

[247] Basil *Epistula* 2.2; Deferrari, I, 8-9.

[248] Basil *Epistula* 2.2; Deferrari, I, 8-9, 14-15.

[249] Basil *Epistula* 2.2; Deferrari, I, 10-11.

[250] Basil *Epistula* 2.2; Deferrari, I, 10-13.

[251] Basil *Epistula* 2.2; Deferrari, I, 14-5.

existence and the mundane cares of the world.[252] It also is motivated to acquire "eternal goods" which are the virtues – temperance (ἡ σωφροσύνη), fortitude (ἡ ἀνδρία), justice (ἡ δικαιοσύνη) and prudence (ἡ φρόνησις) along with the minor virtues which help "the good man" carry out the various "duties of life."[253] It is interesting that Basil does not detail the fruits of the Spirit or other more typical Christian virtues from Scripture. Instead he chooses the four cardinal virtues which can be found in the Bible, but in this case may more likely be coming from the Platonic and Stoic canon as Marcella Forlin Patrucco notes in her commentary.[254]

Basil continues to blend Platonic and Stoic philosophical terms with his Christian faith by describing Scripture as a source for discovering one's "duty" (τοῦ καθήκοντος), but as Philip Rousseau observes, Basil's use of Scripture "was introduced into the discussion only subsequently, as a gloss to the argument."[255] According to Basil the duty of an ascetic is discovered through the study or meditation (ἡ μελετή) of Scripture. The term *melete* designated a spiritual exercise in the Stoic tradition but which primarily meant "preparatory exercises, in particular those of rhetoricians" and it is in this way that meditation should be understood according to Hadot.[256]

This meditation on the Scriptures which Basil is commending here is not primarily directed toward precepts for governing behavior, but toward the example of blessed men – "the living images of God's government" (πολιτεία) so that their good works may be imitated.[257] Wherever a person may be deficient they have a ready example in Scripture to imitate in order to overcome their weakness and obtain virtue. It

---

[252] Basil *Epistula* 2.2; Deferrari, I, 14-5.

[253] Basil *Epistula* 2.2; Deferrari, I, 14-5.

[254] Patrucco notes that these four virtues are "the cardinal virtues of the Platonic and Stoic canon, often opposed to the four passions." Cf. Patrucco, *Le lettere*, 267-8.

[255] Basil *Epistula* 2.3; Deferrari, I, 14-5. Cf. Patrucco, *Le lettere*, 268. The phrase καθῆκον is not a Biblical term, but one which is more common to Stoicism. Cf. Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea*, 80-1.

[256] Hadot, *Way of Life*, 84-5, note 38 on p. 112.

[257] Basil *Epistula* 2.3; Deferrari, I, 14-5.

is as if the virtues came first before the sacred text and the Scripture offers another point of reaching the goal of a virtuous life as Rousseau has suggested: "The Scriptures offered the Christian, in other words, little that was different in pedagogical force from the moral exemplars of the classical canon that Basil would later describe in his *Ad adulescentes*."[258] It is also true that such themes as meditation and study can be found in the Hebrew tradition of the Old Testament, but it is to the Greek tradition of rhetoric and philosophy that Basil belonged and from which he drew resources for his new life. Therefore, *melete* is best understood in *Epistula* 2 from Basil's rhetorical and philosophical background of spiritual exercises.

Basil continues his description of his way of life in Pontus with an inspired piece on prayer. According to Basil, following upon the spiritual exercise of Scripture meditation one will be more desirous of prayer and prayer is beneficial "for it engenders in the soul a distinct conception of God" (ἡ ἐναργῆ ἐμποιοῦσα τοῦ Θεοῦ ἔννοιαν τῇ ψυχῇ).[259] Basil goes on to describe how this takes place:

> And the indwelling of God is this – to hold God ever in memory, His shrine established within us. We thus become temples of God whenever earthly cares cease to interrupt the continuity of our memory of Him, whenever unforeseen passions cease to disturb our minds, and the lover of God, escaping from all, retires to God, driving out the passions which tempt him to incontinence, and abides in the practices which conduce to virtue.[260]

Basil explains to Gregory that the goal of the life of prayer is the "indwelling of God" in the human soul.[261] The means to access this indwelling of God is the continuous or unbroken memory of Him. The memory (μνήμη; *mneme*) of God is *the* foundational concept of the Basilian spirituality as has been noted by several scholars.[262] Here in

---

[258] Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea*, 81.

[259] Basil *Epistula* 2.4; Deferrari, I, 16-7.

[260] Basil *Epistula* 2.4; Deferrari, I, 16-9.

[261] It is interesting that Basil does not refer to the Holy Spirit here such as Paul does in 1 Cor. 3:16 and yet the allusion to this text seems a definite possibility. Instead Basil tries to connect to the presence of God through a spiritual practice of memory of Him. Basil's own concept of the Spirit appears to be very undeveloped at this point in his Christian life.

[262] Thomas Spidlik, S.J., "L'idéal du monachisme basilien" in *Basil of Caesarea: Christian, Humanist, Ascetic: A Sixteen-Hundredth Anniversary Symposium*, ed. Paul Jonathan Fedwick, vol. 1

Epistula 2 the practice of the memory of God is in its seminal expression before his monastic rules were written. Where did this concept come from? Thomas Spidlik, S. J. in his article, "L'Idéal du Monachisme Basilien" wrote that Basil's use of the motif, "the memory of God," comes from the Old Testament and is an "authentically biblical expression."[263] This is true and should be taken into consideration in assessing the development of the concept of the memory of God in his monastic rules. I would like to propose that at this point in his spiritual development the "practice" of such a concept had other sources.

An alternative possibility to the one proposed by Spidlik is that Basil adapted this concept of *mneme* to his Christian life and teaching from his education in philosophy and rhetoric during his time in Athens. As was noted above on the topic of *melete*, Hadot finds in the Christian practices of *melete* and *mneme*, seen here in Basil's *Epistula* 2, the adaptation of philosophical spiritual exercises that were derived from Stoic-Platonic philosophy.[264] The "fundamental spiritual attitude" of Stoicism was *prosoche*, "attention to oneself and vigilance at every instant."[265] Basil knows the concept of *prosoche* and even preached on the topic.[266] The Stoic practice of attention (*prosoche*) is basic to the other spiritual practices of meditation (*melete*) and memorization (*mneme*) of the fundamental truths of reality, distilled into a rule of life (*kanon*), that would help the philosopher act virtuously in every situation.[267] Virtuous action is one of the goals of Basil's spirituality at this stage of the development of his

---

(Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1981), 361-74; *La sophiologie de s. Basile*, Orientalia Christiana Analecta 162 (Roma: Pont. Institutum Orientalium Studiorum, 1961), 45-50; John Eudes Bamberger, "ΜΝΗΜΗ - ΔΙΑΘΕΣΙΣ: The Psychic Dynamisms in the Ascetical Theology of St. Basil" *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 34 (1968) : 233-51.

[263] Spidlik, "L'Idéal du Monachisme Basilien," 368. The concept and activity of memory or better remembering is definitely Biblical, but the phrase "*mneme tou theou*" as Augustine Holmes points out does not occur in the Bible except for one close approximation in Ps. 76:4. Cf. Augustine Holmes, O. S. B., *A Life Pleasing to God: The Spirituality of the Rules of St. Basil* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 2000), 119.

[264] Hadot, *Way of Life*, 84-5, 132-3.

[265] Hadot, *Way of Life*, 84, 130.

thought and the way in which the ascetic will reach this goal was by abiding in the ἐπιτηδεύματα, "the pursuits, customs, habits or practices" which lead to virtue.[268] All three of the practices of *prosoche*, *melete* and *mneme* are foundational to the Stoic form of philosophy and Basil puts at least two of them into his own written regimen of spiritual exercises in his first year of life at Pontus.

The final paragraphs detail the conduct of the Christian living the solitary life such as their conversation habits, personal appearance, clothing, food, eating and sleeping habits. Basil suggests that the general appearance of the solitary should resemble that of a "humble and abject spirit" which is "attended by a gloomy and downcast eye, neglected appearance, unkempt hair, and dirty clothes." The characteristic of humility could be a reference to Christian humility,[269] but the physical appearance of the ascetic seems to be more in line with traditional views of the philosopher such as Aristophanes described: "they were dirty, they were like Socrates."[270] The "ascetics," as Basil says, should live by the rules of moderation, temperance, modesty, simplicity and practicality in their behavior and mode of life in order to free themselves from the duties of the body to focus on "the activities of the mind" (τῇ κατὰ νοῦν ἐνεργείᾳ).[271] These activities of the mind even take place at night when the "practisers of piety" in the quiet of the night "commune with God." Thus their sleep is light and interrupted in order to pray – examining their lives, setting boundaries to deflect evil and asking for God's help. Hadot points out that the practice of self-examination was a part of the spiritual exercises of a philosopher and was

---

[266] Basil *Homilia in illud: 'Attende tibi ipsi'*; S. Y. Rudberg, *L'homelie de Basile de Césarée sur le mot "Observe-toi toi-même"*, Édition critique du texte et étude sur la tradition manuscrite (Stockholm: Almquist & Wiksell, 1962); Wagner, *Ascetical Works*, 431-446.

[267] Hadot, *Way of Life*, 84-5.

[268] LS, 666.

[269] The phrase for humility in 5, 16 is in this instance actually ταπεινῷ...φρονήματι for which Patrucco sees either the gospel or Epictetus as possible sources. Cf. Patrucco, *Le lettere*, 271.

[270] Basil *Epistula* 2.6; Deferrari, I, 20-21 and note 2.

[271] Basil *Epistula* 2.6; Deferrari, I, 22-3.

adapted by the Christian in their own *askesis*.[272] This is all a part of the ascetic Christian way of life – a life of attention to God and to one's self enabled by daily spiritual exercises.

Basil's early epistles also include one to Olympius, *Epistula* 4, written in 358. In this epistle Basil describes his life at Pontus as one of poverty (πενία) and philosophy. In jest Basil writes to Olympius about "Poverty," an aid to his life of philosophy, who was being chased away from Basil's solitary location (τῆς ἐσχατιᾶς) by the generous gifts of his friend. In his epistle Basil draws upon the lives of the philosophers – Zeno, Cleanthes and Diogenes – who took up poverty as an essential aspect to their way of life. Marcella Forlin Patrucco identifies Basil's quotes of various philosophers in the epistle as being Stoic and Cynic *apophthegmata*.[273] Rousseau's assessment of this epistle in light of *Epistula* 2 is that they maintain a "a surprisingly neutral flavour" rather than being overtly Christian.[274]

Another reference to this time of Basil's life occurs in a later epistle to the "Learned in Neocaesarea," *Epistula* 210 written in 376. In it he reflects back on the time he lived in Pontus, describing it this way:

> when, on fleeing the troubles of civic life (ὅτε φεύγων τοὺς πολιτικοὺς θορύβους), and learning that this was a suitable place for the study of philosophy on account of the quiet of its solitude (ἐπιτήδειον ἐμφιλοσοφῆσαι διὰ τὴν ἐκ τῆς ἐρημίας ἡσυχίαν τὸ χωρίον τοῦτο καταμαθών), I passed a period of many successive years here."[275]

In this later account we learn that Basil fled the civic life because of its disturbances and came to Pontus in order to "study philosophy." This endeavor is specifically tied to the search for solitude (ἐρημία) and quiet (ἡσυχία) which coincides with his reasons given in *Epistulae* 14 and 2.

---

[272] Hadot, *Way of Life*, 134-5.
[273] Patrucco, *Le lettere*, 281.
[274] Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea*, 79.
[275] Basil *Epistula* 210.1; Deferrari, III, 196-7.

Basil's favorite words in his earliest correspondence (*Epistulae* 1. 14. 2, 4) to describe his life at this time were φιλοσοφία, ἄσκησις or ἄσκητη and ἐυσέβεια. The three terms are all used in his correspondence from 357-59. Forms of φιλοσοφία occur four times in these writings and once in a later epistle when he refers to that time of his life. Ἐυσέβεια occurs twice and ἄσκησις and ἄσκητη occur four times – all in *Epistula* 2. A forth term, πενία, is the dominant description of his life in *Epistula* 4 to Olympias. Basil's new life in Pontus is referred to in the most general of terms that could be used in both contexts of pagan-philosophical and educated Christian contexts. The language of these four epistles demonstrates transitional qualities in keeping with Basil's journey from Athens into the Christian ascetic life immediately after his baptism.[276] These totals support Rousseau's assessment that Basil was in a process of finding his way in this new life.[277]

b. Basil on the Christian Life – Epistles Dated 360-370

The significance of this time period being one of transition in Basil's life is made more clear as one begins to look at his language for the Christian life in his epistles that can be definitely dated, as much as possible, to the time from 360-370. These epistles span the years of his first ecclesial involvement in the council at Constantinople where he debated with the Anomoeans up until he was raised to the episcopate as Eusebius' successor. These epistles include: 9, 3, 17, 18, 19, 367, 22, 46, 20, 21, 15, 26, 31, 27.[278] The language in Basil's correspondence during this period (360-370) becomes more traditional with the more frequent use of terms such as εὐσέβεια, μαθητής and Χριστιανός.[279]

Based on the difference in language, these later epistles represent a more thorough move to an ecclesial and Biblical language with fewer "neutral" or

---

[276] Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea*, 81.
[277] Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea*, 77-8.
[278] For the dating of these epistles see Fedwick, "Chronology," 7-11.
[279] For a few examples see Basil, *Epistulae* 9.1; 18; 22.2; Deferrari, I, 92-3, 120-1, 130-1.

philosophic references to Basil's own life or the Christian life. This could be a result of several things: the teaching of Basil's mentor in the Christian "philosophic life," Eustathius of Sebaste; his study of Scripture; his reading of other Christian writers during his retreat in Pontus and his eventual contact with other bishops during his attendance at the council at Constantinople in 360. But the primary reason for this change might be his entrance into the ecclesial hierarchy beginning with his ordination as a reader sometime in 360 and his subsequent ordination as a priest in 362 or 364.

A literary bridge between these two periods – the early correspondence in 357-8 and the later correspondence from 360-70 – is *Epistula* 9, to Maximus, the philosopher, φιλόσοφος, dated in 360. *Epistula* 9 is a transitional epistle between his first retreat at Pontus (357-9) and his contact and involvement with the wider Church because it shows that Basil has been reading theological writings by previous bishops of importance such as Dionysius of Alexandria, commenting on them and passing them on to others such as his friend Maximus. Possibly it came together with Basil's texts of Origen which Gregory and he read and edited together. The source of these texts, Dionysius of Alexandria and Origen, would be Alexandria. They also had a copy of a few texts of Eusebius of Caesarea. How they came into the hands of Basil and Gregory is not certain. Rousseau suggests that Basil and Gregory acquired the texts during their travels through the centers of the "Alexandrian school," "the sources of Christian philosophy."[280]

A related issue to this transitional time between his earliest correspondence and his life in the Church as of 360 is the dating of Basil and Gregory's compilation of the *Philocalia*. Traditionally it is thought that they made this compilation in 358 or 359 in Pontus.[281] But if Rousseau's dating of Basil's life is correct there may have been a subsequent time in which he and Gregory could have been in Pontus together – when

---

[280] Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea*, 83.

Gregory flees from his father to visit Basil after his ordination as a presbyter in 362.[282] Their second retreat in Pontus seems like a more appropriate time to make this compilation – when the two are more concretely engaged in the ecclesial life of the Church – rather than in 358 or 359 which is a much more transitional time from Athens. The language Basil chooses to describe himself and his endeavors from 357-8 points to the fact that he is in a much more general philosophical and ascetic regimen with a Christian dress in his first few years in Pontus after his baptism. He has not begun his involvement in the ecclesial affairs of his day nor has he reached the maturity of spiritual formation seen in his so-called monastic rules. Rousseau's description of Basil at this point in his life is an appropriate place to end:

> What should strike us thus far is that, while Basil made Christian associations and displayed Christian beliefs, he had not yet fully related that Christianity to more traditional aspirations. The rounded deliberation of his major ascetic writings, perhaps even of the *Philocalia*, still lay in the future. All he wished to do at this stage was to protect from external distraction a simple ascetic programme (τὸ συνεχὲς τῆς ἀσκήσεως).[283]

4. Conclusion

This section has been an analysis of Basil's philosophic language in his earliest epistles around the time of his conversion between 356-8. During this period Basil's life was one of seeking out solitude and quiet for the purpose of philosophy. From his own *Epistula* 4 and the testimony of Gregory of Nyssa, Basil converted to a philosophic life, by which he means the Christian life of seeking perfection, that was characterized by a self-imposed poverty. Basil speaks about this period being a time of wandering in *Epistula* 14. His struggle to end his wanderings did not end even though he found a place to settle where he could begin this new life. In *Epistula* 2 I have shown that Basil's daily life was shaped by the spiritual exercises of *melete* and *mneme* which came from the Stoic and Platonic philosophical traditions of late antiquity. His language is not

---

[281] Meredith, *The Cappadocians*, 21-2.
[282] Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea*, 84-5.

wholly Christian as it would later become in his epistles after 360 and his ordination to the priesthood, but rather his writings at this time have a more neutral philosophical and religious tone and the *forms* – the "spiritual exercises," clothing and mode of life – would have been familiar to any person at that time with his background and education as a conversion to the philosophic life. Yet this philosophic life was not separate from the Christian tradition, but was driven by his desire for union with God and virtue. What made Basil's conversion specifically Christian will be investigated further in the following section through a theological analysis of Basil's conversion.

[283] Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea*, 79. Cf. Basil *Epistula* 2.2; Deferrari, I, 12.

C. Theological Analysis of Basil's Conversion

Thus far the two analyses in this thesis have provided evidence of the historical aspects of Basil's conversion as it took place between 355-357 and the cultural characteristics of that conversion which resembled the philosophic retirement and practices known in late antiquity. But in order to understand Christian conversion in any age a theological examination is necessary. In this theological analysis of Basil's conversion I will use a series of Early Christian terms and concepts to uncover the distinctly Christian nature of Basil's conversion according to his later reflections in *Epistula* 223 dated in 375.[284] Most of the terms examined here come from the New Testament as well as definitions of conversion found in the works of Richard Peace,[285] Michael Green[286] and Alan Kreider.[287] They include: conversion, repentance, faith, baptism, the Church (or Brethren), the Spirit and the Word (or Gospel). This present section offers a third and crucial view of Basil's conversion that goes beyond historical and cultural considerations to highlight the particularly Christian aspects of his conversion as he interpreted it later in his life as a bishop.

1. Conversion

The term for "to convert" most commonly used in the Greek language is the verb ἐπιστρέφω, meaning "I turn about, I turn around" and "turn towards" something or someone.[288] It can also mean to "turn or convert from an error, correct, cause to repent."[289] The noun, ἐπιστροφή means a "turning about," "twisting," "bending," or "curve."[290] In its intransitive meaning it refers to a "turning or wheeling about."[291] In the Greek and Hellenistic philosophical tradition beginning with Plato onward ἐπιστροφή

---

[284] See above pp. 35-6.
[285] Peace, *Conversion in the New Testament*, 25-7, 216ff.
[286] Green, *Evangelism in the Early Church*, 178-88.
[287] Kreider, *The Change of Conversion*, xv.
[288] LS, 661.
[289] LS, 661.
[290] LS, 661.
[291] LS, 661-2.

"is applied to the effects of philosophy, meaning thereby an orientation of the soul, the turning of men from carelessness to true piety."[292] In the Jewish and Christian contexts this verb and noun referred often to a religious or moral conversion or apostasy when used in the context of humanity's relationship with God.[293] The noun, ἐπιστροφή, is a central concept in Plotinus' philosophical system as well used to describe a process of the soul's return to its source, the One.[294] In Basil's work as a whole the terms occur over 91 times throughout the corpus of authentic, dubious and spurious writings.[295]

Basil uses the verb ἐπιστρέφω twice in *Epistula* 223.2 in the context of describing his conversion. He is explaining the things he learned from reading the Gospel after his awakening. Basil wrote, "the soul should have no sympathetic concern with the things of this world" (καὶ ὑπὸ μηδεμιᾶς συμπαθείας πρὸς τὰ ὧδε τὴν ψυχὴν ἐπιστρέφεσθαι).[296] In this instance ἐπιστρέφεσθαι means turning toward and giving one's attention to something, in this case, to the things of this life.[297] Basil uses the term again in the same way when he describes his observations of the monks he met during his trip through the Orient: he describes them as "not concerning themselves with the body" (μὴ ἐπιστρεφόμενοι πρὸς τὸ σῶμα).[298] Using Basil's own definition and use of ἐπιστρέφω in these two passages, "turning toward and giving one's attention to something," we can better understand the things involved in his own conversion. Basil wrote that he had occupied himself (εἶχον προσδιατρίβων) with "the acquirement of the precepts of that wisdom made foolish by God."[299] Detailing what this preoccupation with wisdom meant Basil wrote that he "lavished much time" and "consumed almost all my youth" with giving attention to this wisdom.[300] After he

---

[292] Nock, *Conversion*, 179.
[293] Georg Bertram, "στρέφω," in *TDNT*, vol. 7 : 723-5, 726-9. Cf. Bauer, 301.
[294] Bertram, "στρέφω," 723.
[295] TLG data base searches of "επιστρεφ" and "επιστρεψ."
[296] Basil *Epistula* 223.2; Deferrari, III, 292-3.
[297] LS, 661, II.3: "turn the mind towards, give attention to, regard."
[298] Basil *Epistula* 223.2; Deferrari. III, 294-5.
[299] Basil *Epistula* 223.2; Deferrari, III, 292-3.
[300] Basil *Epistula* 223.2; Deferrari, III, 290-1.

rose from a deep sleep and saw the "marvellous light of the truth of the gospel" he decided to give his attention, to turn toward this truth and to shape his life according to the teachings of the gospel.[301] Basil's conversion consisted in moving from giving his attention to the wisdom of the world to giving his attention, time and work toward the truth of the gospel.

Conversion according to Richard Peace includes three phases: insight, turning and transformation.[302] Peace after examining Paul's Damascus Road experience concluded that there must be "insight" given in order for a person to be able to convert.[303] For Basil this insight would be the experience of seeing the truth of the gospel and the uselessness of the wisdom of the world which he had spent his life pursuing.[304] The truth of the gospel was like a light showing Basil a new reality that he had not seen before. Basil, perhaps drawing from Ecclesiastes, described his past life as a vanity (τῇ ματαιότητι) and futility (τῇ ματαιοπονίᾳ).[305] This insight caused him to weep over his youthful folly.

Peace defines the second stage of conversion as "turning" which has two parts "a turning *from* and a turning *to*."[306] From Basil's point of view as articulated both in 357 (*Epistula* 1) and later in 375 (*Epistula* 223) his life took a change – he turned *from* Athens and the pursuit of wisdom *to* the "philosophic life" of seeking perfection according to the gospel. This "turning" is articulated well by Basil in *Epistula* 1 to Eustathius: "Owing to the repute of your philosophy, I left Athens, scorning everything there."[307]

It was an insight which gave Basil the ability to see his life from a different perspective and resulted in him turning to God. One could say that Basil "turned from"

---

[301] Basil *Epistula* 223.2; Deferrari, III, 292-3.
[302] Peace, *Conversion in the New Testament*, 25-7.
[303] Peace, *Conversion in the New Testament*, 25, 37ff.
[304] Basil *Epistula* 223.2; Deferrari, III, 292-3.
[305] Basil *Epistula* 223.2; Deferrari, III, 290-3. Cf. Ecclesiastes 1:2, 12-18.
[306] Peace, *Conversion in the New Testament*, 25-6, 56ff.

one philosophy, the philosophy of the Greeks, and "turned to" another philosophy, represented by his phrase "the truth of the gospel." The transformation which resulted from Basil's new insight and his turning to the gospel will be examined under the following term of repentance.

2. Repentance

Repentance (μετάνοια) is a common term in the Christian tradition to describe conversion. Its profane Greek meaning is a "change of mind or heart, repentance, regret."[308] The verb μετανοέω means, "perceive afterwards or too late"; "change one's mind or purpose" and "repent."[309] Nock points out that the use of these two terms by philosophers of antiquity is not as frequent as the general writers of the time, but it is present. Commenting on the use of μετάνοια by philosophers Nock writes: "The term implies an intellectual value judgement, and commonly a momentary realization rather than the entry on a state."[310] The terms are also used frequently by the New Testament writers. Both John the Baptist and Jesus of Nazareth preached repentance as preparation for the Kingdom of Heaven.[311] In John's ministry it meant to bring forth fruits of repentance, good works showing the inner change of mind or heart.[312] After Peter preached his sermon at Pentecost, the people asked the apostles what they should do – Peter responded: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."[313] Basil's corpus has some 300 plus occurrences of the two words, μετάνοια and μετανοέω.[314]

---

[307] Basil *Epistula* 1.2; Deferrari, I, 2-3.
[308] LS, 1115.
[309] LS, 1115.
[310] Nock, *Conversion*, 180.
[311] Matthew 3:2; 4:17.
[312] Matthew 3:8; Luke 3:8.
[313] Acts 2:38 (RSV).
[314] TLG data base searches of "μετανοια" = 211 matches; "μετανο" = 305 matches. There was some overlap between the two searches.

The terms for repentance are not found in Basil's account in *Epistula* 223, but conceptually these terms are apparent through the internal and external changes that took place in his life after his awakening. In *Epistula* 223 Basil recounts his internal response to his awakening to the "marvelous light of the truth of the gospel": he saw the vanity of his pursuits of the wisdom of this world and he wept much over his pitiful life (πολλὰ τὴν ἐλεεινήν μου ζωὴν ἀποκλαύσας).[315] The realization of the vanity of his pursuit caused him to weep and he prayed for guidance. This expression of contrition indicates the internal impact of the event of Basil's awakening. Also in this moment Basil was convinced of the problems of his own character that he could now see in the light of the gospel and chose to change and amend what he could which included the company he kept. This is the beginning of Basil's repentance affecting his behavior and his associations.

Gregory's work, *Vita s. Macrinae*, gives a snapshot of the conversion of Basil as he saw it and gives further knowledge of Basil's inner transformation. Before his conversion Basil was conceited because of his rhetorical ability, contemptuous of others and full of self-importance.[316] After he talked with his sister Macrina his attitude changed. He renounced worldly appearance, showed contempt for the admiration of rhetorical ability and by his own desire chose to live the philosophic life according to the model of his older sister.[317] This vignette captures the character of Basil before and after his conversion. He was proud of his abilities in rhetoric and full of self-importance. But after the discussion of philosophy with Macrina he changed his mind toward worldly glory and the admiration of others. This is evident by his pursuit of a humble life that was characterized by poverty, manual labor and the pursuit of virtue.

---

[315] Basil *Epistula* 223; Deferrari, III, 292-3; NPNF II, 8, 263.

[316] Gregory of Nyssa *Vita s. Macrinae*; Jaeger, Cavarnos and Callahan, *Opera Ascetica*, 377, ll. 11-4; Callahan, *Ascetical Works*, 167.

[317] Gregory of Nyssa *Vita s. Macrinae*; Jaeger, Cavarnos and Callahan, *Opera Ascetica*, 377, ll. 14-9; Callahan, *Ascetical Works*, 167-8.

Returning to Basil's account in *Epistula* 223.2, through reading the gospel he "perceived" (θεασάμενος) that the path to perfection (εἰς τελείωσιν) included four things: the selling of one's possessions, sharing them with the needy brethren, being "without thought of this life," and not having any "sympathetic concern for the things of this world."[318] These four actions characterize the external response that was part of the transformation of this time of his awakening. But the question may be asked whether Basil just learned these things or whether he really did them. We assume so from the record of his life given to us by his own writings, Gregory of Nazianzus and his brother Gregory, but the evidence is not clear.

In *Vita s. Macrinae* Gregory of Nyssa described his brother's new life as one of "complete poverty."[319] This "complete poverty" indicates a lack of property.[320] Basil as the oldest son would have inherited from his parents a vast sum of their wealth which was mostly in land and slaves. The family property was quite vast, spread out over three provinces – Cappadocia, Pontus Polemoniacus and Helenopontus.[321] After the death of Basil the elder Basil's mother and sister Macrina began reducing their wealth in order to live a more simplified and devoted life to God.[322] The implications of Gregory's writing about Basil, Naucratius and Emmelia are that they all sold or gave away some or all of their property.[323] Fedwick has suggested that Basil used his land especially for the purposes of the Church.[324]

Another aspect of this "complete poverty" that we may consider is the issue of slaves. Did Basil own slaves after his awakening to the gospel? It is known that Basil's

---

[318] Basil *Epistula* 223.2; Deferrari, III, 292-3.

[319] Gregory of Nyssa *Vita s. Macrinae*; Jaeger, Cavarnos and Callahan, *Opera Ascetica*, 377, l. 18; Callahan, *Ascetical Works*, 167-8.

[320] See above p. 47.

[321] Gregory of Nyssa *Vita s. Macrinae*; Jaeger, Cavarnos and Callahan, *Opera Ascetica*, 376, ll. 18-20; Callahan, *Ascetical Works*, 167. For the identity of the three provinces see Thomas A. Kopecek, "The Social Class of the Cappadocian Fathers," *Church History* 42 (1973) : 465.

[322] Gregory of Nyssa *Vita s. Macrinae*; Jaeger, Cavarnos and Callahan, *Opera Ascetica*, 376, l. 21 - 383, l. 8; Callahan, *Ascetical Works*, 167-71.

[323] Elm, *'Virgins of God'*, 90.

[324] Fedwick, *Church*, xvii.

family had servants and that after the death of Basil the elder, Macrina convinced her mother to begin living and treating the servants as equals.[325] Basil in *Epistula* 3 refers to a servant who died and other servants who were assaulted in a robbery in his home at Annesi.[326] We have no record of Basil freeing his slaves *per se*, but we know his family changed their relationship with their servants in their home.[327]

Concerning sharing his possessions with needy brothers and sisters we know that in Basil's own teaching in the *Asceticon* he encouraged Christians to deal with their goods as wise stewards who will have to give an account of their actions to God.[328] This meant for Basil not simply giving everything away to the poor or to one's family without consideration or thought that one's possessions belonged to God.[329] Basil suggested disposing of one's possessions with care either personally or through those who have been appointed for this work of administration, i.e. someone in the church.[330] Basil probably had in mind the example of the church in Jerusalem whose members brought the proceeds from the sale of their possessions and laid it at the feet of the apostles for them to distribute to the needy (Acts 4:34-5).[331]

Basil's teaching aside, what may be the most significant evidence of Basil's "repentance" and new life of generosity would be his priestly ministry to the poor, his administration of resources for their needs and his preaching on their behalf.[332] His work to help feed people during the famine of 369 was a notable example of persuading the

---

[325] Gregory of Nyssa *Vita s. Macrinae*; Jaeger, Cavarnos and Callahan, *Opera Ascetica*, 377, l. 24 - 378, l. 5; Callahan, *Ascetical Works*, 168. Cf. Elm, *'Virgins of God'*, 84-9.

[326] Basil *Epistula* 3; Deferrari, I, 26-9.

[327] For Basil's view of slavery see *DSS* 20; Pruche, 204-6; NPNF II, 8, 32; *RF* 11; PG 31, 948A-C. See Jackson's comparison of Basil's view of slavery to that of Aristotle's in NPNF II, 8, 32 n. 4. See Elm's assessment of Basil in *'Virgins of God'*, 103.

[328] Basil *RF* 9; PG 31, 941A-944B; Clarke, *Ascetic Works*, 169-171.

[329] Basil *RF* 9; PG 31, 941A-C; Clarke, *Ascetic Works*, 170.

[330] Basil *RF* 9; PG 31, 941B; Clarke, *Ascetic Works*, 170. For example see Elm, *'Virgins of God'*, 89.

[331] For an example of the importance of the Jerusalem church to Basil see *RB* 85; PG 31, 1144A; Clarke, *Ascetic Works*, 262 and n. 4.

[332] The sermons on behalf of the needs of the poor which are often dated at this time are *Homilia in illud: 'Destruam horrea mea'* (PG 31, 261-277), *Homilia dicta tempore famis et siccitatis* (PG 31, 304-328), *Homilia quod deus non est auctor malorum* (PG 31, 329-353). See Fedwick, "Chronology," 11 and Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea*, 136-9.

rich to open up their resources to those who were going hungry.[333] Another example was the creation of the *Basiliada* or "New City" which he founded for the help of the poor and where he himself served their physical and spiritual needs.[334] These are two examples of Basil's philanthropy as a priest and bishop which he was well known for and of which Gregory of Nazianzus reminds the church at Caesarea in his panegyric of his friend.

The other two steps of repentance that Basil took, according to his testimony in *Epistula* 223, were to take no care of this life and not to allow his soul to have any sympathy with the things of the world. After his awakening Basil began pursuing Christian perfection according to the gospel leading him to leave whatever tangible pursuits of the old life there were. He left the life of the city and lived in seclusion in the woods of Pontus so that he might have quietness for contemplation and the development of virtue. This withdrawal from city life was so that he could cut off his sympathy for the things of the world and the body. He listed all the things which one must withdraw and be separate from in *Epistula* 2: "city, home, personal possessions, love of friends, property, means of subsistence, business, social relations, and knowledge derived from human teaching."[335] This list was representative of his own withdrawal from the world which he was engaged in.

According to Basil's *Epistula* 223 these were the four things which he learned that he must do in order to live a perfect life according to the gospel. These actions were in harmony with an inner effect of that event that caused him to have a new attitude of humility and love toward God and others. Although we cannot verify all the details of Basil's "repentance" such as his selling of land, possessions and freeing of slaves, it seems from the picture of his life over time that we have from family and friends as well as his own testimony that he lived a simple life of ascetic discipline after his baptism

---

[333] Gregory of Nazianzus *Oratio XLIII* 34-6; NPNF II, 7, 406-8.

and as a priest and bishop championed the cause of the poor using his resources and influence on behalf of the Church and its ministries.

3. Faith

Faith, πίστις, in Greek antiquity meant, "trust in others, faith," and "generally, persuasion of a thing, confidence, assurance."[336] The verb, πιστεύω, meant "trust, put faith in, rely on a person, thing, or statement."[337] Faith as understood in the New Testament was the second step of one movement of conversion to Jesus Christ, repentance being the first.[338] For example, in the Gospel of Mark Jesus preached repentance and faith as preparation for the kingdom of God.[339] During the time of the Apostles and afterward the word "faith" – as in "the body of faith or belief, doctrine" – was used to describe the content of the teaching given to the church by the Apostles.[340] Thus faith in Christ was supplemented with the growing concept of "the faith," the tradition of orthodox teaching passed on from the apostles to the Church which it believed and followed.

For Basil faith is not easily discernible in the language he used to describe his awakening in *Epistula* 223. In his description of his conversion in *Epistula* 223 Basil's emphasis is upon his acts of repentance and obedience to the gospel which he read. A good example of what faith might have meant to him at the time of his conversion may be discernible from his work *De spiritu sancto* which was written at about the same time as *Epistula* 223 in the years 374-5. In this work Basil wrote about the "confession

---

[334] Gregory of Nazianzus *Oratio XLIII* 63; NPNF II, 7, 416.

[335] Basil *Epistula* 2.2; Deferrari, I, 10-1.

[336] LS, 1408.

[337] LS, 1407.

[338] Peace, *Conversion in the New Testament*, 222; Green, *Evangelism in the Early Church*, 182.

[339] Mark 1:15. Compare with Acts 2:38 where faith is assumed in repentance and baptism. Cf. Dunn, *Baptism in the Holy Spirit*, 91.

[340] Bauer, 664. This definition of faith, the "sum of what is to believed; system of orthodox belief," according to Lampe is first used by Ignatius of Antioch in his epistle to the Ephesians 20:2 which is a reference to Paul's epistle to the same congregation, Ephesians 4:5 (Lampe, 1087, III. A-G.). This definition for faith becomes more common at the end of the 2nd century for example in the writings of Irenaeus.

of faith" (τῆς κατὰ τὴν πίστιν ὁμολογίας).[341] This confession was the saving dogma of Father, Son and Holy Spirit which was received and confessed by the one who was turning from the worship of idols to the worship of the true God.[342] Basil understood faith along with baptism to be essential to one's salvation.[343]

What Basil was concerned about was the right faith, believing in the right doctrines, the objective content of one's faith. Those who confessed faith in the Triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, were confessing the right faith and could receive God's salvation if they were baptized in the orthodox catholic community. This faith in the Trinity is what had been handed down from Christ himself through the command to his disciples to make disciples and baptize them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit (Matt. 28:19).[344] Basil said that his confession of faith in the Trinity was the most precious thing to him because through it he became a child of God.[345]

Faith in Basil's understanding was not only his confession of faith, but the *conviction* and *knowledge* of the truth of that faith. In *De iudicio dei* he wrote about the importance of the teaching he received from his family in the Scriptures which gave him a "knowledge of the truth."[346] In the *Regulae morales* Basil described faith as the "Unhesitating conviction of the truth of the inspired words, unshaken by any argument either based on the plea of physical necessity or masquerading in the guise of piety."[347] One example of faith as knowledge of the truth is in *Epistula* 223.2 where Basil talks about seeing "the marvelous light of the truth of the gospel."[348] Basil's awakening convicted him that the gospel was the truth and that the wisdom he had been seeking was fading away. It was this conviction and knowledge of the truth which caused him to

---

[341] Basil *DSS* 10.26; Pruche, 151-2; NPNF II, 8, 17.
[342] Basil *DSS* 10.26; Pruche, 152; NPNF II, 8, 17.
[343] Basil *DSS* 10.26; 12, 28; Pruche, 151, 157; NPNF II, 8, 17, 18.
[344] Basil *DSS* 10.24; Pruche, 149-50; NPNF II, 8, 16.
[345] Basil *DSS* 10.26; Pruche, 152; NPNF II, 8, 17.
[346] Basil *De iudicio dei* 1; PG 31, 653A; Clarke, *Ascetic Works*, 77.
[347] Basil *Regulae morales* 80.22; PG 31, 868C; Clarke, *Ascetic Works*, 129.
[348] Basil *Epistula* 223.2; Deferrari, III, 292-3.

change his life. Faith as a conviction of truth captures the subjective and experiential aspect of faith in Basil's conversion.

Faith in Basil's thought also meant obedience to the commands of God which were best summed up by the command to love God and love one's neighbor. Basil described faith in several places according to Paul's description of the life of the Spirit – faith working through love.[349] In *Epistula* 223 Basil's conversion is marked by obedience to what he read in the gospel. His conviction of the truth of the gospel came to have a real effect in his attitude and behavior and resulted in a life of sacrifice and generosity toward others in line with the commands of love from the scripture.

4. Baptism

βάπτισμα in antiquity meant a "baptism" and βαπτίζω meant to "dip, plunge."[350] Baptism in the New Testament was a part of one's conversion, one's turning from unbelief to faith in God. It was required of both Jewish and Gentile converts to Christ. The Early Church traditionally baptized people after they repented from their sin and believed in Jesus Christ.[351] In the Early Church baptism became intricately linked to the cleansing of sins for salvation. The problem soon arose about how to regard post-baptismal sins and if there was remission of sins for those deliberately committed after baptism, especially heinous sins such as apostasy, adultery and murder.[352] The Church's practice of penance, institutional forms of discipline for certain sins committed after one's baptism, became more widespread in the third century, especially in dealing with

---

[349] Basil *Regulae morales* 80.22; PG 31, 868C; Clarke, *Ascetic Works*, 129; *Epistula* 295; Deferrari, IV, 208-9. Cf. Galatians 5:6.

[350] LS, 305-6.

[351] In the New Testament sometimes faith precedes baptism, sometimes repentance and sometimes a simple receiving of the message of the gospel. Cf. Acts 2:38; 8:12, 35-6; 10: 44-7; 16:14-15. In the *Didache* fasting is required before one receives baptism (*Didache* 7:4; Michael W. Holmes, ed. and rev., *The Apostolic Fathers: Greek Texts and English Translations*, revised edition [Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999], 258-9). In Justin's time the practice of the Church was to require that one believe the teaching of the church, repent for one's sins and fast before receiving baptism (Justin Martyr *I apologia* 61.1-2; Wartelle, *Apologies*, 182-3).

[352] For "mortal sins" see 1 John 5:16, 17. For the sin of apostasy see Hebrews 6:4-6; 10:26-31. For the second century view of post-baptismal sins see Hermas *Mandata pastoris* 4.3.1-7; Holmes, *The Apostolic Fathers*, 382-5.

the sin of apostasy during times of persecution.[353] By the time of the local synods in Ancyra and Neocaesarea in the fourth century there were established canons of discipline for those who had committed sins of murder, adultery and apostasy after their baptism.[354] Baptism in the Early Church was taken very seriously as the sacrament for salvation and yet the promise of salvation was held in tension with a living fidelity to one's faith in Christ after one's baptism. Because of the gravity of baptism and the penalty for sins committed after baptism, Christians often delayed baptism until late in life. This pattern can be seen in the baptisms of emperors Constantine and Constantius in the fourth century.[355]

There is little information about Basil's baptism and it is one of the most difficult events to pin down, but possibly the most important of all the aspects of his conversion. The little that is known about it is that he was baptized by Dianius the bishop of Caesarea sometime after his return from Athens in 355 and most likely before his monastic retreat at Annesi in Pontus in late 357 or early 358. When he received the sacrament he was roughly between the age of 25 and 29.

Basil does not make mention of his baptism in *Epistula* 223.2 when he describes his spiritual awakening to the light of the truth of the gospel nor in any of his early epistles. Because of this it is necessary to draw upon his work *De spiritu sancto* again to understand the significance of baptism for his conversion. He wrote about his baptism in chapter 10 of *De spiritu sancto*:

> For if to me my baptism was the beginning of life, and that day of regeneration the first of days, it is plain that the utterance uttered in the grace of adoption was the most honourable of all. Can I then, perverted by these men's seductive words, abandon the tradition which guided me to the light, which bestowed on me the boon of the knowledge of God, whereby I, so long a foe by reason of sin, was made a child of God? But,

---

[353] Cyprian *Epistula* 55.20-3; ANF V, 332-3.

[354] Concilium Ancyranum, *Canones* 1-25 and Neocaesariense, *Canones* 1-15; NPNF II, 14, 61-86.

[355] Meredith, *The Cappadocians*, 21.

> for myself, I pray that with this confession I may depart hence to the Lord.[356]

According to Basil's description of his baptism, it was the beginning of his new life as a Christian, the day of his regeneration and reception of the grace of adoption as a child of God.

Basil's argument in *De spiritu sancto* is his personal response to criticisms of his doctrine and liturgical practice as a bishop. He is defending himself, his beliefs and actions against accusers. Chapter ten is one of those points where his argument becomes more charged with his personal identity and salvation which is attached in his mind to the Trinitarian confession of faith. Because of Basil's personal references in this section it appears that this was his genuine belief of the value and significance of the sacrament of baptism not only for Christians generally, but specifically for himself as well. His personal references here were not just a strategy of argumentation, but the whole Christian faith, his faith and salvation was in the balance, as was the salvation of those who denied the Spirit. Basil was convinced of the importance of baptism and the confession of faith in the Trinity for salvation. This is how one was saved. This is how he was saved and was born again as a child of God.

5. Church, Brothers, Brotherhood

In antiquity ἐκκλησία meant an "assembly duly summoned" and in the New Testament it meant the assembly of believers in Christ called the Church.[357] When the first Christians converted to Jesus Christ they became a part of the community of his apostles, disciples and followers. Luke described the life of the earliest church in detail in the *Acts of the Apostles*: "and all who believed were together and had all things in common; and they sold their possessions and goods and distributed them to all, as any

---

[356] Basil *DSS* 10.26; Pruche, 152; NPNF II, 8, 17.
[357] LS, 509.

had need."[358] According to the Apostle Paul conversion to Christ meant being baptized into the body of Christ: "For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body – Jews or Greeks, slaves or free – and all were made to drink of one Spirit."[359] As the Church of Jesus Christ grew it came to see itself as the "household of God" made up of brothers and sisters in Christ.[360]

It was the church at Jerusalem described in Acts 1-6 which inspired Basil. In *Epistula* 223.2 Basil commented on the discovery of his duty to his "brothers" when he speaks about his awakening. He found that what was demanded of him from the gospel was the "selling of one's goods and the sharing of them with the needy of the brethren" (καὶ τὴν πρὸς τοὺς ἐνδεεῖς τῶν ἀδελφῶν κοινωνίαν).[361] Not only did he see his duty to his fellow Christians, but he prayed for a brother who could be a teacher and a guide in this new life and accompany him through the "brief flood of life."[362] He knew he needed help in his new life and that he had a duty to the new community of fellow believers. Basil saw his conversion in relation to brothers (ἀδελφοί), and the term ἀδελφότης (brotherhood) was the dominant term he used in his monastic rules to describe the community of faith which referred to groups of men and women.[363]

The communal life with brothers of the faith would be an ongoing theme for Basil's life especially during his time as a bishop when some long time friendships either ended or were severely tested. Philip Rousseau has suggested that "only around the notion of friendship do the themes of his biography so coherently cluster."[364] Rousseau has pointed out that later in his life Basil established himself in an "ecclesial society" made up of an orthodox ancestry and loyal friends true to the Nicene faith

---

[358] Acts 2:44-5. Cf. Acts 4:32, 34-5 (RSV).
[359] 1 Corinthians 12:13. Cf. Galatians 3:26-8.
[360] 1 Timothy 3:15; 5:1, 2; Romans 16:1, 13, 14, 16, 17.
[361] Basil *Epistula* 223.2; Deferrari, III, 292-3.
[362] Basil *Epistula* 223.2; Deferrari, III, 292-3.
[363] Daniel F. Stramara, Jr., "'ΑΔΕΛΦΟΤΗΣ–Two Frequently Overlooked Meanings" *Vigiliae Christianae* 51 (1997) : 316. Cf. Lampe, 30.
[364] Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea*, 234. For Rousseau's discussion of friendship in Basil's biography see Chapter VII, "Eustathius and Other Friends," pp. 233-69.

which gave him a sense of belonging and confidence in the midst of betrayal and controversy.[365] Even though the brotherhood and friendships were important to Basil as Rousseau has shown it is important to remember and keep in tension the fact that he never allowed them to compromise his allegiance to Christ, his Church and the truth of the gospel.[366] Basil's faith planted in him from his childhood was his anchor throughout his life and made him who he was. Alan Kreider has pointed out the significance of "belonging" as a necessary category of understanding Christian conversion in the early Church.[367] Basil himself is a great example of what conversion meant to Christians in the 4th century – sharing with brothers who were in need, being guided by one's elders and accompanying one another during this life.

6. The Holy Spirit

The next two categories of analysis, the Spirit and Word of God are drawn from Michael Green's work, *Evangelism in the Early Church.* Green speaks of them as factors in evangelism which "men do not provide."[368] These two factors are relevant to Christian conversion and will now be examined in terms of Basil's spiritual awakening.

Green has commented that the forgotten nature of the work of the Holy Spirit in studies of Christian conversion seems out of touch with the earliest recordings of Christian conversion in Acts.[369] According to Green, God initiates mission and evangelism. But what is not clear in Green's work is how the Spirit more directly relates to the process of someone converting. I would like to make some general observations of the role of the Spirit in conversion that arise from the New Testament. One such observation is that the role of the Spirit in the process of conversion lies first in the demonstration of God's power through miracles of healing and deliverance and the

---

[365] Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea*, 23-6. Cf. *DSS* 29.71-75; NPNF II, 8, 44-8.

[366] For an example of Basil's attitude amidst the controversy that he faced for his faith see *DSS* 30.76-9; NPNF II, 8, 48-50.

[367] Kreider, *The Change of Conversion*, xv.

[368] Green, *Evangelism in the Early Church*, 178.

[369] Green, *Evangelism in the Early Church*, 178.

proclamation of the gospel.[370] Secondly, the Spirit brings conviction of sin and the awareness of the need for salvation through these demonstrations of power and proclamations.[371] The regeneration of the human soul, or rebirth, is also directly related to the work of the Spirit in the New Testament.[372] A final observation is that the Spirit leads people to the truth and enables them to worship God.[373]

In Basil's conversion as recounted by himself and others there is no direct mentioning of the Spirit of God *per se*, but there are some things which could point to the influence of the Holy Spirit in this time of Basil's life. There are at least two aspects of Basil's description of his awakening in *Epistula* 223 which suggest the operation of the Holy Spirit in his conversion: his description of a spiritual awakening in terms of waking to a light and an inner conviction of his errors of the past and the truth of the gospel. A third aspect which will not be discussed below but which is also a sign of God's presence was the power Basil found through this experience to change and start living a new life.

First let us consider Basil's description of his spiritual awakening. Basil described his conversion, albeit metaphorically, as an awakening in which he saw something new that changed his life. He described what he saw in terms of waking to a light, possibly a metaphor for an insight, realization or revelation.[374] Richard Peace has argued that Paul's experience of light on the road to Damascus is in keeping with what modern day research has discovered to be characteristic of spiritual or mystical experiences. Most people who have such numinous experiences speak about them in

---

[370] The work of the Spirit as demonstrations of power: in the ministry of Jesus: Matthew 12:28, Luke 11:20; in the ministry of the apostles: Acts 2:1-4, 14-21, 4:31, Romans 15:18-9; in the life of the Church: 1 Cor. 12:9-10, 28.

[371] The Spirit's role to bring conviction of sin: John 16:8, 9. See Acts 2:1-42; 3:1-4:4 and 17:25-34 as examples of the Spirit of God manifesting the power of God through signs and miracles that resulted in the conviction of sin and the awareness of the need for salvation.

[372] John 3:3, 5; 1 Corinthians 6:11; Titus 3:5.

[373] John 4:23-4; 15:26, 16:7, 13.

[374] In the Greek and Hellenistic traditions, the importance of light both literal and metaphorical to symbolize intellectual and spiritual knowledge in the context of conversion or initiation into a religion goes at least as far back as Plato's *Respublica* and the mysteries of Greek religion.

terms of light.[375] The significance of this event in Basil's life was an experience of what Benedicta Ward has called "the uncovenanted action of God" breaking in to produce conversion.[376] Ramsay MacMullen has labeled Basil's conversion as an example of an intellectual's conversion and has described Basil's account of his awakening and reaction to it like this: "Such was the certainty sought. To see it was to know it instantly, by an experience as much spiritual as intellectual."[377] What this thesis suggests is that the language of light and new insight into the truth of the gospel in Basil's awakening was an experience of God's Spirit, the finger of God (Lk. 11:20), the "uncovenanted action of God" breaking into his life and drawing him to the truth of the gospel.

Now, Basil's description of the effect of this awakening was that it convicted him of the truth and the uselessness of the wisdom of the Greeks. This awakening caused him to have an emotional reaction. The verb ἀποκλαίω used here by Basil means to "weep aloud"; "bewail much, mourn deeply for" someone or something.[378] What Basil recalls is that he mourned deeply for his "piteous life" and prayed for someone to initiate and guide him in the way of piety. This emotional reaction was a result of something he saw about his life – mainly that he had spent it in futility, in a vain pursuit of worldly wisdom, and his character needed amendment. Basil's reaction to this vision and the insight it gave him would seem to indicate a state of conviction about his life like that experienced by others who have realized their errors.[379] Basil was awakened to see his life in a new way which caused him to have an emotional reaction of weeping and conviction of the errors of his past.

Basil's awakening not only convicted him of his errors but also of the truth of the gospel. In his work *De spiritu sancto* Basil wrote about the Spirit as light, as

---

[375] Peace, *Conversion in the New Testament*, 65-8, 74ff.

[376] Benedicta Ward, S. L. G., *Harlots of the Desert: A Study of Repentance in Early Monastic Sources* (Kalamazoo, Michigan: Cistercian Publications, 1987), 3.

[377] MacMullen, *Christianizing the Roman Empire*, 69.

[378] LS, 202.

intelligible light enabling rational creatures to discover and find the truth.[380] The Spirit gives power to Christians to contemplate and see the Son and the Father.[381] Basil expresses this dynamic of vision and knowledge of God often in terms of enlightenment and illumination using the terms φωτισμός, φωτίζειν and λάμπω. According to Basil the ability to confess Jesus as Lord, worship God and know God is through the illumination of the Spirit which is especially linked to the gift of the Spirit given at baptism.[382] Basil also spoke about the knowledge of the truth as a gift of illumination from God in his homilies:

> May the Father of the true light, however, who has decked the day with the heavenly light, who has brightened the night with gleams of fire, who has made ready the peace of the future age with a spiritual and never ending light, illumine your hearts in a knowledge of the *truth*, and preserve your life without offense, etc (emphasis mine).[383]

> 'Come ye to him and be enlightened: and your faces shall not be confounded.' He urges those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death to come to the Lord and to approach the rays of the Godhead, in order that, illuminated with the *truth* by this nearness, they may through grace take His light unto themselves. As the present sensible light does not appear equally to all, but to those who have eyes and are awake and able to enjoy the presence of the sun without any obstacle, so also the Sun of justice, 'the true light that enlightens every man who comes into the world,' does not bestow His brightness on all, but on those who live in a manner worthy of Him (emphasis mine).[384]

What these passages about enlightenment through the truth of God indicate is that for Basil his awakening which he expressed in terms of a metaphor of waking to a light was an insight of new knowledge about God's *truth* which he didn't have before. If, according to the Scriptures, the Spirit of God is the Spirit of truth (Jn. 15:26) then it must have been the Spirit of God which enabled Basil to find the truth and change his

---

[379] Peace, *Conversion in the New Testament*, 37-55. Cf. The crowd of Jews at Pentecost in Acts 2:37 and Paul in Acts 9:1-9.

[380] Basil *DSS* 9.22; Pruche, 146; NPNF II, 8, 15.

[381] Basil *DSS* 18.47, 26.64; Pruche, 197-8, 231; NPNF II, 8, 29, 40.

[382] Basil *DSS* 15.35; 18.47; Pruche, 171, 197-8; NPNF II, 8, 22, 29.

[383] Basil *Hexaemeron* 2.8; PG 29, 52B; A. C. Way, trans., *Saint Basil: Exegetic Homilies*, The Fathers of the Church 46 (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1963; reprint, 1981), 35-6.

[384] Basil *Homilia in Psalmum XXXIII* 4; PG 29, 360B-C; Way, *Exegetic Homilies*, 254-5.

life accordingly. The fruit of this experience of new insight was a godly life which led Basil to a fruitful time as a priest and bishop on behalf of the Church.

7. The Word of God, The Gospel

Green has observed that the Spirit and Word of God often worked together for it is "through the Word of God that the Spirit of God is accustomed to act."[385] This may best be seen in the fact that the book of Acts says that the apostles were given boldness to speak the gospel by the power of the Spirit (Acts 2:1ff.; 4:31). The Spirit has worked through the Word of God to bring men and women to a knowledge of Jesus Christ throughout the history of the Church. As Jaroslav Pelikan has suggested in *The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition (100-600)*, the work of transformation in a person's life came not only from the proclaimed Word of God, but also from reading the sacred texts or hearing them read: "A special version of the doctrine of the word as means of grace came in the claim that the Scriptures could convert a reader, even apart from such instruction or proclamation."[386]

According to Basil he learned what he ought to do to live according to the gospel by reading the Scriptures.[387] This "gospel" was not necessarily a message of hope of new life for Basil, but it was the teachings of the Lord and was characterized by a call to action. Basil wrote that he read the gospel and learned what was proper for a Christian to do and, not only that, he also learned how one may live perfectly. The principle of perfect obedience to every command of God became the aim for Basil's *Asceticon* on the Christian life.[388] Perfect obedience was possible according to Basil through a proper understanding of God's commands found in Scripture, the avoidance of distractions which would keep one from performing every command of the Lord

---

[385] Green, *Evangelism in the Early Church*, 179.

[386] Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine*, vol. 1, *The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition (100-600)* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1971; paperback, 1975), 161.

[387] Basil *Epistula* 223.2; Deferrari, III, 292-3.

perfectly and a constant memory of God which would allow one to know at each moment God's will in every situation.[389] Thus for Basil the word of God in his conversion and later in his teaching would emphasize the importance of obedience to the will of God expressed through the commands of the Lord in the gospel.

8. Conclusion

From this theological analysis, Basil's conversion was characterized by the traditional elements of Christian conversion – repentance, faith and baptism, but also by a distinct experience which he likened to "awakening from a deep sleep," and seeing "the light of the truth of the gospel." The truth for Basil is somehow the overriding thing which distinguishes the gospel of Jesus Christ from the wisdom of the world. It is to this truth that he gave his life. Conversion for Basil also meant obedience to this truth – a humble submission to the gospel yoke through baptism and obedience to the commands of Christ.

The "light of the truth of the gospel" was an experience that resulted in new insights and a new way of life that 15-20 years later Basil could still recall as the significant turning point in his life. Basil's metaphorical language captures the mystery of that moment of God's uncovenanted grace. It was an awakening that affected him emotionally, attitudinally and behaviorally and was a "transforming moment" in which a person experiences the Holy One and comes to a deeper knowledge of ultimate truth as reality.[390] This moment brought knowledge to Basil but most importantly transformed his life.

---

[388] Basil *RF* 5; PG 31, 920B-924D; Clarke, *Ascetic Works*, 158-61. Cf. Holmes, *A Life Pleasing to God*, 113-4.

[389] Basil *RF* 1, 5; PG 31, 905B-908B, 920B-924D; Clarke, *Ascetic Works*, 152, 158-61.

[390] Peace, *Conversion in the New Testament*, 76-77. Cf. James Loder, *The Transforming Moment*, 2d ed. (Colorado Springs, Co.: Helmers & Howard, 1989), 14-26.

PART II: A SURVEY OF BASIL'S TEACHING ON CONVERSION

Introduction

Part II is an examination of conversion in the works of Basil of Caesarea beginning with an examination of Basil's use of the terms ἐπιστρέφειν and ἐπιστροφή and then moving to a more narrow focus on the topic of conversion-initiation in Basil's writings. I will be using this term "conversion-initiation" to designate those steps, both internal and external, whereby a person is initiated into the Christian faith and becomes a part of the Church.[391] The general argument of Part II is that conversion for Basil is a widely applied concept that has two main applications – one of which is to refer to a turning or return to God that may take place at any point in one's life and the second is based upon the steps of conversion when one is initiated into the Christian faith. To investigate both of these applications I will first discuss the meaning and usage of the words ἐπιστρέφειν and ἐπιστροφή in Basil's writings to understand conversion in the broadest sense. Following this I will focus upon conversion-initiation which can be divided into three main categories: 1) the individual human processes or steps in conversion-initiation: repentance and faith; 2) the ecclesial context which involves the Church, its proclamation of the Word of God and administration of the sacrament of baptism; 3) the operations of the Spirit in conversion-initiation. The terms and concepts which are used in Part II come from theological studies of conversion in the New Testament and the Early Church which were introduced in Part I.[392]

Part II is significant because it is a study strictly focused on Basil's teaching on Christian conversion and conversion-initiation.[393] One of the aims of this study was to

---

[391] See below p. 117ff.

[392] See above p. 87ff.

[393] Studies and articles which touch upon Basil's teaching on conversion or conversion-initiation, especially baptism include: Jean Bernardi, *La Prédication des pères cappadociens: Le Prédicateur et son auditoire*, Publications de la Faculté des lettres et sciences humaines de l'Université de Montpellier 30 (Marseille: Presses universitaires de France, 1968), 68-70, 394-5; Everett Ferguson,

not separate Basil's ascetic teaching from his dogmatic teaching and preaching. My goal was to try to construct a complete picture of Christian conversion from the various types of literature which he wrote. Unfortunately because of the lack of space in the thesis I have had to focus Part II more narrowly than I had first planned limiting the study to Basil's use of specific terms and had to leave out a study on themes of conversion in Basil's sermons. Another aim of Part II was to present a complementary perspective to Basil's conversion by surveying his teaching on the subject thereby drawing a connection between the relationship of personal experience and dogmatics in the Patristic era.

"Exhortations to Baptism in the Cappadocians," *Studia Patristica* XXXII (1997) : 121-29; Benoît Gain, *L'Église de Cappadoce au IV^e siècle d'après la correspondance de Basile de Césarée*, Orientalia Christiana Analecta 225 (Rome: Pontificium Institutum Orientale, 1985), 115-6, 191-200, 334-45; A. G. Hamman, ed. and trans., *Le baptême d'après les pères de l'eglise*, rev. ed. (Paris: Migne, 1995), 14ff., 95-6; Markos A. Orphanos, *Creation and Salvation According to St. Basil of Caesarea* (Athens: Gregorios Parisianos, 1975), 112-22; Thomas Spidlik, S. J., *La sophiologie de s. Basile*. Orientalia Christiana Analecta 162 (Roma: Pont. Institutum Orientalium Studiorum, 1961), 204-16.

A. Conversion

1. Definitions and Usages of Terms

The terms ἐπιστρέφειν and ἐπιστροφή are used by both Greeks and Christians to denote a religious or moral conversion.[394] As mentioned above the verb ἐπιστρέφειν literally means to "turn about, turn round" and ἐπιστροφή means "a turning about."[395] Ἐπιστρέφειν could either have the active meaning of someone turning something or someone or the passive meaning of a person being turned, i.e. converted.[396] Ἐπιστροφή in the New Testament literature also has the meaning of attention given to someone or something.[397] The verb ἐπιστρέφειν was used in both the LXX and the New Testament to designate 1) the turning of people to God, 2) the turning of God to people or 3) the turning of people away from God to the worship of idols.[398] Except for point three "to turn" in these contexts meant to turn from sin, idolatry, false gods to the worship of the true God. In Acts 26:18 Paul described his commission from God to preach to the Gentiles: "to open their eyes, that they may turn (τοῦ ἐπιστρέψαι) from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me" (RSV). In the Christian literature of the New Testament and Early Church ἐπιστρέφειν was frequently combined with μετανοέω, "to repent," to communicate a turning to God and repentance from sins.[399]

2. Basil's Use of these Terms

Basil's use of the terms ἐπιστρέφειν and ἐπιστροφή in his writings to designate "returning, converting" or "conversion" occurs with various nuances of meaning. I will distinguish between five different kinds of uses of ἐπιστρέφειν by

---

394 Bauer, 301. Cf. Nock, *Conversion*, 179-80. Cf. Nock's notes for pages 179ff. on page 296.
395 LS, 661. See above pp. 87-8.
396 LS, 661.
397 Bauer, 301.
398 Bertram, "στρέφω," 723-5, 726, 728-9.
399 Cf. Luke 17:4; Acts 3:19; 26:18-20; 1 Clement 7:5.

Basil and one usage of ἐπιστροφή in his writings. These range from the active converting of another to the converting of a baptized believer after they have fallen into some form of sin. Basil's broad application of the terms indicates the variety of contexts in which one could speak of conversion in the Early Church. The following is a study of selected examples of Basil's use of the terms ἐπιστρέφειν and ἐπιστροφή to illustrate this point.

a. Convert – Actively Converting Another

The first category in Basil's works of the term ἐπιστρέφειν refers to an agent actively converting, correcting or reforming another person from errors, offenses, sins, etc. An example can be found in a epistle that Basil wrote to a prison superintendent to ask that the Church be given civil authority to correct bishops and priests who had been arrested. He described the disciplinary action of the Church toward these clerics: "to convert (ἐπιστρέψαι) them in the discipline and correction of the Lord, for I think in the name of God I shall make them better for the future."[400] Basil continued in the epistle by stating that he had known the fearful judgments of God to be more effective than the stripes of the magistrate's correction. A further example can be found in his work *De iudicio dei* where Basil wrote about how Paul tried to convert the hearts of the lost to the fear of God's judgments through his epistle to the Romans.[401] In both of these examples the task of conversion belongs to the minister of God. The minister can effect conversion through a proclamation of God's judgments upon sin. The goal is to reform the recalcitrant or convert the sinner and lead them, through an understanding of the judgment of God, to the fear of the Lord.

This activity of converting sinners is not only the work of ministers, but also of the brothers in the monasteries. In *Epistula* 22 Basil wrote to a group of monks admonishing them:

---

[400] Basil *Epistula* 286; Deferrari, IV. 176-7.

> Through love for Christ the Christian should be grieved and distressed at his brother's faults and rejoice over his successes. He should not be indifferent to sinners or silent before them. He who reproves another should do so with all tenderness, in fear of God and with a view to reforming (τοῦ ἐπιστρέψαι) the sinner.[402]

To convert someone in the brotherhood was to help a brother reform their behavior and turn from sin to the way of truth and life. This kind of conversion was of concern to the whole community and a subject about which Basil taught in his other monastic writings such as *Regulae brevius tractatae* 3 and 4.[403] In *RB* 3 Basil taught the brothers that to convert a sinner was to deal with him according to the rule of reconciliation given by Christ in Matthew 18:15-17. These verses provided Basil and his monasteries with a clear and godly pattern for discipline and conversion within the community.

b. Convert – Turning to God

Basil also used the word ἐπιστρέφειν to indicate converting or turning to God. An example of this kind of usage can be found in his *Homilia in psalmum VII*, "when one unrighteous person is corrected, a multitude will convert" (ἐπιστρέψουσι).[404] In this passage Basil taught his congregation that conversion to God resulted from judgment. The context of this statement is Basil's interpretation of Psalm 7:8, "And a congregation of people shall surround thee."[405] Basil said that the congregation of God will come to Him when God's judgment is given. Basil here relates judgment specifically to God's judgment of the wicked and that this judgment causes people to turn to God, to convert. In this case God is the agent bringing conversion through judgment of one wicked person.

---

[401] Basil *De iudicio dei* 3; PG 31, 656D; Clarke, *Ascetic Works*, 79.

[402] Basil *Epistula* 22; Deferrari, I, 136-7.

[403] Basil *RB* 3, 4; PG 31, 1084A-1085A; Clarke, *Ascetic Works*, 231-2.

[404] Basil *Homilia in Psalmum VII* 4; PG 29, 236D-237A; Way, *Exegetic Homilies*, 170-1. Translation my own.

[405] Basil *Homilia in Psalmum VII* 4; PG 29, 236D-237A; Way, *Exegetic Homilies*, 170.

c. Convert – God Turns toward Those Who Turn to Him

Another example of the term ἐπιστρέφειν is found in *Homilia in psalmum XXVIII* where Basil commented on verse 10, "The Lord makes the flood to dwell."[406] The "flood" in this verse was interpreted by Basil as the waters of baptism. Those who entered into baptism were delivered from their sins and made fit for the Spirit to come and dwell in them. Basil backed up his interpretation of this verse with further references to Psalm 31:5, 6 and Micah 7:19. The latter is a prophecy about God turning to show mercy to his people and casting their sins into the bottom of the sea which Basil also allegorically interpreted as a reference to baptism. By juxtaposing this verse with his exegesis of Psalm 28:10 Basil declared to his congregation that God will turn to those who enter into baptism and show mercy to them. Thus, conversion to God results in God reciprocating, turning to humanity and delivering them from their sins. There is a mutual turning one to the other.

d. Conversion – Repentance and Baptism

In Basil's teaching he viewed repentance as an integral part of the process of conversion. In *Regulae brevius tractatae* 288, Basil combined ἐπιστροφή with μετάνοια to communicate a process of returning to God. He wrote to the brothers:

> Since then both the mode of conversion (τῆς ἐπιστροφῆς) ought to be congruous to the sin and there is need of fruits worthy of repentance (τῆς μετανοίας) …it is necessary to confess sins to those who are entrusted with the stewardship of the mysteries of God.[407]

"Converting" in the context of the brotherhood included repenting from sin and turning back to God. In this use conversion is almost synonymous with repentance in general and refers to a reformation of behavior.[408]

Conversion also includes baptism and salvation in Basil's thought. In *De spiritu sancto* Basil wrote about the necessity of keeping pure the seal of the Holy Spirit given

---

[406] Basil *Homilia in Psalmum XXVIII* 8; PG 29, 304B-D; Way, *Exegetic Homilies*, 210-1.
[407] Basil *RB* 288; PG 31, 1284C-1285A; Clarke, *Ascetic Works*, 340.
[408] Lampe, 535-6.

in baptism in order that the Spirit will not be taken away on Judgment Day.[409] Basil described those who have received baptism but lived unworthy lives as having in some limited way the presence of the Spirit still with them.[410] But salvation that comes from conversion (τὴν ἐκ τῆς ἐπιστροφῆς σωτηρίαν), may be taken away from them at Judgment Day if they do nothing with the gift of the Spirit.[411] Basil equates conversion with baptism which may or may not result in salvation depending upon the continued faithfulness to Christ throughout one's life. Although baptism is a crucial moment in conversion to God, for Basil, conversion ultimately is a process that cannot be limited to that one event.

e. Convert – Returning to God after Falling into Sin

Another common usage of ἐπιστρέφειν by Basil is found in his *Epistula* 46, "to a fallen virgin." In *Epistula* 46 Basil admonished a virgin who had fallen from her covenant through fornication to return to God. Basil quoted three passages from Jeremiah that speak about the "returning" or "turning again" of the Jews to faithful devotion of God.[412] Basil quoted these verses from Jeremiah and others as well in order to help the fallen virgin and guard her from further evil. Basil recommends that she read and reflect upon the examples of conversion in the Scriptures which will bring healing to her soul.

In this case conversion consisted of turning from a serious moral failure, fornication, and returning to God. Basil offered the fallen virgin hope through verses from Scripture which speak of "returning" and exhorted her to read the Scriptures herself. The Word of God is central to conversion whether in the form of the words of Jeremiah to the wayward nation of Israel or to the fourth century Christians who have fallen into sin. This epistle is an example of the kind of active converting described

---

[409] Basil *DSS* 16.40; Pruche, 182.
[410] Basil *DSS* 16.40; Pruche, 182.
[411] Basil *DSS* 16.40; Pruche, 182-3.
[412] Basil *Epistula* 46.5; Deferrari, I, 300-303. Cf. Jeremiah 8:4; 3:7; 8:22 (LXX).

above. Basil is seeking to reform a sinner by communicating his sorrow over this evil, the tragedy of what was lost, the judgment that comes upon sin and the help available in God, much as the Apostle Paul who counseled his churches through his Epistles.

f. Convert – Turning from a Lesser Good to a Greater Good

Another use of ἐπιστρέφειν can be found in *De spiritu sancto* where Basil described turning from a lesser good, the Law of Moses, to a greater good, the Holy Spirit and the spiritual contemplation of the Word of God. In *De spiritu sancto* Basil wrote about the need to turn from the letter to the Spirit by loosely quoting Paul's words from 2 Corinthians 3:17:

> For even unto this day the same veil in the reading of the Old Testament remains, the veil not being removed, for in Christ it is done away…Nevertheless, when one will turn to the Lord (ἐπιστρέψῃ πρὸς Κύριον), the veil will be taken away. Now the Lord is the Spirit.[413]

According to Paul, the letter or Law of Moses is not evil but is good (Rom. 7:12). The problem with the law is that it cannot give life and can only condemn sin which ultimately brings death (Rom. 7:9, 10; 2 Cor. 3:6, 9). According to Basil, the Spirit brings life (2 Cor. 3:6) and gives one the ability in the presence of Christ to see the "truth" from the "type."[414] The lesser good, shadow, or type is the Law. The greater good is the life of the Spirit and contemplation of the truth of God through the Spirit. By turning to the Lord, the Spirit, one is able to look into the "depth of the meaning of the Law" and see the "things unspeakable."[415] The literal interpretation of the letter of the Law will cause one to read with a veil over the eyes and remain in ignorance. By turning to the Spirit, the Lord and author of Scripture, the veil will be taken away and one will be able to perceive the depths of the true meaning of the text. Based on the 2 Corinthians 3 text Basil wrote:

---

[413] Basil *DSS* 21.52; Pruche, 208; NPNF II, 8, 33. Translation from NPNF is altered.
[414] Basil *DSS* 21.52; Pruche, 209-10; NPNF II, 8, 33.
[415] Basil *DSS* 21.52; Pruche, 209; NPNF II, 8, 33.

> So with the veil on the face of Moses corresponds the obscurity of the teaching of the Law, and spiritual contemplation with the turning (τῇ δὲ ἐπιστροφῇ) to the Lord. He, then, who in the reading of the Law takes away the letter and turns (ἐπιστρέφει) to the Lord, – and the Lord is now called the Spirit, – becomes moreover like Moses, who had his face glorified by the manifestation of God.[416]

The end of this turning to the Lord who is the Spirit is the transfiguration of the person by the presence of God. For Basil "turning to the Spirit" means honoring him as Lord and spiritually contemplating the word that He has written. This results in the knowledge of the truth, transfiguration of the whole person and beholding God's face.

This kind of conversion I am categorizing as a conversion from a lesser good to a greater good in order to draw out the Platonic dualism in the thinking of Basil. Plato described the need for a "conversion" of the soul from the realm of becoming to the realm of being.[417] The attention of the Christian exegete, according to Basil, is to be given to the Lord who is the Spirit, not to the letter of the Law. The Christian converts to the Spirit and the life of the Spirit which is able to give life. Such is a higher realm of existence and being compared to that of the letter which can only offer "types" to the understanding of the essence of the truth.[418]

Origen's exegesis of 2 Corinthians 3 and his allegorical method may be the source for Basil's emphasis on the importance of "turning to" the Spirit in order to comprehend the deeper truths of the sacred text. Benoît Pruche discerns Origen's influence on Basil in his exegesis of 2 Corinthians 3 in *De spiritu sancto* 21.52.[419] Similarly Jaroslav Pelikan suggests Basil's exegesis of 2 Corinthians 3 is taken from Origen's exegesis of the same passage.[420] But Basil's reference to 2 Corinthians 3:14-17 emphasizes the importance of the source of true knowledge arising not from a

---

[416] Basil *DSS* 21.52; Pruche, 209; NPNF II, 8, 33-4.

[417] Plato *Respublica* 7.518 C-D; Paul Shorey, trans., *Plato: The Republic*, vol. 6, LCL (London: William Heinemann; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1935), 132-3.

[418] For Basil's view of typology in scripture see *DSS* 14.31-3; NPNF II, 8, 19-21.

[419] Pruche, 209 n. 4.

method, but from the Spirit. The conversion called for by Basil in this passage is to a higher way of thinking and interpreting Christian truth that is enabled and shaped by the Spirit, the Lord and author of the Scriptures, not by the letter of the Law.

g. Conclusion

These types of uses of the words ἐπιστρέφειν and ἐπιστροφή emphasize the variety of ideas about conversion prevalent in Basil's writing. He used these terms in a broader sense than just conversion to a religion. Based on Basil's use of these terms it is possible to conclude that conversion included initiation to the Christian faith, but also a general returning to God after sin. The example from *De spiritu sancto* of turning to the Spirit is a more subtle use of the idea of conversion and emphasizes one's attention being given to God's Spirit over the literal interpretation of the Law. Basil's use of ἐπιστρέφειν was in harmony with the Platonic ideal of a philosophic conversion – converting from the land of shadows to the land of true reality of the Forms. The Spirit represents this true reality to Basil and so when one turns to the Spirit it is a conversion to a new way of seeing reality. This is worth noting because it may be the most profound and creative usage of the terms ἐπιστρέφειν and ἐπιστροφή in Basil's writings. Now that we have discussed Basil's teaching on conversion in general based upon his use of these two terms I will examine Basil's teaching on conversion-initiation.

---

[420] Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, "The 'Spiritual Sense' of Scripture," in *Basil of Caesarea: Christian, Humanist, Ascetic: A Sixteen-Hundredth Anniversary Symposium*, ed. Paul J. Fedwick, vol. 1 (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1981), 354, n. 97.

B. Conversion-Initiation

The previous section dealt with the terms of conversion, ἐπιστρέφειν and ἐπιστροφή, in Basil's works. In the next three sections I will develop an argument about conversion in Basil's writings that is more specifically focused on conversion at the moment of initiation into the Christian faith. Following James Dunn's use in his *Baptism in the Holy Spirit* I will use the term "conversion-initiation" to designate this specific understanding of conversion.[421] As demonstrated in the previous section Basil used the idea of conversion in various ways for different situations in a person's life. I will begin first with an examination of the individual human steps of conversion-initiation in Basil's writings, that is what people can and must do in response to the gospel in order to become a Christian. Secondly, I will argue that Basil assumes the context of conversion-initiation is the Church.[422] It is through the Church's administration of the Word of God and the sacrament of baptism that conversion-initiation takes place. The final component of conversion-initiation in Basil's teaching is the activity of the Holy Spirit. These three categories of conversion-initiation can be summarized by the three adjectives: human, ecclesial and divine. It is with the human aspects of conversion-initiation that we will begin this study.

1. Individual Human Steps in Conversion-Initiation

The following section will discuss the human aspects of conversion-initiation, repentance and faith. I came to these two topics initially from Michael Green's designation of those things that humans must do in response to the gospel as seen in the book of Acts after Peter's sermon at Pentecost, namely repent, believe and be

---

[421] Dunn, *Baptism in the Holy Spirit*, 6-7.

[422] The importance of the "ecclesial context" of *penance* has been described by Allan Fitzgerald in *Conversion through Penance in the Italian Church of the Fourth and Fifth Centuries: New Approaches to the Experience of Conversion from Sin*, Studies in the Bible and Early Christianity 15 (Lewiston, Queenston and Lampeter: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1988), 187-430. In chapter three, "Ecclesial Context: Preaching Penance and Pardon," Fitzgerald examines the sermons of various preachers on the topic of penance.

baptized.[423] I have altered Green's initial idea with James Dunn's break down of Acts 2:38 – the individual human response (faith and repentance), the duty of the community of faith (baptism) and the activity of God (the gift of the Holy Spirit).[424] Although baptism could be seen in conversion-initiation as the decision of the convert as Green does, according to Dunn baptism was that aspect of conversion-initiation for which the Church was primarily responsible: it was the Church that baptized the convert or later catechumen.[425] It is Dunn's analysis of Acts 2:38 which captures more appropriately the communal aspect of conversion emphasized by Basil and practiced by the Early Church. Based upon this I will defer my discussion of baptism for now, choosing to regard it as part of the ecclesial context of conversion-initiation.

Also it is important to note that theoretical qualifications are in order when making the claim that there are human steps involved in conversion. Even though repentance and faith are two steps which humans must take in response to God's call according to Scripture (Mark 1:15; Acts 2:38), some theologians would say that the topics considered under "individual human steps" are gifts given by a God who predestined the elect for salvation and others for damnation. It is not the task of the present study to try to determine Basil's position in regards to the theological debate concerning predestination, free will and grace such as occurred between Augustine and Pelagius in the early 5th century. Besides the lack of space in this thesis for such an endeavor there seem to be two especially relevant reasons for avoiding this line of enquiry. The first is based on the difference of emphasis between the Eastern and Western Churches which produces two slightly different approaches to this question of grace and free will in the salvation of humankind. Not only were the Greek Fathers "relatively optimistic" about the situation of humankind as opposed to the "sombre" and "pessimistic" view of humankind passed down in the Western Church after Augustine,

---

[423] Green, *Evangelism in the Early Church*, 181-2.

the Greek Fathers were highly suspicious of essentially deterministic philosophical and religious systems such as the Gnostic religion of the Manichees or the popular forms of Stoicism.[426] Basil and other Eastern Church Fathers of the 4th century sought to keep a delicate balance between the notions of the human free will and the grace of God. To them, human free will was the key to understanding the source of sin and death in the world.[427] They held that the source of evil was not *substantive* such as the Manichees believed (i.e., that the body and material world in general was evil), but that evil was a result of human sin: the deliberate disobedience of God's command in order to pursue bodily desires for pleasure and the result of the misuse of the gift of free will.[428] Secondly the Pelagian controversy took place well after Basil's death in 379 (or 377) and therefore it would be faulty methodology to focus attention upon a topic that was not of concern either to him or his closest friends who shared his views. I will avoid pursuing various notions of predestination that may appear in Basil's thought. Instead I will suggest an understanding of the human-divine relationship which arises more naturally from Basil's own works and the tradition of the Church in the Greek East which is that of a *synergistic* relationship between God's grace and the human will co-operating together for salvation.[429] To begin my examination of this synergistic

---

[424] Dunn, *Baptism in the Holy Spirit*, 91.

[425] Dunn, *Baptism in the Holy Spirit*, 91.

[426] J. N. D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, 4th rev. ed. (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1968), 344. The Manichaen deterministic system of thought derived from their dualism which stated that the absolute evil of matter (ὕλη) can only be overcome by receiving the gift of gnosis through the teachings of Mani (Stevenson, *A New Eusebius*, 266-7; Peter Brown, *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography* [London and Boston: Faber and Faber, 1967; reprint, 1990], 46-60). The Stoa theorized that there were the two principles governing the world: providence (*pronoia*) and determinism (*heimarmene*). Cf. A. H. Armstrong, ed., *The Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Medieval Philosophy* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967], 124ff. See also Christopher Stead, *Philosophy in Christian Antiquity* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994; paperback reprint 1998], 50-1.

[427] Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, 347, 349.

[428] Basil *Homilia quod deus non est auctor malorum* 5, 7; PG 31 337D-340A, 341B-344A, 344C-345B; Henry Bettenson, ed. and trans., *The Later Christian Fathers: A selection of the writings of the Fathers from St. Cyril of Jerusalem to St. Leo the Great* (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), 60-2. Basil from a very early time in his life was concerned about the questions of free will and providence. See *Epistula* 1; Deferrari, I, 2-7 and *Philocalia* 21-27; George Lewis, trans., *The Philocalia of Origen: A Compilation of Selected Passages from Origen's Works made by St. Gregory of Nazianzus and St. Basil of Caesarea* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1911), 137ff.

[429] Werner Jaeger, *Two Rediscovered Works of Ancient Christian Literature: Gregory of Nyssa and Macarius* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1954), 88-106; Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, 352. Jaeger

relationship I will turn first to the topic of repentance in order to begin looking at the human steps involved in conversion-initiation according to Basil.

a. Repentance

One of the core theological themes of Christian conversion is repentance (μετάνοια). Having already introduced and defined the term in Part I of this thesis, I will now discuss Basil's use of it, especially as it relates to conversion-initiation.[430] Basil used the terms μετάνοια and μετανοέω to describe a much broader aspect of the Christian life than just conversion-initiation. Rather these terms were used by him to speak about a continual practice which is characteristic of the Christian life.[431] Therefore it is difficult to draw a line between what, for Basil, is involved in conversion-initiation and what is repentance as a repeated form of devotion within the Christian life. With this in mind I will look at Basil's teaching on repentance as he articulated it in his *Regulae morales* and the *Regulae brevius tractatae*. The following topics will be discussed to help bring the nature of repentance at a more general level into focus for conversion-initiation: 1) repentance as an inner attitudinal and external behavioral transformation; 2) the relationship between repentance and purification (κάθαρσις).

Repentance, an Inner Attitudinal and External Behavioral Transformation

As was noted above, μετάνοια means "a change of mind or heart, repentance, regret."[432] What lies at the root of μετάνοια, both for Basil and the Early Church, was the change of mind – an inner change – that coincided with or resulted in an external

---

emphasizes that in Gregory of Nyssa, Basil of Caesarea and the Greek Tradition in general the priority is given to the human free will in the process of becoming perfect like God, following the Platonic vision of the human life (Jaeger, *Rediscovered Works*, 97-102). What the Greek Fathers added was the part played by the Holy Spirit who co-operated with the human free will giving it the power and grace to become like God.

[430] See above p. 90.

[431] This is particularly captured in Basil's teaching on penance in his canonical epistles, *Epistulae* 188, 199, 217, and his explanation of the prayer life of the faithful in *Epistula* 207.3-4; Deferrari, III, 186-9. Penance is not included in this study of conversion in Basil's writings because of lack of space in the thesis and my emphasis upon a definition of repentance that is applicable to conversion-initiation. Penance for past sins was not required by the Church if one had not been baptized. It was required for those who had already been baptized. Cf. Basil *Epistula* 199.20; Deferrari, III, 110-1.

[432] LS, 1115.

change of behavior. Often the outer manifestations of repentance seem to be the most important but Basil understood that both were important if repentance was genuine. In Basil's monastic writings the inner aspects of repentance involved both mental and emotional changes. Ultimately it resulted in a new attitude or disposition (διάθεσις) toward God, others and sin.[433] Repentance was a topic on which Basil taught in depth demonstrating a subtle understanding perhaps born of his pastoral experience in the Church. Following is an examination of repentance as Basil defined it in the *Regulae morales* and the *Regulae brevius tractatae*. The consistency of Basil's teaching on repentance will become clearer as I compare his view of repentance as described in these two sections of the *Asceticon*. This study will attempt to establish Basil's general definition and description of genuine repentance which can then be applied to conversion-initiation.

In Basil's work the *Regulae morales*, the importance of repentance as a process of inner attitudinal transformation is discussed in the first rule. *Regulae morales* 1.1a begins with the statement:

> That it is necessary for those who believe in the Lord to repent first, according to the proclamation of John, and of our Lord Jesus Christ himself; for those not repenting are condemned more severely than those who have been condemned before the Gospel.[434]

This rule demonstrates two principles, both of which Basil finds in the Gospel of Matthew: the first is that one ought to repent (Matt. 4:17) and the second is that one ought to believe (Matt. 9:20-22). According to Basil the human response to the gospel proclamation demanded by Jesus is to repent and believe.

Basil also warns in the second half of *Regulae morales* 1 that there is a stricter judgment for those who do not repent after hearing the gospel than those who lived and died before the proclamation of the gospel. According to Basil there is a difference in

---

[433] Lampe, 347.

[434] Basil *Regulae morales* 1.1; PG 31, 700B. The translations of the *Regulae morales* in this section are my own.

the severity of God's judgment corresponding to the different dispensations of history. Basil emphasizes here his teaching about the significance of Christ and the proclamation of salvation in Christ by the Church. Time for Basil is measured in reference to this event – the proclamation of the gospel about Jesus Christ. The response people make to the gospel proclamation has consequences – they either believe and repent or they do not repent and thus are condemned.

Basil continues to elaborate his point in *Regulae morales* 1.2 where he writes: "That the present time is one of repentance and forgiveness of sins; but in the coming age, the righteous judgment of retribution."[435] Basil buttresses this statement by citing Mark 2:10, Matthew 18:18-19, John 5:28, 29, Romans 2:4-6 and Acts 17:30, 31. Again, Basil makes here the distinction of ages: the first age is the present time when the Gospel is being proclaimed and there is opportunity to repent and receive forgiveness for one's sins; the next age is one in which there will be a just judgment and retribution for the things done during the present age.

Basil's view of the Christian life is put in terms of the eschatological tension between this age and the age to come. He frequently refers to the topic of the coming judgment in his writings and here he emphasizes its importance for those who have heard the gospel. They have an opportunity to prepare for that judgment now. They can repent and receive mercy and forgiveness of sins. God is a just judge who will judge all people and will reward or punish them for what they have done on earth in this present time. For Basil conversion is an opportunity in time that will not always be available.

Basil's next point, *Regulae morales* 1.3, describes the affective manifestations of true repentance: "That it is necessary for those who repent to weep bitterly, and to show forth from the heart the rest of the things, as many as are peculiar of repentance."[436] Basil listed under this heading Matthew 26:75 which describes Peter's response of

---

[435] Basil *Regulae morales* 1.2; PG 31, 700C.

weeping "bitterly" at the recognition of his denial of Christ when the rooster crowed. This was the first response to understanding one's faults according to Basil – weeping in remorse. Then Basil wrote that one ought to show and demonstrate the other characteristics which are germane to repentance, characteristics which come from the heart. According to Basil these are referred to in 2 Corinthians 7:6, 7, and 11 which describe the repentant actions of the Corinthians when they heard of their faults and mistakes as a congregation. The Corinthians experienced "a godly grief" which worked in them these responses: longing, mourning, zeal for Paul, earnestness, eagerness, indignation, alarm at the wrong done and punishment of the guilty. True and genuine repentance from the heart caused the sinner to respond with weeping, longing for what was good and right, zeal and earnestness in amending one's ways with a righteous indignation against sin and dealing with sin thoroughly. The next Scripture Basil listed was the repentance of the crowds at Ephesus who, when they heard the apostolic preaching, confessed their sins and made their evil deeds known, publicly burning their books of magic (Acts 19:18-19).

Basil also described the external, behavioral transformation of repentance in *Regulae morales* 1.4: "That merely the withdrawal from sins is not sufficient toward salvation for those who repent, but they also have need of fruits worthy of repentance."[437] Here Basil listed only Matthew 3:7-11. In this passage John the Baptist rebukes the Pharisees and Sadducees who come to him for baptism. John tells them to bring forth fruits that are appropriate to their repentance for without fruit a tree is cut down and thrown into the fire and so is everyone who does not bring forth good fruit in their lives. John's point stresses the eschatological judgment of God which separates the ones who do not bear fruit from the ones who do bear fruit with the threat of being destroyed in fire. Basil is still defining the repentance that he believes the New

---

[436] Basil *Regulae morales* 1.3; PG 31, 701A-B.

Testament teaches. Those who repent must not just stop sinning, but they must also bring forth fruit – they must display the positive effects of their new life. If they do not show forth the good then their repentance is suspect.

Basil's last point in *Regulae morales* 1.5 reinforces more clearly what he has already taught, namely, "That after the departure from this life there is not time for rectifying one's life through good deeds, because God with patience has measured out the present time for doing the things which please him."[438] For this point Basil lists a long text from Matthew 25:1-13 which is the parable of the five wise and five foolish virgins.[439] This text combined with Jesus' admonition in Luke 13:24, 25 – to enter the narrow door before the householder closes it – emphasizes that there comes an end to one's opportunity for entering the Kingdom of God. The time to do good, to prepare and strive for the Kingdom is now. After death there is no further opportunity to strive to enter it. Basil also lists 2 Corinthians 6:2-4a in which Paul admonishes the Church that the time for salvation is now. Basil follows this with Galatians 6:10 which is an exhortation to do good to all while there is time.[440]

Basil's definition of repentance can also be found in his *erotapokriseis* (questions and answers) to monks and ascetic enthusiasts, what has been called his *Regulae fusius tractatae* and *Regulae brevius tractatae*.[441] An important text for this discussion is *erotapokrisis* 51 (*RB* 5), where Basil answers the question: "How a man

---

[437] Basil *Regulae morales* 1.4; PG 31, 701C.

[438] Basil *Regulae morales* 1.5; PG 31, 701D-704A.

[439] For another reference by Basil to this passage see *Homilia exhortatoria ad sanctum baptisma* 7; PG 31, 441B-C; Hamman, *Le baptême*, 110.

[440] For other references to the importance of time in regards to repentance see *Homilia exhortatoria ad sanctum baptisma* 1; PG 31, 424A-B; Hamman, *Le baptême*, 97-8.

[441] The numbering of the *erotapokriseis* in what is believed to be the manuscript of the *Asceticon* closest to the form in which Basil wrote the work can be found in the Halki manuscript i225. The *erotapokriseis* are numbered1-357. Cf. Paul Jonathan Fedwick, *Bibliotheca Basiliana Vniversalis: A Study of the Manuscript Tradition of the Works of Basil of Caesarea*, vol. III. *The Ascetica, "Contra Eunomium 1-3," "Ad Amphilochium De Spiritu Sancto," Dubia et Spuria, with Supplements to Volumes I-II*, Corpus Christianorum (Turnhout: Brepols, 1997), 46-62, 672-98. I provide the numbering system of the Halki manuscript and the traditional numbering based on the "Vulgate recension" (A4) found in Migne's edition vol. 31. Cf. Fedwick, *Bibliotheca*, III, 87-116.

should repent for each sin, and what fruits worthy of repentance he should show."[442] Basil says that the one who sins must have the disposition (διάθεσις) of the psalmist who said, "I have hated and abhorred injustice."[443] This is the first sign of repentance in Basil's view – a disposition that hates sin. Basil then gives Psalm 6 as a model and teaching of what the repentant should do. One of the striking features of this Psalm is the desperate petitions of the psalmist for mercy from God coupled with moaning and weeping. Basil also offers the Corinthian church as a model of repentance, specifically, their response to Paul's rebuke over their laxity in dealing with sin within their congregation (2 Cor. 7:6ff.). In this passage Titus reported to Paul that they were made sorry in a godly manner and did all that they could to rectify the situation with eagerness, zeal, fear and longing, showing themselves blameless in the matter (2 Cor. 7:11). Finally Basil offers the repentance of Zacchaeus as a model of what should be done by one who truly repents. This would imply that those who repent would repay any that they have offended or exploited for personal gain.

In *erotapokrisis* 52 (*RB* 287) the second part of the question in 51 is answered. The question of *erotapokrisis* 52 reads, "What are the fruits of repentance?" Basil's answer is that they are "works of righteousness opposed to sin, which the penitent ought to bring forth as fruits, fulfilling the words: 'Bearing fruit in every good work (Col. 1:10).'"[444] Here Basil reiterates what is found elsewhere in the *Asceticon* – genuine repentance shows the fruit of good works. He emphasizes in his teaching that new actions ought to replace the old sinful ones.

---

[442] Basil *RB* 5; PG 31, 1085A-B; Clarke, *Ascetic Works*, 232. This is ErAp. 18 in A1r (A1r=Rufinus' Latin translation. Cf. Fedwick, *Bibliotheca*, III, 4-43) and ErAp br. 5 in A4. Cf. Fedwick, *Bibliotheca*, III, 655.

[443] Basil *RB* 5; PG 31, 1085A; Clarke, *Ascetic Works*, 232.

[444] Basil *RB* 187; PG 31, 1284B-C; Clarke, *Ascetic Works*, 339. This is ErAp. 19 in A1r and ErAp br. 287 in A4. This is one of the striking examples of the way in which the redactor of A4 reshuffled the *erotapokriseis* into an order for his own use as Fedwick indicates in his work on the relationship of the manuscripts (Fedwick, *Bibliotheca*, III, 46-7, 675 n. 151).

In these definitions of repentance from his *Asceticon*, Basil's teaching on the relationship between the inner transformation of hatred of sin is always combined with the external transformation of behavior in bearing fruit worthy of repentance. What is very striking in both of these texts, the *Regulae morales* and the *Regulae brevius tractatae*, is the use of Scripture which informs Basil's definition of repentance. Basil uses some of the same Scripture texts in both the *Regulae morales* and the *Regulae brevius* such as 2 Corinthians 7.

Repentance and Purification

References to repentance (μετάνοια) or cleansing (κάθαρσις) are commonly found in the writings of the Early Church. The two are not the same, but often cleansing is paired with repentance especially in relation to baptism. One repents from one's sins and then is cleansed by the purifying waters of baptism. One of the common texts of the Early Church in the liturgy of baptism was Isaiah 1:18 which emphasized the need for sinners to cleanse themselves from their sins.[445]

In *Regulae morales* 1.1 Basil wrote that the first response to hearing the gospel must be repentance. Then in *Regulae morales* 2.1 he described the importance of taking further steps to enable one to serve God, obey the gospel and become a disciple of Christ.[446] In this rule Basil described the importance of cleansing: "That it is necessary for the one who has obeyed the gospel first of all to be cleansed (καθαρισθῆναι) from every pollution and defilement of flesh and spirit, so that thus he may become acceptable to God in the deeds of holiness."[447] Basil draws this rule from the two texts Matthew 23:25, 26 and 2 Corinthians 7:1. In the former Jesus condemned the Pharisees and Scribes as hypocrites because they cleansed the external but not the internal parts of

---

[445] Justin Martyr *I apologia* 61.3-5; Wartelle, *Apologies*, 182; Cyril of Jerusalem *Catechesis* 1.title. 1; NPNF II, 7, 6; Basil *Homilia exhortatoria ad sanctum baptisma* 1; PG 31, 425A.

[446] Basil *Regulae morales* 2.1-3; PG 31, 704C-705B; Clarke, *Ascetic Works*, 101-2.

[447] Basil *Regulae morales* 2.2; PG 31, 704D-705A.

their lives. The latter is Paul's exhortation to the Corinthians to cleanse themselves from every defilement of body and spirit with the view toward growing in holiness.

In these passages of the *Regulae morales* Basil emphasizes the order (τάξις) of the Christian life.[448] One must convert through repentance and then be cleansed in body and spirit so that one's good deeds will be acceptable to God. This is a further elaboration of the exhortation of *Regulae morales* 1.1 and 4 to repent from sin and bear fruit of repentance. To do this, *Regulae morales* 2.2 indicates that there must be a cleansing of the inner places of the spirit and also from any pollution of body. Basil's language is similar to baptismal language even though he does not list any Scriptures pertaining to baptism at this point. Later in *Regulae morales* 20 Basil speaks of the necessity of baptism for those who believe in Christ.[449]

Purification has ritual connotations in most religions including Greek and Hebrew. The understanding of purity and holiness in the Christian tradition comes from the purity laws in the Old Testament. The need for ritual and moral purity in order to be acceptable to enter the place of worship or offer worship to God is detailed in the book for the Levitical priests, Leviticus.[450] The Hebrew prophets especially emphasized moral purity over ritual purity.[451] The necessity for ritual and moral purification as prescribed in the Mosaic Law and the writings of the Prophets carried over primarily to the understanding of moral purity in the New Testament world and the tradition of the Church (Mk. 7:15; Acts 10: 15, 28; 2 Cor. 6: 14-7:1; 1 Pet. 1:15, 16).[452] An important

---

[448] Although Basil does not use this word here he did employ a principle of order in teaching others about the Christian life. See *RF* 1; PG 31, 905B-908B; For two other examples of the importance of good order in Basil's *Asceticon* see *RF* 3; PG 31, 916C; *RF* 24; PG 31, 981D; *De iudicio dei* 2; PG 31. 656B-C. The role of order in Basil's *Asceticon* has been described by Holmes, *A Life Pleasing to God*, 61-64, 167. A TLG search for "ταξι" produced 335 matches in Basil's corpus.

[449] Basil *Regulae morales* 20.1; PG 31, 736C-D; Clarke, *Ascetic Works*, 107.

[450] Holiness codes of the Levitical priesthood are found in Leviticus 17-26.

[451] Fredrich Hauck, "καθαρός," in *TDNT*, vol. 3 : 417. Hauck lists for examples, Is. 1:15ff; Ps. 51:2; Jer. 33:8 (LXX 40:8).

[452] Hauck, "καθαρός," 423-4. Compare to Hans Hübner. "Unclean and Clean (NT)," in *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, vol. 6, ed. David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992) : 741-5. Hübner's survey of the same material concludes that the OT injunctions of clean and unclean were taken as binding by the writers of the New Testament. He cites D. Wendebourg. "Die alttestamentlichen

text for the Early Church regarding purification was Paul's Epistles to the Corinthians. Paul wrote to the believers in Corinth saying that they were now the temple of the Lord and that He dwelled in them through His Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 3:16, 17). According to Paul the act of purification was accomplished when the Corinthians had been washed, sanctified and justified in the name of Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of God – a possible reference to baptism (1 Cor. 6:11).

In Basil's work *De spiritu sancto*, purity is taken up especially in terms of the life in the Spirit. The Holy Spirit of God will not come to a person until they have been cleansed.[453] In *De spiritu sancto* the terms for "purity" and "to purify," κάθαρσις and καθαρίζειν, occur seventeen times which is quite a contrast to the one occurrence of "repentance" (μετάνοια) in this work.[454] The *Asceticon* as a whole focuses on both repentance and purity fairly equally.[455] The difference in focus between the two works may have to do with the emphasis of baptism in *De spiritu sancto* where baptism is a central theme to Basil's argument in defending the equal honor of the Holy Spirit. According to *De spiritu sancto* then purification could refer to baptism which is needed for the Spirit to draw near to the believer.

In terms of conversion-initiation in Basil, repentance is the responsibility of the convert. Basil is explicit, he or she must do this *first* as described in *Regulae morales* 1.1. The next thing Basil prescribed in *Regulae morales* 2.2 was that they must be cleansed in order to offer good works which are sanctified. Yet baptism is not mentioned directly until *Regulae morales* 20 which states that the one who believes must be baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Instead, *Regulae*

Reinheitsgesetze in der frühen Kirche," *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* 95 (1984) : 149-70, to establish the mixed application of clean and unclean in the worship life of the post-apostolic Church, especially as it related to the priesthood and sexuality (Hübner, "Unclean and Clean (NT)," 744-5).

[453] Basil *DSS* 9.23; 15.35; 22.53; Pruche, 147, 170, 212.

[454] TLG data base search of "καθαρ" received 17 hits in *De spiritu sancto* and "μετανο" received 1 hit.

[455] TLG data base search on "καθαρ" received 49 hits in the *Asceticon magnum* and 32 hits in the *Regulae morales*. TLG search on "μετανο" received 53 hits in the *Asceticon magnum* and 28 hits in the *Regulae morales*.

morales 2.3 describes the necessity for withdrawal from association with wicked people and not being "warmly attached" to anything of this life.[456] From these portions in the *Regulae morales* it seems that purification has nothing to do with baptism.

This leads us to ask whether purification means something different than baptism in Basil's thought. An interesting point to consider when asking this question is Basil's use of the term καθαρίζειν in *De spiritu sancto* 9. Although the work as a whole is concerned with baptism, Basil does not refer to baptism directly at all in *De spiritu sancto* 9 which lends credence to H. Dörries' theory supported by J. Gribomont that the chapter is in fact a separate piece from the rest of the work inserted at a later time.[457] In *De spiritu sancto* 9 Basil does not use the word μετάνοειν or μετάνοια, but rather καθαρίζειν to convey the idea of purification and cleansing which is needed for the Spirit to indwell the believer. This may be a result of the influence of Neoplatonism on Basil's thought in *De spiritu sancto* 9.[458] In the Greek Church the verb καθαρίζειν was widely applied: to purification in general; more specifically in terms of baptism; through the means of repentance and the practice of virtue.[459] Possibly what is present in Basil's thought is that κάθαρσις represented a *stage* in the spiritual life which involved baptism and repentance.[460] *Regulae morales* 2.2 states that the one who is purified is purified in flesh and spirit and then his good works may be acceptable (2 Cor. 7:1). This is consistent with what Basil wrote in *De spiritu sancto* about baptism – that it cleanses

---

[456] Basil *Regulae morales* 2.3; PG 31, 705A-B; Clarke, *Ascetic Works*, 101-2.

[457] Michael A. G. Haykin, *The Spirit of God: The Exegesis of 1 and 2 Corinthians in the Pneumatomachian Controversy of the Fourth Century*, Supplements to *Vigiliae Christianae* XXVII (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1994), 106-7.

[458] Basil *DSS* 9.23; Pruche, 147. TLG data base search for "καθαρ" gave a total of 5 hits for *DSS* 9.22.11; 23.5; 23.8; 23.9; 23.14. Chapter 9 is the greatest concentration of Basil's use of "καθαρ" in *DSS*. It could very well be related to this chapter's affinity to Platonic and Neoplatonic philosophy. TLG searches on Plotinus and Porphyry reveal a profusion of language about purification. A search of "καθαρ" yielded 179 hits in Plotinus' *Enneads* and 158 hits in Porphyry's works. Compare this with a search of "μετανο" which yielded 4 hits in Plotinus' *Enneads* and 7 hits in Porphyry's corpus.

[459] Lampe, 682-3.

[460] The ascetic stage of purification as a step in the spiritual life was most clearly placed in the Greek tradition by Dionysius the Areopagite, but the roots of it may go back further to the monastic tradition, of which Basil was a part, as well as the language of Neoplatonism which Basil also knew at some level. Cf. Lampe, 683.

the soul from the filth which comes through a carnal mind.[461] Elsewhere in *De spiritu sancto* Basil also taught that one can not contemplate the Spirit unless he has been cleansed of sin by the teaching of Jesus.[462]

These examples suggest a general tendency in Basil's thought to see purification as a beginning stage of the Christian life which leads toward a higher stage of the life of the Spirit. The roots of this could be both philosophical and Scriptural as seen in the frequent use of κάθαρσις and καθαρίζειν in Neoplatonic writers such as Plotinus and Porphyry.[463] It does not seem too much of a stretch to conclude that Basil saw repentance as an aspect of the purification process which took place in conversion-initiation. Nevertheless, the complexity of Basil's thought about the two ideas (μετάνοια and κάθαρσις) does not allow either of them to be limited only to conversion-initiation.

Conclusion

Basil's view of repentance involves both an internal and external transformation of human nature. Repentance is genuine when there is a harmony between an inner attitude of hatred toward sin and the outward bearing of fruits worthy of repentance. On the positive side, repentance involves the practice of good deeds. Basil is very strict about what repentance is and what it is not. In terms of conversion-initiation, repentance is what must be done *first* when one believes the gospel. The threat of judgment for not responding to the proclamation of the gospel is severe and is a warning that inspires action. Purification is also an important term related to repentance in Basil's works. It definitely includes repentance and seems to be synonymous with it at times. Purification in Basil's *De spiritu sancto* 9 and *Regulae morales* 2.1 seem to emphasize that

---

[461] Basil *DSS* 15.35; Pruche, 170; NPNF II, 8, 22.

[462] Basil *DSS* 22.53; Pruche, 212. In *De baptismo* 1.2.10, 26 the same theme is taken up where Jesus' teaching is the baptism of fire promised by John the Baptist. Cf. Jeanne Ducatillon, ed. and trans., *Basile de Césarée, Sur le baptême*, Sources Chrétiennes 357 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1989), 132-5, 185. See also Ducatillon's analysis on pp. 50-4.

[463] See note 458 above.

κάθαρσις is a beginning stage of the life of the Spirit which includes repentance and baptism.

b. Faith

The following is an examination of Basil's teaching about faith and its importance for salvation. Basil describes faith as the acceptance of the gospel, the conviction of the truth of the message, a confession of one's belief in the Trinity, the knowledge of God and manifested in love to God and one's neighbor. These characteristics of faith will be looked at from various texts of Basil to better understand how faith is related to conversion-initiation.

Basil used faith in a variety of ways throughout his works, each of which have some bearing on conversion-initiation. Basil defined faith clearly in a few places. First in *De fide*, he states that faith is "an unhesitating acceptance (συγκατάθεσις ἀδιάκριτος) of what is heard, with full conviction (ἐν πληροφορίᾳ) of the truth of what is proclaimed by the grace of God."[464] Basil continued his thought about what faith was by giving Paul's description of Abraham's faith in God to fulfill what he had promised (Rom. 4:20-1). In the *Regulae morales* Basil defined faith as the "unhesitating conviction (᾽Αδιάκριτος πληροφορία) of the truth of the inspired words, unshaken by any argument either based on the plea of physical necessity or masquerading in the guise of piety."[465]

These two definitions taken from *De fide* and *Regulae morales* emphasize faith as an acceptance and conviction of the truth (ἀλήθεια) which comes from the inspired Scriptures or the proclamation of the gospel. Basil used the adjective ἀδιάκριτος to define this acceptance and conviction. It means literally "undistinguishable, not discriminated."[466] Lampe and Clarke translate it as "unhesitating."[467] This definition of

---

[464] Basil *De fide* 1; PG 31, 677D-680A; Clarke, *Ascetic Works*, 91.
[465] Basil *Regulae morales* 80.22; PG 31, 868C; Clarke, *Ascetic Works*, 129.
[466] LS, 22.

faith focuses on accepting that which is the truth in the Word of God without hesitation or discrimination.

In both of these cases, *De fide* and *Regulae morales* 80.22, there is an emphasis on an "unhesitating acceptance" of the Christian truth as opposed to heretical propositions. Clarke, in a note on *Regulae morales* 80.22, indicates that the phrase "φυσικῆς ἀνάγκης" is a reference to an Arian argument based on the logical necessities of nature.[468] In the work *De fide* Basil gave a Biblical statement of his faith in the form of a baptismal creed to some monks who had doubts about his orthodoxy.[469] The importance of accepting the orthodox Christian truth in both cases was the proper disposition of a convert according to Basil.[470]

Basil also defined faith in relation to knowledge. In *Epistulae* 233-235 Basil wrote to Amphilochius of Iconium to answer some of his questions about an argument used by Anomoean teachers concerning the Christian knowledge of God. These false teachers declared that they knew God's substance and this was a superior knowledge of God than the knowledge of the orthodox catholic Christians. They accused the orthodox of worshiping what they did not know. Basil's response was to say that "'knowing' has many meanings."[471] Basil argued that faith was one way of knowing God and it is faith which saves Christians. He defined faith in this epistle as follows: "And it is faith enough to know that God is, not what He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him (Cf. Heb. 11:6)."[472] This is Basil's definition of faith and it is presented as a way of knowing God.

---

[467] Lampe, 33; Clarke, *Ascetic Works*, 91, 129. M. M. Wagner in her translation of ἀδιάκριτος is less exact. In *De fide*, 1, she translates it as "whole hearted" and in *Regulae morales* 80.22 she translates it as "sure." Cf. Wagner, *Ascetical Works*, 59, 203.

[468] Clarke, *Ascetic Works*, 129 n. 2.

[469] For details about the background of *De fide* see Haykin, *The Spirit of God*, 53-5.

[470] The importance of truth and faith is also mentioned by Justin in the context of conversion-initiation. Cf. Justin *I apologia* 61.1-3; Wartelle, *Apologies*, 182-3.

[471] Basil *Epistula* 234.1; Deferrari, III, 370-1.

[472] Basil *Epistula* 234.2; Deferrari, III, 374-5.

In the above case faith was in contrast to the Anomoean claim to know the substance of God which Basil addressed in his *Contra Eunomium* 1-3. It was Basil's view that the Anomoean teaching of Eunomius was disturbing the "simplicity of faith" which the Church had received from the Apostles as well as the purity and simplicity of the teaching of the divine Spirit.[473] This "simplicity of faith," for Basil and others, was the belief in the doctrine of the Trinity held by Christians which formed the basis of the orthodox faith professed at baptism.[474] Conversion-initiation was therefore integrally connected to the doctrine of the Trinity which was accepted and believed in by the convert and confessed at her baptism. According to Basil faith was the unhesitating acceptance of the doctrine of the Church about the Trinity. It was not the seeking of knowledge of God's substance, but believing that God existed and rewarded those who sought after Him.

Basil also defined faith as "the faith of the fathers" which was a reference to the creed of the Nicene Council[475] – "the articles of faith as drawn up by the blessed Fathers in the synod once convened at Nicaea" which contained "the saving dogma."[476] Faith in these epistles was the true doctrine or teaching about God. "The Faith" had an objective dimension that is separate from the subjective experience of the faith of a Christian. It was the truth as Basil and the Church understood it, taught it, and expected those who wanted to be baptized to accept and confess.

In Basil's summary of the Christian life in the *Regulae morales* he wrote: "What is the sign of a Christian? Faith working through love."[477] This is Basil's definition of the Christian life taken from Paul's Epistle to the Galatians. In fact he defined this kind

---

[473] Basil *Contra Eunomium* 1.1; Bernard Sesboüé, Georges-Matthieu de Durand and Louis Doutreleau, eds. and trans., *Basile de Césarée, Contre Eunome, suivi de Eunome, Apologie*, vol. 1, SC 299 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1982), 140-143.

[474] Sesboüé, de Durand and Doutreleau, *Contre Eunome*, vol. 1, 140 n. 1 and 141 n. 2.

[475] Basil *Epistula* 295; Deferrari, IV, 208-9.

[476] Basil *Epistula* 125; Deferrari, II, 260-1, 264-5.

[477] Basil *Regulae morales* 80.22: PG 31, 868C; Clarke, *Ascetic Works*, 129.

of faith as "saving faith" in *Epistula* 295 which he wrote to a community of monks.[478] Faith needed to be paired with obedience to the commands of Christ, because faith could not save if it was not combined with good works. This may help explain some references that Basil makes elsewhere that without obedience to all the commands of God it is not possible to be saved.[479]

c. Conclusion

Repentance and faith constitute the human response to the gospel and the apostolic proclamation.[480] Basil's teaching of repentance and faith is in general agreement with the New Testament paradigm, but there is at least one important emphasis in Basil's thought which especially characterizes his view of the human steps in conversion-initiation. Basil's teaching of conversion-initiation is dominated by his use of the word πίστις to mean the apostolic doctrines which constitute what the orthodox and catholic Church taught and believed about God, humanity, salvation, etc. Basil primarily focused upon the confession of faith in the Trinity professed by the baptizand in the baptismal liturgy, but also the faith of the baptizer. The confession of faith constituted the essence of the truth of the Christian faith and was a non-negotiable for salvation. Those who did not baptize in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit were not ministers of the catholic Church and therefore could not administer a saving baptism. M. A. Orphanos concludes his discussion of Basil's view of theology with these words:

> Therefore, baptism, in order to be valid and effective, must be performed within the confines of the Church, which, as alone preserving the sound faith, can provide by her orthodox ministers true baptism and salvation. Thus, in Basil's judgment, the sound faith of the baptized and the minister, combined with the proper ritual act, gives to baptism its validity and effectiveness.[481]

---

[478] Basil *Epistula* 295; Deferrari, IV, 208-9.

[479] Basil *RF Prooemium*.2, 5; PG 31, 893A-C, 900B; Clarke, *Ascetic Works*, 147, 150; Wagner, *Ascetical Works*, 230.

[480] Mark 1:16; Acts 2:38.

[481] Orphanos, *Creation and Salvation*, 122.

This quote sums up the importance of faith in Basil's view of conversion-initiation – it must be the orthodox faith in the three persons of the Godhead. The faith of the baptizer is as important as the faith of the convert. This leads us into the following topic of the importance of the Church. Conversion-initiation requires faith, but that faith is found in the Church and is guarded and passed on to those seeking baptism by its bishops and priests. Because of this development of the importance of "the faith," the ecclesial context of conversion-initiation also became more important as a means of passing down the correct interpretation of the apostolic faith to new believers.

2. The Ecclesial Context of Conversion-Initiation

Conversion-initiation takes place in the community of believers. The following three sections will examine the ecclesial context of conversion-initiation in relation to the Church, its administration of the proclamation of the Word of God, and the mystery of baptism.

a. Church

Basil's monastic theory and ecclesiology is really one unified view of the Church as the body of Christ, united to Christ and one another by the Spirit of God and the keeping of the commandment of love. As Paul J. Fedwick described Basil's form of asceticism is an ecclesial type which was his prescribed curriculum for all Christians, not just those who had removed themselves from the mainstream life of the Church.[482] The ascetic life was "a sequel to the sacrament of baptism."[483] The goal of the ascetic life was the goal of the Christian life, that is, "to become similar to God."[484] This pursuit of Christian perfection was for Basil the corporate pursuit of a people seeking to live a

---

[482] Fedwick, *Church*, 15, 20, n. 105.
[483] Fedwick, *Church*, 15.
[484] Fedwick, *Church*, 15.

life pleasing to God.[485] Therefore most of what Basil had to say about the life of the Christian and the Church can be found in his ascetic writings.[486]

Two important aspects of Basil's ecclesiology which emerge from this collection of works were the communal or cenobitic ideal of the Church and the theme of Christ as the Head of the body, His Church.[487] The communal ideal arose most naturally out of the book of Acts which detailed the characteristics of the first church in Jerusalem as well as 1 Corinthians 12 which is Paul's description of the unity and harmony of the body of Christ. What Basil sought to do as bishop of Cappadocia was to establish the kind of life in the churches and monasteries under his authority that was modeled in the first church at Jerusalem.[488] It was Basil's cenobitic ideal which gave a distinctive shape to the form of ecclesial-monasticism which he helped establish in Asia Minor.[489]

Basil's emphasis upon the advantages of the cenobitic life over the hermitic form of monasticism was shaped by his understanding of the Christian life as "faith working through love."[490] The two commands of Christ which were the foundation for the other commandments were to love God and to love one's neighbor.[491] Thus, for Basil, it was necessary that Christians live and worship together in order to fulfill the command of love.[492] The command of love is a dominant theme in Basil's ecclesiology

---

[485] Fedwick, *Church*, 15-8, 97-100; Clarke, *Ascetic Works*, 164, n. 4.

[486] Fedwick, *Church*, 15, 17, 18.

[487] Basil *De iudicio dei* 3, 4; PG 31, 657C-661C; Clarke, *Ascetic Works*, 80-1; *RF* 7.2; PG 31, 929C-932B; Clarke, *Ascetic Works*, 164, 166.

[488] Fedwick, *Church*, 14.

[489] Basil *RF* 7; PG 31, 928B-933C; *Epistula* 295; Deferrari, IV, 206-209. See Emmanuel Amand de Mendieta, *L'Ascèse monastique de saint Basile: Essai historique* (Maredsous: Éditions de Maredsous, 1949), 118-28. See Anthony Meredith, S. J., "Asceticism–Christian and Greek," *Journal of Theological Studies*, n.s., vol. 27, no. 2 (October, 1976) : 323-4. See Fedwick, *Church*, 15.

[490] Basil *Regulae morales* 80.22; PG 31, 868C; Clarke, *Ascetic Works*, 129; *De iudicio dei*, 8; PG 31, 676B-C; Clarke, *Ascetic Works*, 89.

[491] Basil *RF* 1-3; PG 31, 905B-917D; Clarke, *Ascetic Works*, 152-8.

[492] Basil *RF* 7; PG 31, 928B-933C; Clarke, *Ascetic Works*, 163-6.

and establishes the guiding principles for his brotherhoods, local congregations and the wider unity of the catholic Church.[493]

The second most important characteristic of Basil's ecclesiology is the unity of the Church through submission to Christ who is the King and the Head of the body.[494] Those who are Christians are part of one body, of which Christ is the Head.[495] There is a spiritual union with Christ which joins all Christians together and this union comes through baptism into the same Spirit.[496] This unity is maintained by joint submission to the Head through obedience to His will and mutual submission to one another in peace. It is broken by jealousy, strife and division.[497]

The Church, in Basil's view of conversion-initiation, is the place where initiation takes place for initiation into Christ and the body of Christ occurs specifically in baptism. Basil speaks of baptism as a "mystical initiation to the knowledge of God" in *De spiritu sancto*.[498] During the baptismal rite the baptizand makes their confession of faith and is thus admitted into the company of the faithful.[499] The newly-baptized, through the process of the catechumenate and baptism, is initiated into the unwritten ordinances and teachings of the Church which Basil refers to as the "silent and mystical tradition."[500] Christian initiation is into one body – the body of Christ – and into one Spirit – the Holy Spirit of God. In *De spiritu sancto* Basil paraphrased Paul's words from 1 Corinthians 12:13 in describing the unity of the Church through baptism in the one Spirit of God: "And as parts in the whole so are we individually in the Spirit, because we all 'were baptized in one body into one spirit.'"[501] For Basil there is a

---

[493] Basil's emphasis on maintaining the bond of peace and communion of love through regular correspondence and visitation among the churches is well attested to by his own prolific correspondence with churches throughout the Roman Empire. Cf. Fedwick, *Church*, 34, 101-28.

[494] Basil *De iudicio dei* 2-4; PG 31, 653C-661A; Clarke, *Ascetic Works*, 77-81.

[495] Basil *De iudicio dei* 3; PG 31, 660A; Clarke, *Ascetic Works*, 80.

[496] Basil *DSS* 26.61; Pruche, 228; *RF* 7.2; PG 31, 929C; Clarke, *Ascetic Works*, 164.

[497] Basil *De iudicio dei* 3; PG 31, 660A; Clarke, *Ascetic Works*, 80.

[498] Basil *DSS* 29.75; Pruche, 253-4.

[499] Basil *DSS* 10.26; Pruche, 151-2; NPNF II, 8, 17.

[500] Basil *DSS* 27.66; Pruche, 234; NPNF II, 8, 42.

[501] Basil *DSS* 26.61; Pruche, 228; NPNF II, 8, 39.

spiritual communion that all believers share since they have been baptized into the body of Christ.[502] It is the confession of faith and baptism of the catholic Church which separates the catholic Christian convert from the heretical and schismatic offshoots of the one true faith. Thus baptism and the confession of faith either unites or divides not only the Christian from the pagan, but the heretic from the orthodox.

The role of the Church in Basil's view was to nurture new-born Christians. It gave birth to them through baptism and nourished them through the milk of its catechesis.[503] This dimension of the Church's ministry demanded that the ministers of God serve as shepherds and physicians of souls.[504] The importance of a loving community was paramount in Basil's teaching, yet this was not a community of mere acceptance, but a company of people seeking to live lives pleasing to God, spurring one another on to the goal as athletes.[505] Therefore the Church was the context of the ongoing process of conversion which Basil found necessary in order for a person to become perfect in all things. In this context brothers and sisters in Christ converted "sinners" through rebuke and correction.[506] The leader in the Basilian monasteries had the task of laboring for the spiritual life and growth of the brothers or sisters which involved the ministry of admonition and discipline.[507]

In the church at Caesarea conversion-initiation took place in the context of the Church where Christian converts were baptized and then shepherded by the ministry of the ecclesial hierarchy and the fellowship of the brethren. Basil's teaching on the authority of Christ as King and as the Head of the body forms the basis for the unity of that body with which the convert is joined. *Submission* to authority includes the authority of God and of his Church. It meant receiving correction humbly and loving

---

[502] Basil *RF* 7.2; PG 31, 929C; Clarke, *Ascetic Works*, 164.
[503] Basil *Homilia exhortatoria ad sanctum baptisma* 1; PG 31, 425A.
[504] Basil *Regulae morales* 80.16-7; PG 31, 865B-C; Clarke, *Ascetic Works*, 129.
[505] Basil *RF* 7; PG 31, 928B-933C; Clarke, *Ascetic Works*, 163-6; *Epistulae* 22, 150, 295; Deferrari, I, 128-141; II, 360-71; IV, 206-9.
[506] Basil *RB* 3, 4; PG 31, 1084A-1085A; Clarke, *Ascetic Works*, 231-2.

others in the household of faith. According to Basil conversion-initiation meant being *joined* as a member to the body of Christ through the one Holy Spirit, living in love and supporting the life of that body. The point at which a convert was united to God and his Church was baptism. This is the point where one renounced the works of the devil, confessed faith in the Trinity and was joined by the Spirit to the body of Christ. Thus, being joined to Christ and submitting to Christ's authority as King and Head meant breaking from the world and any other ties that would keep one from living a life of obedience to Christ. Failing to break from these things could hinder one's ability to obey Christ fully and thus endanger one's salvation.

b. The Word of God

The relationship of the Word of God to conversion-initiation will now be examined from three different angles. First I will discuss Basil's two-fold breakdown of the Word of God into *kerygmata* and *dogmata* and the importance of *kerygmata* in conversion-initiation. Following this I will show that obedience to the Word of God was necessary for salvation which made obedience to the Word the primary means of transformation. The final point is the importance of the minister of the Word whether as bishop or the "leader of the Word" in Basil's monasteries. Basil taught that the minister of the Word was important in bringing about the conversion of sinners and recalcitrant believers; that conversion took place through the admonition given by the minister and his use of *oikonomia* to heal the wounds of the soul with the proper medicine. These three aspects – the proclamation of the Word of God, obedience to the Word of God and the minister of the Word of God – will be looked at in relation to conversion-initiation.

Kerygmata *and* Dogmata *in Conversion-Initiation*

In *De spiritu sancto*, Basil distinguished between two categories of the teaching of the Church: the *kerygmata* and the *dogmata*. Basil described the *kerygmata* of the

---

[507] Basil *RF* 25; PG 31, 984C-985C; Clarke, *Ascetic Works*, 191-2.

Church as that which was "proclaimed to all the world."[508] Thus *kerygmata* included the general preaching of the gospel for repentance and salvation through faith and obedience to Christ, whereas the second category, the *dogmata*, was reserved for those who were being initiated into the Church.[509] This teaching was an oral tradition which came originally from the apostles that included liturgical rites and practices and was guarded with silence from the uninitiated. According to Basil *kerygmata* and *dogmata* form the basic division of the Word of God for the Church: the Word of God proclaimed in the world and the unwritten apostolic tradition held silently within the hearts of the faithful and transmitted by an oral tradition most likely in the catechetical process of the Church.[510] The distinction between *kerygmata* and *dogmata* is important for the task of understanding Basil's view of the Word of God in conversion-initiation.

Having explained how Basil distinguished between *kerygmata* and *dogmata*, I will discuss further the importance of proclamation in its own right. Basil mentions the role of the Word of God in conversion-initiation in his *Homilia in psalmum XLVIII*. Commenting on verses 2 and 3 Basil saw in this passage a summons for all people of the world to listen to the Word of God.[511] It was the proclamation of the gospel through prophets and apostles that the Spirit used to bring together people from all walks of life into the Church.[512] A critical aspect of this proclamation was that it was a call through the Church summoning the saved. It was a summons which went out universally and primarily to those who stand condemned because of their sin.[513] Here Basil draws from his imagery of sinners as the sick in need of healing. Sinners who heard the

---

[508] Basil *DSS* 27.66; Pruche, 236; NPNF II, 8, 42. See Emmanuel Amand de Mendieta, *The 'Unwritten' and 'Secret' Apostolic Traditions in the Theological Thought of St. Basil of Caesarea*, Scottish Journal of Theology, Occasional Papers, 13 (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1965), 1 n. 8. *Kerygmata* in this context according to Amand de Mendieta's interpretation of Basil means "the official and open proclamation of faith."

[509] Basil *DSS* 27.66; Pruche, 232-8; NPNF II, 8, 40-3. Amand de Mendieta defines *dogmata* in this context as "liturgical traditions with the implied theological doctrines" (Mendieta, *Apostolic Traditions*, 1).

[510] Gain, *L'Église de Cappadoce*, 334-6

[511] Basil *Homilia in Psalmum XLVIII* 1; PG 29, 432C-433B; Way, *Exegetic Homilies*, 312.

[512] Basil *Homilia in Psalmum XLVIII* 1; PG 29, 432C-436A; Way, *Exegetic Homilies*, 312-4.

proclamation of salvation were called to repent. The Word of God goes out first to sinners and then to those who are saved and unites the repentant in peace and harmony within the Church.[514]

Basil taught that the proclamation of the Word of God is not only the work of the Church, but is tied closely to the work of the Holy Spirit. As Basil noted earlier in the same work, the Spirit summons sinners to repentance through the proclamation of the Church.[515] In the introduction to his first Homily on the six days of creation, Basil said:

> Let us hear, therefore, the words of truth expressed not in the persuasive language of human wisdom, but in the teachings of the Spirit, whose end is not praise from those hearing, but the salvation of those taught.[516]

The object of the proclamation of the Word of God is to communicate the truth in such a way that it would be in conformity and harmony with the teachings of the Spirit so that people may be saved.

> This work of saving the lost through the proclamation of the Word of God was

practically translated into an invitation by Basil to be baptized. For Basil and the other Cappadocians the Word of God was preached in order to bring people to a place of receiving baptism. This objective is captured in Basil's *Homilia exhortatoria ad sanctum baptisma* which Basil gave before the Lenten season in order to encourage people to be baptized.[517] In the sermon Basil proclaimed that it is always the time for salvation through baptism, but especially at the season of *Pasch.*[518] Likewise Basil

---

[513] Basil *Homilia in Psalmum XLVIII* 1; PG 29, 433C; Way, *Exegetic Homilies*, 313.

[514] Basil *Homilia in Psalmum XLVIII* 1; PG 29, 433C-436A; Way, *Exegetic Homilies*, 313-4.

[515] Basil *Homilia in Psalmum XLVIII* 1; PG 29, 433A; Way, *Exegetic Homilies*, 312.

[516] Basil *Hexaemeron* 1.1; Mendieta and Rudberg, *Homilien zum Hexaëmeron*, 3, ll. 10-3; Way, *Exegetic Homilies*, 4-5.

[517] Basil *Homilia exhortatoria ad sanctum baptisma*; PG 31, 424-44; Hamman, *Le baptême*, 97-112. All three of the Cappadocians preached exhortations to baptism and J. Bernardi wrote that an exhortation to baptism took place yearly between Christmas and the beginning of Lent (Bernardi, *La Prédication des pères cappadociens*, 304). For a discussion of all three of their exhortations to baptism, cf. Ferguson, "Exhortations to Baptism in the Cappadocians," 121-9.

[518] Basil *Homilia exhortatoria ad sanctum baptisma* 1; PG 31, 424A-425A.

warned his congregation of the danger of postponing baptism until the time of death.[519] In his sermon Basil addresses the excuses that people give to avoid baptism and admonished people not to delay lest they wait too long and miss the opportunity for salvation which God has made available to them.[520] Basil throughout his sermon commended the sacrament of baptism, its grace to save and eternal benefits.[521] It is in sermons such as his exhortation to baptism that we see that proclamation for Basil ultimately was to bring the saved into the Church as a people under the yoke of the gospel who lived a life of obedience to God's word.

Obedience to the Word of God

For Basil obedience to all the commands of God, especially the commands of Christ in the Gospels, was essential to enter the Kingdom of God.[522] According to the *Regulae morales* 1.1 the gospel brought a more terrible judgment upon its hearers if not obeyed than that received by those who never heard it.[523] In the *Prooemium* to the *Regulae fusius tractatae*, Basil taught the ascetics and enthusiasts in his audience that salvation was dependent upon obedience to every command of God.[524] Basil's teaching in the rest of the *Asceticon* may be best understood as an explanation of what it means to live a life of obedience to God's commandments in the context of the brotherhood.[525]

For Basil the Word of God was the greatest authority over a Christian's life. To convert was for him to receive the commands of Christ and obey them even unto death.[526] According to Basil the Word of God held more authority than human

---

[519] Basil *Homilia exhortatoria ad sanctum baptisma* 1; PG 31, 425B-C.
[520] Basil *Homilia exhortatoria ad sanctum baptisma* 5; PG 31, 436C-437A.
[521] Basil *Homilia exhortatoria ad sanctum baptisma* 5; PG 31, 433A.
[522] Basil *RF Prooemium*.3; PG 31, 893C-D; Clarke, *Ascetic Works*, 147.
[523] Basil *Regulae morales* 1.1; PG 31, 700B-C; Wagner, *Ascetical Works*, 71.
[524] Basil *RF Prooemium*.2, 5; PG 31, 893A-C, 900B; Clarke, *Ascetic Works*, 147, 150; Wagner, *Ascetical Works*. 230.
[525] Basil *RF* 1-9; PG 31, 905B-944B; Clarke, *Ascetic Works*, 152-71. *RB* 1; PG 31, 1080C-1081C; Clarke, *Ascetic Works*, 230-1.
[526] Basil *RB* 116; PG 31, 1161A-B; Clarke, *Ascetic Works*, 273.

obligations, the traditions of society and the laws of the Empire.[527] For this reason, Basil acknowledged the possibility that one may have to disobey others in order to obey Christ and be his disciple.[528] Obedience to the gospel, for Basil, was the way of conversion which led to salvation. This is most clearly seen in Basil's *Asceticon* where it is evident that, for Basil, the Christian life was not just the one-time step of obedience to be baptized but a life of constant devotion to the Word of God and obedience to its demands which began with submission to baptism.

The Minister of the Word of God

The duties of the bishop-preacher in Basil's practice and theory are found most clearly in *Regulae morales* 70.1-37.[529] The preacher was responsible both to preach the whole counsel of God and to practice it.[530] Basil also wrote that the one entrusted with the gospel must do all that he can for the salvation of those outside the Church, even heretics.[531] Those who convert are those who have believed in the Lord through the proclamation, have repented from sins, and have gone on to bear good fruit according to the gospel of Jesus.[532] The long-term task of the minister of the Word of God was "to bring all to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, yet each in his own order."[533] One way in which Basil saw the role of the minister of God was in the form of admonition to sinners. The leader of the Word (*proestos*; ὁ προεστὼς τοῦ λόγου)[534] in Basil's monasteries was responsible for rebuking sinners and not allowing

---

[527] Basil *RF* 5, 8, 11, 12; PG 31, 920C-921B, 924C-D, 933C-941A, 948A-949A; Clarke, *Ascetic Works*, 159, 161, 166-9, 173. Although obedience to Christ superceded all other obligations Basil did not dismiss the laws and obligations of this world.

[528] Basil *RB* 114; PG 31, 1160B-C; Clarke, *Ascetic Works*, 272-3.

[529] Basil *Regulae morales* 70.1-37; PG 31, 816D-845A; Wagner, *Ascetical Works*, 162-184.

[530] Basil *Regulae morales* 70.5-6, 8-9; PG 31, 821B-824A, 824B-825B; Wagner, *Ascetical Works*, 166-8.

[531] Basil *Regulae morales* 70.32; PG 31, 841B-C; Wagner, *Ascetical Works*, 182-3.

[532] Basil *Regulae morales* 1.1-5; PG 31, 700B-704C; Wagner, *Ascetical Works*, 71-4.

[533] Basil *Regulae morales* 70.31; PG 31, 841A-B; Clarke, *Ascetic Works*, 123.

[534] Basil used the title "leader of the word" to designate the one given the charism of preaching the word of God in the context of the church or in the monastery (Fedwick, *Church*, 47 n. 44, 47-53, 77ff.). See *Homilia in Psalmum XXVIII* 2; PG 29, 284A-B; *Epistula* 184; Deferrari, II, 472-3; *RF* 15.4; PG 31, 956B. For New Testament use see Bauer, 707. See Lampe, 1150-1, προΐστημι B.6, for the use of προεστώς for bishop, leader, superior of a monastery in Greek Patristic writers.

the brothers or sisters to sin without correcting their errors so that they may be saved.[535] Admonition was an important aspect of the work of the leader of the Word and helped convert sinners and restore brothers.

Basil's use and view of admonition was not without discernment. According to Gregory of Nazianzus, Basil, as a minister who preached and taught the Word of God, was guided by the rhetorical principle of *oikonomia* (οἰκονομία).[536] George L. Kustas has explained the meaning of *oikonomia* in this way:

> the notion of accommodation to circumstance, whether in the daily management of an estate, as originally, or in church affairs, or in God's providential concerns for his creature as seen in the Incarnation. It is not the imposition of a rule but the exercise of a function and has properly to do not with compromise but with adjustment. Its psychological roots lie in the sense of a plural world conceived ideally as a harmonious interaction among its members, an interaction to be achieved not despite but through their distinctiveness and individuality.[537]

Basil's use of *oikonomia* in his preaching of the Word of God was as a bishop over his flock. This "exercise of a function" affected his teaching and found articulation as a principle in Basil's instructions on the practice of the "leader of the Word." According to Basil the leader of the Word ought to be like a physician administering medicine and prescribing remedies and treatments appropriate to the sickness of each patient.[538] Therefore Basil taught the leaders of the Word to teach and admonish their brothers and sisters with the sensitivity of a physician in order to bring healing and salvation.

Conclusion

The two forms of the Word of God in conversion-initiation according to Basil's teaching was the proclamation of the gospel given to all and the catechesis offered to the catechumens. The proclamation of the gospel was the main way in which God's Spirit brought people into the Church. By proclamation Basil invited and exhorted

---

[535] Basil *Regulae morales* 72.6; PG 31, 849B-C; *RF* 25.1; PG 31, 984C-985A; *RB* 3, 4; PG 31, 1084A-1085A.

[536] Gregory of Nazianzus *Epistula* 58; PG 37 113A-117B; NPNF II, 7, 454-5.

people to be saved through baptism. According to Basil's teaching conversion-initiation involved submitting to the authority of God which meant obedience to his Word. The Christian, for Basil, was one who unreservedly submitted to the will of God as written in the Scripture and taught by the Church. The minister of the Word of God was crucial to the effectiveness of the proclamation in winning people to the way of salvation for it is through his or her admonition of sinners that people repented and obeyed God's word. The life of the minister, his or her obedience to the Word of God, was no less important than their ministry of the Word.

As we have seen conversion-initiation according to Basil took place within the Church which proclaimed the Word of God which is the voice of the Spirit of God calling the elect into the Church. Basil's description of this process in his *Homilia in psalmum XLVIII* will be discussed further under the topic of the work of the Spirit. But we shall turn first to a discussion of baptism which will complete the section on the ecclesial context of conversion-initiation.

c. Baptism

Perhaps Basil's work as a priest and bishop highlights his view of conversion-initiation best. In the following section I will endeavor to review the main points of Basil's view of baptism in conversion-initiation. First I will outline the general form of the *rite* of conversion-initiation in Basil's works. Secondly I will lay out the theological importance of baptism for conversion-initiation and salvation as taught by Basil.

---

[537] George L. Kustas, "Basil and the Rhetorical Tradition," in *Basil of Caesarea: Christian, Humanist, Ascetic: A Sixteen-Hundredth Anniversary Symposium*, ed. Paul J. Fedwick, vol. 1 (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1981), 227-8.

[538] Basil *RF* 30; PG 31, 992C-993A; *The Ascetic Works of St. Basil*, 196.

Baptism and the Rites of Conversion-Initiation

In outlining the various steps of conversion it is helpful to look at the process of conversion-initiation which Basil writes about primarily in *De spiritu sancto*, but elsewhere as well. In *De spiritu sancto* he mentions, not methodically but anecdotally, the various relevant aspects of conversion-initiation that are related to and involving baptism. Some of these consist of the rite, but also the process of being a catechumen.[539]

The first step[540] an unbeliever took in the process of conversion-initiation was to come to the Church. It was in this stage of attendance that the person was considered a "hearer" – one who listened to the prayers, heard the readings of the Scripture in the liturgy as well as the sermon. These individuals were then dismissed before the celebration of the Eucharist. At some point in time the individual decided to respond to the invitation to register for baptism.[541] At this point, if they were accepted by the Church to receive baptism, they were signed with the cross by the bishop and enrolled as a catechumen.[542] In the catechumenate they were taught the foundations of the faith, especially the orthodox understanding of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, as well as the liturgical *dogmata* of the Church.[543] The profession of faith was learned by the catechumen so that they would be able confess their faith at the time of baptism. In the baptismal ceremony the person entered the church, renounced the devil and the worship of idols, professed their faith in the Trinity which may have included signing their name to an official document,[544] and received the washing in water for their cleansing and the

---

[539] The baptismal rite of Cappadocia in the fourth century is not known to us today as are other rites from other churches from the same time period, such as the rite of Antioch which is found in John Chrysostom's catechetical instructions or the rite of the Jerusalem church in Cyril's *Mystagogical Catecheses*. The following description is an approximation based on general knowledge of Chrysostom's and Cyril's liturgies along with the specific rites which Basil mentions.

[540] The following process of conversion-initiation was taken from Basil *DSS* 10.26; 11.27; 15.35; 27.66; *Homilia exhortatoria ad sanctum baptisma* with reference to Mendieta, *Apostolic Traditions*, 60-1 and Yarnold, *The Awe-Inspiring Rites*, 1-54.

[541] Basil *Homilia exhortatoria ad sanctum baptisma* 7; PG 31, 440A-B.

[542] Basil *DSS* 27.66; Pruche, 233.

[543] Basil *DSS* 27.66; Pruche, 232-8.

[544] Basil *DSS* 10.26; Pruche, 152, n. 1. B. Jackson's note on this point in *DSS* 10.26 says: "The names of the catechumens were registered and the Renunciation and Profession of Faith (*Interrogationes et Responsa* ; ἐπερωτήσεις καὶ ἀπόκρισεις) may have been signed" (NPNF II, 8, 17, n. 7).

giving of the Spirit.[545] They were immersed three times in imitation of the three days Christ was dead in the grave and corresponding to the names of the three persons of the Trinity. After the immersions they were anointed with holy oil.[546] They were then able to partake of the Eucharist with the rest of the congregation. This was the process of the rite of initiation which occurred traditionally over a period of time while the person was first a hearer, then a catechumen or one of the illuminated, and, finally, one of those who were perfected by the grace of baptism.

Baptism and Conversion-Initiation

Basil's doctrine of conversion-initiation is founded on the significance of baptism and its meaning for salvation and the Christian life. The following points will be made from Basil's teaching on baptism: baptism was primarily a part of the imitation of Christ which was necessary for salvation; baptism regenerated the believer, giving them new life in Christ; baptism gave the gift of the Spirit and the blessing of salvation from the power of death.

According to Basil baptism saved because it was in imitation of Christ's death and resurrection. It served to complete or perfect the process of imitating Christ. With this emphasis Basil stands in a tradition of understanding the Christian life as an imitation of Christ's life, an imitation most dramatically seen in the lives of the martyrs and later in the monastic movement. Baptism was also associated with the imitation of

---

[545] Pruche, 152 n. 4 and Spidlik, *La sophiologie*, 205 n. 244 both outline the three elements of Christian salvation in Basil as including: the renunciation of idols, the confession of the Trinitarian faith and baptism in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. According to Pruche who is quoted by Spidlik, this baptism unites the believer to the Trinity, deifies them and makes them sons of God.

[546] There is no clear record of Basil's description of the anointing with oil in the rite and its definite relation in the rite to the washing with water. Basil does mention anointing with oil generally and describes it proceeding after baptism in *De ieiunio, homilia i* 2. Cf. *Homilia in Psalmum XLIV* 8. Ysebaert wrote that "The Cappadocian Fathers employ χρίειν for a postbaptismal anointing with an oil which is called χρῖσμα and μύρον, but there are still equivocal expressions for the gift of the Spirit as the effect of this rite" (Ysebaert, 365). Cf. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, 434.

Christ and martyrdom by the Church and Basil's teaching was no exception.[547] Basil taught that the imitation of Christ in baptism was necessary for salvation:

> This is the reason for the sojourn of Christ in the flesh, the pattern [of] life described in the Gospels, the sufferings, the cross, the tomb, the resurrection; so that the man who is being saved through imitation of Christ receives the old adoption. For perfection of life the imitation of Christ is necessary, not only in the example of gentleness, lowliness, and long suffering set us in His life, but also of His actual death.[548]

The imitation of Christ forms the foundation of Basil's view of baptism. The one who is baptized is laid in the water just as Christ was buried in a tomb. Then they are raised in the likeness of Christ's resurrection and live a resurrected life according to the gospel of Christ.

For Basil the imitation of Christ is central to his view of the entire Christian life. Baptism is a part of the imitation of Christ which also consists in the life of discipleship. In Basil's context it was the monastic life which was the life of discipleship that imitated Christ's life. But to perfectly imitate Christ was to be baptized in order to imitate not only his life, but also his death and resurrection.

According to Basil baptism was a gift of new life, the regeneration of the inner person. He described in *De spiritu sancto* the importance of regeneration through the sacrament of baptism, as the "beginning of a second life."[549] The imitation of Christ's death by immersion in the water (i.e., the tomb) brought the old life to an end. The imitation of Christ's resurrection was the rising again by the power of the Holy Spirit. In other words, Basil taught that the Spirit made the convert a new person. Basil described the role of the Spirit in the immersion in water: "the water receiving the body as in a tomb figures death, while the Spirit pours in the quickening power, renewing our

---

[547] Gordon Jeanes, "Baptism Portrayed as Martyrdom in the Early Church," in *Forms of Devotion: Conversion, Worship, Spirituality, and Asceticism*, edited with an introduction by Everett Ferguson (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1999), 70-2. Cf. Basil *DSS* 15.36; NPNF II, 8, 22.

[548] Basil *DSS* 15.35; Pruche, 168-9; NPNF II, 8, 21.

[549] Basil *DSS* 15.35; Pruche, 169; NPNF II, 8, 21.

souls from the deadness of sin unto their original life."[550] It was a complete transformation of the baptized "in mind, word, and deed, and his becoming, by the power given, that very thing of which he was born."[551]

This regeneration cleanses and renews the soul.[552] It is the process of being born again as Basil described it: "This then is what it is to be born again of water and of the Spirit, the being made dead being effected in the water, while our life is wrought in us through the Spirit."[553] The resurrection life, the life which the Christian has after baptism, is described in the Gospels by Christ.[554] To be baptized is to enter into the resurrection life of discipleship and perfection according to the gospel.

Regeneration through baptism was a defining characteristic of the Christian. In *Regulae morales* 80.22, a summary of the marks of a Christian, Basil wrote about the importance of regeneration as a mark distinguishing the Christian man or woman:

> What is the mark of a Christian? To be born anew in baptism of water and Spirit. What is the mark of him that is born of water? As Christ died to sin once, that he should thus be dead and unmoved by any sin, as it is written: "All we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death. We were buried therefore with Him through baptism into death ; knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away, that we should no longer be in bondage to sin (Rom. 6:3, 4, 6)." What is the mark of him that is born of the Spirit? That he should be, according to the measure given him, that very thing of which he was born, as it is written : "That which is born of the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit (Jn. 3:6)."[555]

The goal of regeneration according to Basil is to be "unmoved by any sin," that is to be perfect in one's obedience to the will of God. Regeneration enabled the Christian to live a life without sin, obeying every command of the Lord. With the gift of regeneration one becomes a person of the Spirit as described in Basil's *Asceticon* and elsewhere. This

---

[550] Basil *DSS* 15.35; Pruche, 170; NPNF II, 8, 22.

[551] Basil *Regulae morales* 20.2; PG 31, 736D-737C; Clarke, *Ascetic Works*, 107. Cf. *Regulae morales* 80.22; PG 31, 869A; Clarke, *Ascetic Works*, 130.

[552] Basil *DSS* 15.35; Pruche, 170; NPNF II, 8, 22.

[553] Basil *DSS* 15.35; Pruche, 170; NPNF II, 8, 22.

[554] Basil *DSS* 15.35; Pruche, 171; NPNF II, 8, 22.

[555] Basil *Regulae morales* 80.22; PG 31, 868D-869B; Clarke, *Ascetic Works*, 130.

is an important point when understanding Basil's view of Christian asceticism which presumes the regeneration of baptism.

The distinction between regeneration and the gift of the Spirit in the Early Church has been debated by theologians which has resulted in some finding a clear distinction between the regeneration of the believer and the gift of the Spirit in the baptismal rite and others emphasizing the unity of the sacrament in one act of grace given by God's Spirit.[556] In Basil's teaching in keeping with other witnesses of the rites of conversion-initiation in Asia Minor he does not distinguish in the rite between the two actions of the Spirit regenerating the believer as opposed to the gift of the Spirit being given.[557] Baptism is generally, according to Basil, the moment when the convert receives the gift of regeneration and the gift of the Spirit. The Spirit is received as one is immersed in the waters of baptism. It is the Spirit that brings the grace which saves in baptism. Basil said in *De spiritu sancto* 10.26, "Whence is it that we are Christians? Through our faith, would be the universal answer. And in what way are we saved? Plainly because we were regenerate through the grace given in our baptism. How else could we be?"[558] Then in *De spiritu sancto* 15.35, he wrote, "It follows that if there is any grace in the water, it is not of the nature of the water, but of the presence of the Spirit."[559] Therefore according to Basil, the grace which saves comes from the presence of the Spirit at baptism.

The gift of the Spirit brings a wealth of blessings to the believer who confesses their faith in the Trinity and is baptized in the likeness of Christ's death and resurrection. Basil describes some of these benefits of the Spirit:

> Through the Spirit comes our restoration to paradise, our ascension into the kingdom of heaven, our return to the adoption of sons, our liberty to call God our Father, our being made partakers of the grace of Christ, our being called children of light, our sharing in eternal glory, and in a word,

---

[556] Ysebaert, 58-62.
[557] Ysebaert, 70-1, 74, 351, 364-6.
[558] Basil *DSS* 10.26; Pruche, 151; NPNF II, 8, 17.
[559] Basil *DSS* 15.35; Pruche, 171; NPNF II, 8, 22.

> our being brought into a state of all "fulness of blessing," both in this world and in the world to come, of all the good gifts that are in store for us, by promise whereof, through faith, beholding the reflection of their grace as though they were already present, we await the full enjoyment.[560]

Another notable aspect of the gift of the Spirit is that it was not made available through the water baptism offered by John the Baptist; only Christ baptized with the Spirit and with fire, the latter of which Basil interprets as the "trial at the judgment."[561]

Salvation is tied to faith in the Trinity, the grace of baptism and the ongoing life of discipleship which involves obedience to the commands of Christ and living a life worthy of one's calling. Baptism saves, but the Christian's perseverance in keeping the seal of the Spirit pure is necessary in order for salvation to be secured.[562] Basil wrote that baptism was a deposit of God's grace for the day of redemption much like a talent which can be multiplied through investment or hidden and buried (Matt. 25:14-30).[563] The Christian who buries the gift of God's grace will lose it at the judgement and this grace Basil described as the Spirit himself.[564] Grace for salvation, then, is the Spirit himself who regenerates the one who believes and confesses their faith in the Trinity during the sacrament of baptism.

In *Epistula* 234 Basil wrote to Amphilochius, "How then am I saved? Through faith."[565] Faith was for Basil the foundation of salvation and the beginning point. Faith though was bound to baptism. It was baptism which sealed this faith. In *De spiritu sancto* Basil wrote to Amphilochius again and said:

> Faith and baptism are two kindred and inseparable ways of salvation : faith is perfected through baptism, baptism is established through faith, and both are completed by the same names. For as we believe in the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, so are we also baptized in the name of the Father and the Son and of the Holy Ghost : first comes the

---

[560] Basil *DSS* 15.36; Pruche, 171-2; NPNF II, 8, 22. Cf. *DSS* 9.23; NPNF II, 8, 15-6.
[561] Basil *DSS* 15.36; Pruche, 172; NPNF II, 8, 22.
[562] Basil *DSS* 16.40; Pruche, 182-3.
[563] Basil *DSS* 16.40, Pruche, 182.
[564] Basil *DSS* 16.40; Pruche, 182.
[565] Basil *Epistula* 234.2; Deferrari, III, 374-5.

> confession, introducing us to salvation, and baptism follows, setting the seal upon our assent.[566]

Without faith *and* baptism one cannot be saved.[567] For Basil this means that one must confess the orthodox faith in Father, Son and Holy Spirit and be baptized in the catholic Church which upholds this faith and baptizes in these three names. Based on the previous point about the necessity of the Spirit to bring regeneration it seems as though Basil is saying that the Spirit is present only in the orthodox catholic Church not in heretical churches. Thus salvation is dependent on a specifically orthodox baptism, that is in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and, in the catholic Church as opposed to the congregations of heretics whose foundation of faith and thus of their baptism was at variance with the truth. Basil kept in line with the tradition of the Fathers that "rejected completely the baptism of heretics."[568]

Conclusion

Baptism forms the centerpiece and the ritual aspect of conversion-initiation. It is conducted by the bishop and initiates the convert into the household of God. Baptism's significance is that it begins the new life of the Christian who becomes a child of God and begins a whole new existence in the Spirit. The role of the Spirit in conversion-initiation completes the picture of Basil's teaching. It is to a further examination of Basil's ideas on the Holy Spirit that we now turn.

3. The Holy Spirit: Divine Action and Gift in Conversion-Initiation

The doctrine of the Holy Spirit in Basil's writings gives some indication of the role of the Spirit in the conversion-initiation of the Christian. In his two major dogmatic works Basil consistently referred to this person of the Trinity as the Holy Spirit, the

---

[566] Basil *DSS* 12.28; Pruche, 157; NPNF II, 8, 18.

[567] Basil *Contra Eunomium* 3.5; Bernard Sesboüé, Georges-Matthieu de Durand and Louis Doutreleau, eds. and trans., *Basile De Césarée: Contre Eunome, suivi de Eunome, Apologie*, vol. 2, SC 305 (Paris: Éditions Du Cerf, 1983), 164-5; *DSS* 10.26; 12.28; Pruche, 151; 157.

[568] Basil *Epistula* 188.1; Deferrari, III, 12-3.

Spirit of truth and the Paraclete.[569] These three titles also provide for Basil the basis for part of his argument for the divinity of the Spirit in *Contra Eunomium* and *De spiritu sancto*. These three titles as well as the role of the Spirit as *creator* form four points in Basil's pneumatology which are relevant to the topic of conversion-initiation.

a. The Spirit of Truth

The Spirit of God in the Gospel of John is called the "Spirit of truth which proceeds from the Father" (Jn. 15:26) and it is this Gospel which also emphasizes the three things the Holy Spirit convicts people of, namely, sin, truth and the judgment of God (John 16:7-11). The Spirit works by showing people the truth and this takes place in relation to sin and judgment as well. These are foundational truths for Basil's doctrine of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of truth according to Basil leads people into the truth and helps them to confess the true faith.[570]

Basil in *De fide* wrote a confession of faith with which he said he baptized in Caesarea. In this baptismal confession or "private creed" Basil described the person of the Holy Spirit:

> We believe in and confess the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete, 'whereby we are sealed unto the day of redemption' (Eph. 4:30), the Spirit of truth (Jn. 15:26), 'the spirit of adoption of sons whereby we cry: Abba (Father) (Rom. 8:15),' who works and divides the gifts of God to every one according as He wills unto profit (1 Cor. 12:7, 11); who teaches and brings to mind whatever he hears from the Son (Jn. 14:26); who is good and shows the way to all truth and confirms all believers unto certain knowledge, true confession, pious worship, and adoration in spirit and truth (Jn. 4:23) of God the Father and His Only-begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and of Himself.[571]

This baptismal creed demonstrates Basil's view of the importance of the Holy Spirit in the process of salvation. It is the Spirit of adoption that enabled a person to cry to God in heaven and call Him Father. The Spirit sealed the baptized for the day of redemption

---

[569] Basil *Contra Eunomium* 3.2; Sesboüé, de Durand and Doutreleau, *Contre Eunome*, vol. 2, 152-157; *De fide* 4; PG 31, 685B-C; *DSS* 9.22-3; Pruche, 145-7.

[570] Basil *DSS* 9.22; 11.27; Pruche, 146, 155; NPNF II, 8, 15, 18.

[571] Basil *De fide* 4; PG 31, 585B-C; Wagner, *Ascetical Works*, 64-5. Wagner's translation is altered slightly.

when Christ will come to call His own into His Kingdom. The Spirit gave believers "certain knowledge" of God and "shows the way to all truth." Twice it mentions the Spirit with relation to truth: the Spirit of God is the Spirit of truth and it leads people to the truth that they may know God and rightly confess Him as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

b. The Paraclete

Another title for the Spirit of God which Basil often used was Paraclete (ὁ παράκλητος; Jn. 14:16; 16:7 [NKJV]) which means "helper" and "intercessor" in the New Testament.[572] It is the Paraclete who worked with the ministers of the Word of God, those who proclaimed the gospel, to bring people to God. The Spirit Himself, according to Basil, is calling people to God through this proclamation. Basil described the role of the Spirit in calling people into the Church in *Homilia in psalmum XLVIII* 1:

> 'Hear these things, all ye nations; give ear, all ye inhabitants of the world. All you that are earthborn, and you sons of men: both rich and poor together' (Ps. 48, 2, 3). The place of assembly is very great since the psalm summons to the hearing all the nations as well as all who fill the world with their dwellings. With this lofty proclamation it attracts, I believe, not only the earthborn and the sons of men, but also the rich and the poor, and invites them to listen. What sort of watchtower stands up so high over all the earth, as to see all the nations from afar off and to embrace all the world with the eyes? What herald is so loud-voiced as to shout out so as to be heard by so many ears at the same time? What place is able to hold those assembling? How great and how wise is the teacher, that he finds instructions worthy of so great an assembly? Wait a little and you will learn that what follows is worthy of the promise. For, He who is assembling and summoning all by the proclamation is the Paraclete, the Spirit of truth, who brings together through prophets and apostles those who are saved; of whom, since 'Their sound hath gone forth into all the earth; and their words unto the ends of the world' (Ps. 18:5), therefore, it says: 'Hear all ye nations, and all ye inhabitants of the world.' Wherefore, the Church has been collected from all classes of life, in order that no one may be left without its aid.[573]

This quotation includes three important elements in the discussion of conversion-initiation: the Spirit, the Word of God, and the Church including its ministers. The Holy

---

[572] Bauer, 618.

[573] Basil *Homilia in Psalmum XLVIII* 1; PG 29, 432C-433B; Way, *Exegetic Homilies*, 312-3.

Spirit is the universal herald in Basil's homily who draws people from all nations and classes of people to the Church. Those who hear this call are both the saved and the unsaved.[574] The Spirit calls people to the Church and unites the people from various places and walks of life into one Church in peace. The work of conversion-initiation was seen by Basil in light of the greater work of the creation of the Church which the Spirit was accomplishing. Conversion-initiation begins before baptism and is a work of the Holy Spirit that draws a person who is outside of the Church into the flock of Christ. The Spirit is sending out His summons and those at the top of His list are sinners.

The above quote from his homily on Psalm 48 illustrates Basil's view of the Spirit, the Paraclete, who helps the ministers of the Church proclaim the gospel. The summons of the apostles and prophets in Psalm 48 is God's word going out and the Spirit is working with the word to call people into the Church. This is true also of the teaching of the Church. In *Homilia exhortatoria ad sanctum baptisma* Basil described the Church as sending out its proclamation and gathering its children to be nursed by its catechesis.[575] The ministry of the word administered in the Church with the help of the Spirit accomplishes the conversion-initiation of the children of God.

In conversion-initiation both Basil's pneumatology and ecclesiology are dynamically related. The Spirit is the builder of the Church, bringing people into the assembly of the saved through the proclamation of its ministers. The Spirit unites people from all the nations into one bond of peace. Conversion-initiation is a process by which the Spirit unites a person to other believers different from themselves, making them brothers through common salvation in Christ. The role of Paraclete emphasizes especially the helping role that the Spirit gives to the Church so that the elect may be saved.

---

[574] Basil *Homilia in Psalmum XLVIII* 1; PG 29, 432C-433C; Way, *Exegetic Homilies*, 312-3.
[575] Basil *Homilia exhortatoria in sanctum baptisma* 1; PG 31, 425A.

c. The Holy Spirit

The third title of the Spirit of God is the Holy Spirit which for Basil is the most important title.[576] The Holy Spirit sanctifies and perfects the believer. This is central to Basil's view of the operations of the Spirit which make Him divine. According to Basil the Spirit's specific role is as the sanctifier, perfecter and sustainer of creation.[577] Even the angels were dependent upon the Spirit of God to maintain their sanctity.[578] Holiness and the ability to live a holy life originate from the Spirit of God, not from human effort.[579] Basil taught that the Spirit purified the believer at two main points which could be related to baptism: the stage of purification before baptism and the gift of Himself given to the pure in baptism.

During the process of conversion-initiation in the Early Church exorcisms were traditionally conducted by ministers of the Church during the catechumenate.[580] In some baptismal liturgies at the stage of the renunciation of the devil there was also a symbolic gesture of blowing him away or spitting at him.[581] Basil testifies in *De spiritu sancto* that it is the Holy Spirit who casts out devils, liberates sinners from the tyranny of the devil and sanctifies sinners.[582] Basil writes about Gregory Thaumaturgus as example of a minister who was powerfully filled with the Spirit and exorcised demons.[583] According to Basil the work of the Spirit was to cast out devils which was a part of the purification in conversion-initiation. He used human instruments, such as Gregory Thaumaturgus, to liberate people who in turned left their pagan deities and worshipped the Christian God.[584] Therefore in Basil's mind the Spirit's role in casting out demons

---

[576] Basil *DSS* 9.22; Pruche, 145; NPNF II, 8, 15.
[577] Basil *DSS* 16.38; Pruche, 174-80; NPNF II, 8, 23-5.
[578] Basil *DSS* 16.38; Pruche, 175-80; NPNF II, 8, 23-5.
[579] Basil *Contra Eunomium* 3.2; Sesboüé, de Durand and Doutreleau, *Contre Eunome*, vol. 2, 154-155, line 53.
[580] Yarnold, *The Awe-Inspiring Rites*, 9-12.
[581] Yarnold, *The Awe-Inspiring Rites*, 19.
[582] Basil *DSS* 19.49; Pruche, 201; NPNF II, 8, 31.
[583] Basil *DSS* 29.74; Pruche, 251-2; NPNF II, 8, 46-7.
[584] Basil *DSS* 29.74; Pruche, 251-2; NPNF II, 8, 46-7.

was directly related to conversion-initiation especially at the stage of preparation for baptism.

The Holy Spirit in turn comes to the pure, those who have been cleansed and restored to their original beauty through baptism.[585] The gift of the Holy Spirit also comes to those who prepare to receive Him through living a worthy life of purity, faith and obedience to the teachings of Christ.[586] Conversion-initiation is a two-way process of the choice to renounce the devil combined with the liberation and purification given by Spirit. That process prepares one to receive the Spirit of God Himself and thereby become holy.

d. Creator Spirit

A fourth category for understanding the role of the Holy Spirit in Basil's thought comes from the activity of the Spirit rather than a title. That activity is the role that the Spirit has in creation. One of the proofs of the Spirit's divinity according to Basil was His participation in creation. The role of the Spirit in conversion-initiation arises from Basil's economic Trinitarian theology which posits the working of the Word (Logos) and the Spirit together in creation. In his *Homilia in psalmum XXXII*, he comments on verse 6, 'By the word of the Lord the heavens were established; and all the power of them by the spirit of his mouth.'[587] In this passage the second and third persons of the Trinity and their work of creation are linked with the Father in Genesis 1. Basil teaches that the Word created and the Spirit held the heavenly things together in holiness and virtue.[588] Basil teaches a similar doctrine of the Spirit in *De spiritu sancto* 16. The Spirit worked with the Word in creation and also worked with the Lord Jesus in his ministry on earth for the salvation of humankind.[589] According to Basil nothing happens in the

---

[585] Basil *DSS* 9.23; Pruche, 147; NPNF II, 8, 15.
[586] Basil *DSS* 22.53; Pruche, 211-12; NPNF II, 8, 34.
[587] Basil *Homilia in Psalmum XXXII* 4; PG 29, 333A; Way, *Exegetic Homilies*, 234.
[588] Basil *Homilia in Psalmum XXXII* 4; PG 29, 333B-D; Way, *Exegetic Homilies*, 234-5.
[589] Basil *DSS* 16.39; Pruche, 180-1; NPNF II, 8, 25.

Godhead without the Spirit: "in every operation, the Spirit is closely conjoined with, and inseparable from, the Father and the Son."[590]

Based on this argument according to Basil the Spirit's role in creation is two-fold: He participates in the creation of the physical world and the creation of the new world of which the regeneration of the soul by the Spirit of God is a part.[591] The Spirit refashions the soul, renews this earthly life for the future life in the Kingdom of God.[592] The primary locus of this work is in the sacrament of baptism. It brings a new life to the believer who has put to death the old life and seeks the promise of the Holy Spirit. Basil described the new creation that comes by the power of the Holy Spirit in baptism in *De spiritu sancto*:

> For this cause the Lord, who is the Dispenser of our life, gave us the covenant of baptism, containing a type of life and death, for the water fulfils the image of death, and the Spirit gives us the earnest of life. Hence it follows that the answer to our question why the water was associated with the Spirit is clear: the reason is because in baptism two ends were proposed ; on the one hand, the destroying of the body of sin, that it may never bear fruit unto death; on the other hand, our living unto the Spirit, and having our fruit in holiness; the water receiving the body as in a tomb figures death, while the Spirit pours in the quickening power, renewing our souls from the deadness of sin unto their original life. This then is what it is to be born again of water and of the Spirit, the being made dead being effected in the water, while our life is wrought in us through the Spirit.[593]

The Spirit of God is active in conversion-initiation and especially in the sacrament of baptism. In this sacrament the Spirit of God creates new life forming a child of God who by the power of the Spirit can cry out to her Father in heaven, "Abba, Father" (Rom. 8:15, 16). The conversion-initiation has brought forth new life by the power of the Spirit, by the will of God, creating a new man or woman of spirit. Basil said that the

---

[590] Basil *DSS* 16.37; Pruche, 173-4; NPNF II, 8, 23.

[591] For the Spirit's participation in creation see Basil *Hexaemeron* 2.6; Mendieta and Rudberg, *Homilien zum Hexaëmeron*, 31, ll. 1-22; Way, *Exegetic Homilies*, 30-1. For the need of a new creation or the regeneration of life after the judgement see *Hexaemeron* 1.4; Mendieta and Rudberg, *Homilien zum Hexaëmeron*, 8, ll. 6-16; Way, *Exegetic Homilies*, 8.

[592] Basil *DSS* 19.49; Pruche, 200-2; NPNF II, 8, 30-1.

[593] Basil *DSS* 15.35; Pruche, 170; NPNF II, 8, 22.

mark of those who were born of the Spirit according to John's Gospel was that they were now spirit.[594]

e. Conclusion

The Spirit of God in conversion-initiation is the Divine presence liberating, sanctifying and creating new life. What Basil has to say about the role of the Spirit underlines the importance of the cooperation of human will with Divine initiative. The Spirit is present and yet waiting for the sinner to repent. There is a movement from God through His Spirit to the human desiring God. There is a human expression of repentance and faith in God reaching out for Him to confirm His promise of salvation. The Spirit dwells in the neophyte, the ultimate gift of God. Fidelity to that gift is the test to see whether conversion will result in salvation for the human soul.[595]

---

[594] Basil *Regulae morales* 80.22; PG 31, 869A; Clarke, *Ascetic Works*, 130.
[595] Basil *DSS* 16.40; Pruche, 182-3; NPNF II, 8, 25-6.

PART III: BASIL'S *DE SPIRITU SANCTO* AND THE DOCTRINE OF ENLIGHTENMENT IN THE GREEK CHURCH

Introduction

Part III is an investigation of the theme of enlightenment tracing the use of the word cluster φωτίζειν and φωτισμός from its use in Greek and Jewish literature and the New Testament to the use of the terms in the Early Church.[596] To a lesser extent other words such as λάμπειν and αὐγάζειν will be noted, but only on a secondary and anecdotal level, because these terms never reached such technical usage by the Church as φωτίζειν and φωτισμός which became significant terms in the Early Church for aspects of conversion-initiation.

The premise of Part III is that in the Greek Church there is a development over time of a doctrine of enlightenment. The word "doctrine" is used as opposed to "theme" or "teaching" because this study finds that enlightenment or illumination is a topic which is central to the theology, sacramental life and spirituality of the Greek Church. I identify three main streams of what appears to be an emerging doctrine of Christian enlightenment. I am calling these three streams – "theological," "sacramental/liturgical" and "spiritual." The purpose of the *theological* use of the terms φωτίζειν and φωτισμός was to describe the persons and activities of the Trinity; the *sacramental/liturgical* use of the terms was focused on the catechumenate and baptism; the *spiritual* use of the terms depicted aspects of Christian spirituality. Basil's *De spiritu sancto* was to a certain degree the culmination of this growing doctrine of enlightenment.

---

[596] Some important articles and studies on enlightenment in the Early Church include: Hans Conzelmann, "φῶς," in *TDNT*, vol. 9 : 310-58; Thomas Halton, "Baptism as Illumination," *Irish Theological Quarterly* 32 (1965) : 28-41; B. Studer, "Illumination," in *Encyclopedia of the Early Church*, ed. Angelo di Berardino, trans. by Adrian Walford with bibliographical amendments by W. H. C. Frend, vol. 1 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 405; Léon Veuthey, "Illumination," in Ds, vol. 7, part 2 : 1330-46; J. Ysebaert, *Greek Baptismal Terminology: Its Origins and Early Development* (Nijmegen: Dekker & Van De Vegt N. V., 1962), 157-78.

Part III will begin by drawing out significant aspects of the Greek and Jewish background of the concept of enlightenment and the usage of φωτίζειν and φωτισμός. Then the New Testament beginnings of the doctrine of enlightenment will be described along thematic lines through the illustration of the use of φωτίζειν and φωτισμός in the earliest Christian writings. In the following sections these terms and the emerging doctrine of enlightenment will be examined according to the three streams of use: the theological, the sacramental/liturgical and the spiritual, as it emerged in the writings of Justin, Origen, Athanasius and Cyril of Jerusalem. The final section works through Basil's use of the terms φωτίζειν and φωτισμός in *De spiritu sancto* which represents a synthesis of the doctrine of enlightenment. Basil's synthesis and contributions to the tradition will then be summarized in the conclusion to Part III.

A. The Roots and Beginning of the Doctrine of Enlightenment

It is necessary for the study of the two words φωτίζειν and φωτισμός as well as the concept of enlightenment to give some background to their development before they came together in later Greek Christian writers such as Basil of Caesarea in the fourth century. There was a whole tradition – Greek, Jewish and Christian – which gave the Greek speaking Church ample resources from which to speak about enlightenment. The following is a brief survey of the important aspects of the use of φωτίζειν and φωτισμός and the concept of enlightenment in Greek, Jewish and Early Christian writings and contexts as pertain to the Greek Christian writers from the second to the fourth centuries.

1. Greek and Hellenistic Literature

This section on enlightenment in Greek and Hellenistic literature will lay out the common definitions of the terms being studied and then proceed to examine the concept and the use of these terms in Platonic and Neoplatonic philosophy concentrating on the contributions of Plato and Plotinus. The section on Greek and Hellenistic religion will follow this theme and the terms φωτίζειν and φωτισμός through the Greek and Hellenistic religious traditions.

a. Definitions of φωτίζειν and φωτισμός

The Greek usage of the word φωτίζειν has the intransitive meaning "shine" or "give light."[597] Its literal transitive meaning is "illuminate."[598] This transitive meaning is often used as a technical term for the illumination of the sun, moon or other sources of light.[599] Its metaphorical meaning is "bring to light" and "make known."[600] The noun φωτισμός means "illumination" and "light."[601]

---

[597] LS, 1969.
[598] LS, 1969.
[599] Ysebaert, 158.
[600] LS, 1969.
[601] LS, 1969.

b. Enlightenment in Platonic and Neoplatonic Philosophy

In Greek philosophy the concept of illumination is important, especially in the Platonic and Neoplatonic school of thought. The words φωτίζειν and φωτισμός are not used by Plato,[602] but the concept of illumination is very important to his view of the goal of the human life. The goal is envisioned in the allegory of the cave and the vision of the sun in *Respublica* 7 as an ascent to light, a continual growth of perception and knowledge of true reality.[603] A very general way of describing Plato's thought is that through contemplation of the ultimate Forms or Ideas such as truth, beauty, goodness, one's soul can be enlightened by the Form and ultimately be united to it. For example in the *Respublica* the illumination of the soul comes through a conversion from the world of becoming and sense perception to the contemplation of "the good," the "brightest region of being," which is unchanging and perceived through the eyes of the soul.[604] Another important point in Plato's teaching on illumination is that the eye has its own light to which the sun adds its light in order to give it vision.[605] The eye is like a little sun but needs the light of the sun to see most accurately. This idea of vision as being both from within and from without is important to the Church Fathers who use this idea in their view of the soul and its ability or inability to be illumined.[606] For Plato the concept of enlightenment was ultimately tied to his theory of the knowledge of the Forms. This knowledge is one of an understanding and participation in that which is known.[607]

---

[602] TLG data base search for "φωτιζ" and "φωτισ" produced no citations in Plato's works or in Aristotle. But Ysebaert quotes Aristotle as using φωτίζειν in *Anal.Post*.I.31. See Ysebaert, 158.

[603] Plato *Respublica* 7.517B-518B; Shorey, *Republic*, vol. 6, 128-133. For a discussion of Plato's view of illumination: Veuthey, "Illumination," 1331. Unfortunately Veuthey goes from the Greek conception of illumination to the Christian view without much consideration of Jewish thought. See also Conzelmann, "φῶς," 314-5; Andrew Louth, *The Origins of the Christian Mystical Tradition: From Plato to Denys* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981; paperback reprint, 1999), 1-2.

[604] Plato *Respublica* 7.518C-D; Shorey, *Republic*, vol. 6, 134-5.

[605] Plato *Respublica* 6.508-9; Shorey, *Republic*, vol. 6, 100-7. See also Plato *Timaeus* 45 B-D; E. G. Bury, trans. *Plato: Timaeus, Critias, Cleitophon, Menexenus, Epistles*, vol. 7, LCL (Cambridge, Mass. and London: Harvard University Press, 1929; reprint, 1989), 100-3.

[606] I am indebted to Professor Andrew Louth for bringing this to my attention.

[607] Louth, *Origins*, 2.

Φωτίζειν and φωτισμός do not come into greater use among philosophers of the ancient world until the Neoplatonists in the third century AD.[608] Plotinus uses φωτίζειν approximately twenty times.[609] Iamblichus uses them seven times, but Porphyry twenty-two times and later Proclus uses it approximately fifty-five times in his theological synthesis of Platonic philosophy and polytheism.[610] The growing trend in the use of φωτίζειν and φωτισμός among Neoplatonic philosophers seems to correspond with the growing usage of the words among the Christian writers from the middle of the second century onwards, but its usage among the Neoplatonists pales in comparison to its frequency of use among many of the Christian writers. An example of this is found in comparing the works of Plotinus and Origen, contemporaries who had both studied under the same teacher.[611] Origen used φωτίζειν and φωτισμός approximately 264 times compared to Plotinus' twenty.[612] And Plotinus was one of the non-Christian writers who used these two words most frequently.

Plotinus' doctrine of illumination is tied to his view of the soul's relationship to the three hypostases – One, Intellect and Soul. The soul is dependent upon the hypostases and especially Intellect for illumination, knowledge of reality. The human soul is shrouded in darkness until it turns to its source, the source of illumination, Intellect. It is Intellect which gives both universal Soul and the human soul light. This light is metaphorical – it is knowledge of what one is in relation to the three hypostases, an understanding, a revelation of reality, a recollection. Plotinus explains the process of

---

[608] In the TLG data base search of "φωτισ" and "φωτιζ" only Chrysippus (c. 280-207 B.C.) used these words with any frequency, approximately 14 times. A search on Zeno did not turn up any results.

[609] TLG data base search of "φωτισ" and "φωτιζ". For a review of Plotinus' concept of illumination see Veuthey, "Illumination," 1331-33. For a review of his philosophy see A. H. Armstrong, "Plotinus," in *The Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Medieval Philosophy*, ed. by A. H. Armstrong (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 195-268.

[610] TLG data base search of "φωτισ" and "φωτιζ".

[611] Although recent theories have suggested that there were two different men by the name of "Origen" – one pagan, the other Christian – I hold to the traditional view that the Christian Origen is the only one and that he studied under a pagan teacher.

[612] TLG data base search of "φωτισ" and "φωτιζ".

illumination from the human side in *Ennead* 1.2.4.[613] The task of the human soul is to turn (ἐπιστρεφειν) toward Soul and Intellect and the One, to look up, to ascend. This turning is a process of purification (κάθαρσις). This purification also includes acquiring virtue (ἀρετή) and eventually leads to perfection (τέλος). The turning of the soul, if it is to be illuminated (φωτισθῇ) and gain knowledge of itself, must "thrust towards that which gives it light" (τῷ φωτίζοντι).[614]

While there must be moral effort on the part of the human soul, there is also the activity from the intelligible realm illuminating it with knowledge. It is Intellect which raises universal Soul to its own level through illumination.[615] This illumination allows Soul to be united with Intellect. Similarly the soul of the human which is illuminated is also raised up and shares in Soul and perceives the Forms of Intellect. This experience of being raised up and united with Intellect is one which Plotinus attests to having experienced himself.[616] Enlightenment is effected by a conversion, a turning of the soul to the source of enlightenment, the Intellect. This conversion involves purification, acquiring of virtue and leads to knowledge of the Forms, of one's true identity and perfection.

c. Enlightenment in the Greek Mysteries and Hellenistic Mystery Religions

The concept of illumination is also important to the religious life of the Greeks, especially in the initiation rites to the mysteries of the various local cults such as the Eleusian mysteries which honored the goddess Demeter. In this ritual and others like it the illumination came to the initiate when the sacred objects of the cult were presented

---

[613] Plotinus *Enneads* 1.2.4; A. H. Armstrong, trans., *Plotinus, Porphyry on the Life of Plotinus and the Order of His Books, Enneads I.1-9*, vol. 1, LCL (London: William Heinemann; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1966), 136-9.

[614] Plotinus *Enneads* 1.2.4; Armstrong, *Plotinus, Porphyry on the Life of Plotinus*, vol. 1, 138-9.

[615] Plotinus *Enneads* 5.3.8; A. H. Armstrong, trans., *Plotinus, Enneads V. 1-9*, vol. 5, LCL (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press; London: William Heinemann, 1984), 94-9; Armstrong, *Philosophy*, 250.

[616] Plotinus *Enneads* 4.8.1; Stephen MacKenna, trans., *Plotinus: The Enneads*, abridged by John Dillon (London: Penguin Books, 1991), 334.

to them and sacred words were uttered by the hierophant.[617] The illumination thus had to do with a certain knowledge that was obtained by a process of initiation into the rite. It had to do with the revealing of the mystery to one who had undergone the initiation. A blessing was pronounced by the priest on those who had seen the mysteries.[618] Those who had seen it were sworn to secrecy in reverence to the goddess and could not speak of what they had seen to outsiders.[619]

The later Hellenistic mystery religions such as the cult of Isis and the *Hermetica* used the word φωτίζειν and its Latin equivalent, *illustrare*, to describe the illumination given the initiates during the rite of initiation into the cult. These ceremonies are depicted in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* and the *Hermetica*. In the *Metamorphoses* Lucius, during his initiation into the priesthood of Isis, describes the height of his secret initiation in terms of a revelation of light:

> Therefore listen, but believe: these things are true. I came to the boundary of death and, having trodden the threshold of Proserpina, I traveled through all the elements and returned. In the middle of the night I saw the sun flashing with bright light. I came face to face with the gods below and the gods above and paid reverence to them from close at hand.[620]

The most notable usage of the word φωτίζειν with a religious meaning – "illuminate with spiritual light" – is found in the later *Corpus Hermeticum* from the second century A.D.[621] One example of the use of φωτίζειν in the *Hermetica* is 13.18

---

[617] *The Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, lines 474-6; N. J. Richardson, ed., *The Homeric Hymn to Demeter* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974), 133. See Richardson's commentary on pp. 302-4. See also George Emmanuel Mylonas, *The Hymn to Demeter and Her Sanctuary at Eleusis*, Washington University Studies, New Series, Language and Literature, No. 13 (St. Louis: March, 1942), 61.

[618] *The Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, line 480; Richardson, *Homeric Hymn*, 134. See Richardson's commentary on pp. 313-4 on the later use by philosophers of this same blessing of happiness for "those who have gained enlightenment by contemplation" (Richardson, *Homeric Hymn*, 313).

[619] *The Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, lines 478-9; Richardson, *Homeric Hymn*, 134. See Richardson's commentary on pp. 304-10.

[620] Apuleius *Metamorphoses* 11.23; J. Arthur Hanson, trans., *Apuleius: Metamorphoses*, vol. 2, LCL, (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1989), 341. Ysebaert lists Apuleius' use of *illustrare* in *Met.* 11.27, 28, 29 (Ysebaert, 160); Hanson, *Apuleius*, vol. 2, 348-9, 352-3, 354-6). See also *Met.* 11.15 where Isis is the source of illumination even of the other gods (Hanson, *Apuleius*, vol. II, 321).

[621] *Corpus Hermeticum* 9.3, 13.18; LS, 1969. See A. D. Nock and A.-J. Festugière, eds. and trans., *Corpus Hermeticum: Works I-XII*, vol. 1 (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1946; reprint, 1980), 97, ll. 7-14 and A. D. Nock and A.-J. Festugière, eds. and trans., *Corpus Hermeticum: Works XIII-XVIII*,

where the author describes a hymn which says, "O holy Knowledge, by you am I illumined (γνῶσις ἁγία, φωτισθεὶς ἀπὸ σοῦ), and through you do I sing praise to the incorporeal Light (διὰ σοῦ τὸ νοητὸν φῶς ὑμνῶν)."[622]

There has been some debate about the origin of the Christian usage of the words φωτίζειν and φωτισμός and its possible derivation from the mysteries of the Graeco-Roman religious milieu.[623] The important references to φωτίζειν and its derivatives most often pointed to as the sources proving the Christian borrowing of this term include: Suidas, Apuleius, *Metamorphoses* 11.27, 28, 29 (Latin verb equivalent – *illustrare*), Vettius Valens and the *Corpus Hermeticum*, 1.32; 9.3; 13.18, 19, 21.[624] With regard to this issue Ysebaert concludes in his study: "it is not possible to establish with certainty whether φωτίζειν ever formed part of the vocabulary of the mysteries. The verb may however, have been used in its profane metaphorical meaning for the imparting of the secret of the mysteries to the non-initiated and later to the initiated themselves."[625] Ysebaert observes that there are several other phrases which are used in the literature of the mysteries to mean the same thing as φωτίζειν.[626] His conclusion about the *Corpus Hermeticum* is that its use of φωτίζειν and φωτισμός does not derive from the general language, but from early Christian writers Paul, Clement of Alexandria and Origen.[627]

d. Conclusion

What we have seen in this brief survey of the Greek sources is that the words φωτίζειν and φωτισμός had a literal usage related to the illumination of the sun, moon and stars. The metaphorical meaning derived from this usage referred to making

---

Asclepius, vol. 2 (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1946; reprint, 1973), 208, ll. 4-6. Ysebaert lists these references for φωτίζειν in the *Corpus Hermeticum* 1.32; 9.3; 13.18, 19, 21. Bauer lists references for φωτισμός in the *Corpus Hermeticum* 10.21; 7.2a. See Bauer, 873.

[622] *Corpus Hermeticum* 13.18; Nock and Festugière, *Corpus Hermeticum: Works XIII-XVIII*, vol. 2, 208, ll. 4-6.

[623] Ysebaert, 159.

[624] Ysebaert, 161-2.

[625] Ysebaert, 162.

something known or bringing something to light. In the Greek world enlightenment could come through the rituals of the mysteries or it could be experienced in the context of a philosophical conversion of the soul from the realm of "becoming" to the realm of "being" as described by Plato and further developed by Plotinus.

In both the religious and philosophical schools the sources of enlightenment came from two points – either the divine or the human. During the process of conversion or turning to the "good" in Platonic thought, illumination came from a change in the human intellect based on rational proofs. Plotinus draws upon a higher power for illumination by positing the need for the "Intellect" to give illumination to the human soul. In the mysteries and their later Hellenistic forms the initiate went through a process, a rite of purification, which led to the event of enlightenment. In these religious contexts the deity made itself known in some revelation accompanied by light. This revelation was the knowledge of a different realm given to the human. All of these examples indicate that knowledge – rational or spiritual – was directly linked to the concept of the "salvation of the soul," both in the Greek religious and philosophic traditions.

The Greek world, whether in its religious life or philosophic schools, was a source of ideas about the nature of enlightenment from which the later Christian Greek Fathers would derive some of their own thoughts and teachings. It is not the purpose of Part III to come to a conclusion on the debate of whether Christianity adopted its usage of φωτίζειν and φωτισμός to describe its rites of initiation directly from mystery religions. But it must be said that the concept of enlightenment in the mysteries and the use of terms such as φωτίζειν and *illustrare* in the literary Greco-Roman religions reveal the importance of enlightenment to the religious mindset of antiquity and the Hellenistic period. Despite this point the Church's well-spring for its use of language

---

[626] Ysebaert, 162.

did not come primarily from the Greek or Hellenistic world, but from the Jewish faith and its Scriptures. Reflection on the Jewish use of the words φωτίζειν and φωτισμός and the concept of enlightenment in the New Testament gave a special nuance to the Greek Christian ideas of enlightenment that differed from the past Greek sources. It is the Jewish use of φωτίζειν and φωτισμός that I will now examine.

2. Septuagint, Jewish Writings and Philo

The Jewish context was very different than that of the Greek context. The most crucial difference was the monotheistic faith of the Jewish people which was based on the tenet that they were the covenant people of God who carried with them the revelation of God, the Law given through Moses (Ex. 20:1-21; 31:18; 34:1-35). Based on Moses' encounter with God on Mount Sinai where he received the Law of God, it could be said from the Jewish standpoint that Moses experienced the highest degree of spiritual enlightenment. He spoke with God face to face and was the bearer of the glory of God in his own person (Ex. 33:7-11; 34:29-35). Moses' words were the supreme source of authority in the Jewish tradition (Mark 12:19, 26, 28-34; Jn. 9:28-9). It is in the context of the Mosaic covenant, oral and written, that the terms for enlightenment were used in the Greek translation of their Scriptures, the Septuagint.

a. Septuagint and Qumran Texts

In the Septuagint, the translation of the Hebrew Scriptures to Greek, was a major development in the interaction between the Greek and Jewish thought worlds. In this translation the Jewish rabbis used the words φωτίζειν and φωτισμός to speak of various forms of enlightenment, both literal and metaphorical drawing upon its Greek usage. The Septuagint uses φωτίζειν and φωτισμός often but not exclusively to translate the verb אוֹר (Qal) "to become light," "to be light," "to shine."[628] Some important examples of the metaphorical use of φωτίζειν occur when it says that God

---

[627] Ysebaert, 162-3.

enlightens or gives light to the eyes such as in 2 Esdras 9:8 (φωτίσαι ὀφθαλμοὺς ἡμῶν καὶ δοῦναι ζωοποίησιν), Psalm 12:4 (φώτισον τοὺς ὀφθαλμούς μου), Sirach 34:17 (ἀνυψῶν ψυχὴν καὶ φωτίζων ὀφθαλμούς) and Baruch 1:12 (καὶ δώσει κύριος ἰσχὺν ἡμῖν καὶ φωτίσει τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς ἡμῶν).[629] Also in Psalm 18:9 the command of the Lord "illuminates the eyes" (φωτίζουσα ὀφθαλμούς).[630]

An interesting use of the verb φωτίζειν in the Septuagint is its translation of the noun אורים as in the Urim and Thummim in 2 Esdras 2:63 and 17:65. In these examples φωτίζειν acquired the new meaning "to bring to light."[631] Another particularly important development in the Jewish usage of the word φωτίζειν is found in the use of the word to mean "enlighten," "instruct" and "teach."[632] It is a translation of the Hebrew verb ירה (Hiph.) meaning to "to direct" and "to teach."[633] In the Qumran texts אור has the meaning of "illumination of the members of the community with divine knowledge."[634] The verb ירה (Hiph.) is also used for the "teaching of knowledge by God."[635] The noun φωτισμός is used in the poetic writings of the Septuagint translating the Hebrew noun אור in its profane sense of "illumination."[636] Probably one of the most important examples of the use of φωτισμός in the poetic writings is Psalm 26:1 – "Lord, my light and my savior" (Κύριος φωτισμός μου καὶ σωτήρ μου).

b. *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* and Rabbinic Judaism

In the pseudepigraphical writing of the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* there is an important use of the word φωτισμός. It is in the *Testament of Levi* that

---

[628] Ysebaert, 164. For definitions of אור see Brown, *Hebrew and English Lexicon*, 21.
[629] Ysebaert, 164.
[630] Ysebaert, 164.
[631] Ysebaert, 166.
[632] LS, 1969; Ysebaert, 166-8.
[633] Ysebaert, 166-7. For definitions of ירה see Brown, *Hebrew and English Lexicon*, 435.
[634] Ysebaert, 168.
[635] Ysebaert, 168.
[636] Ysebaert, 167-8.

φωτισμός is used with a symbolic meaning of "illumination," "enlightenment" or "light."[637] It says:

> For what will all the nations do if you become darkened with impiety? You will bring down a curse on our nation, because you want to destroy the light of the Law (τὸ φῶς τοῦ νόμου) which was granted to you for the enlightenment of every man (εἰς φωτισμὸν παντὸς ἀνθρώπου), teaching commandments which are opposed to God's just ordinances.[638]

In this passage the Law is a light and was given to the Jewish people to be offered through them to all people. This statement hearkens to the traditional rabbinical interpretation of verses such as Isaiah 42:6 and 49:6 attested to by Justin – the Law is the servant of God and a light to the nations and will convert the Gentiles to the worship of God.[639] This text seems to have this same thought in mind – the Law will be a light to every person so that they will worship the God of the Jewish people. This Law was a light because it showed what God expected of those who worshiped Him – that is, exclusive devotion and the keeping of His commandments.[640]

There is an interesting parallel to this passage found in 2 Corinthians 4:4, "to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ" (εἰς τὸ μὴ αὐγάσαι τὸν φωτισμὸν τοῦ εὐαγγελίου τῆς δόξης τοῦ Χριστοῦ).[641] Conflicting theories over the dating of the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* (200 B.C. or 200 A.D.) as well as its authorship (Jewish or Christian) prohibits any definite conclusions of its influence upon the New Testament writers.[642] But the similar usage of φωτισμός in 2 Corinthians 4:4 indicates the way it was being used with a symbolic or

---

[637] Bauer, 873.

[638] *Testament of Levi* 14:4; H. C. Kee, ed. and trans., "Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs" in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, vol. 1, *Apocalyptic Literature and Testaments*, ed. James H. Charlesworth (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1983), 793; Greek text taken from Bauer, 873.

[639] Justin Martyr *Dialogus cum Tryphone* 121-2; PG 6, 757C-760C; ANF I, 260.

[640] One example relevant to conversion is God's command to His people that every male ought to be circumcised. Thus conversion to Judaism among proselytes demanded keeping the Law of Moses which required one to be circumcised if one was going to be a part of the people of God. Cf. Bardy, *La Conversion au christianisme*, 101-4.

[641] Bauer, 873. English version is from RSV.

[642] R. H. Charles dated the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* in the latter part of the 2nd century B.C. coming out of a Jewish origin. M. de Jonge dates the Testaments in about 200 A.D. and determined that it was written by Christians. Cf. "Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs" in *The Oxford*

metaphorical meaning in Jewish and Christian contexts to speak about enlightenment and conversion.

The importance of the Law as a light was well known in the Jewish faith before and during the time of Christ.[643] G. Vermes has pointed out in his article "The Torah Is A Light" the "existence of an interpretative tradition in early Jewish exegetical literature according to which... enlightenment signifies the knowledge and practice of the Law."[644] Vermes concludes that a variant reading of Deut. 33:10 as it appears in the 4Q Testimonia was not influenced by the Hellenistic usage of φωτίζειν found in mystery religions contra Professor Th. H. Gaster's theory, but rather this variant was a result of a "simple midrashic process" found in Targums based on references to light in the Prophets and Writings.[645] Vermes' findings are a good example of the shift in twentieth century biblical scholarship which has shifted from attributing the usage of certain words and concepts in Jewish writings to Hellenistic sources to the steady recovery of the original Hebrew and Semitic sources. This is important for this study of φωτίζειν and φωτισμός which wants to emphasize the Greek *and* Jewish sources for the later Christian usage of these words and their application.

c. Philo of Alexandria

Philo of Alexandria (c. 20 B.C.-45 A.D.) used φωτίζειν and φωτισμός approximately 12 times in his writings.[646] His usage is in line with that of the common Greek and Jewish usages of the time especially to speak about the illumination of the

---

Dictionary of the Christian Church, ed. F. L. Cross and E. A. Livingstone, 3rd edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 1593 and Kee, "Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs," 776-9.

[643] Emil Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C.–A.D. 135)*, revised and edited by G. Vermes, F. Millar and M. Black, vol. 2 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1979), 321 note 22, 464.

[644] G. Vermes, "The Torah Is A Light," *Vetus Testamentum*, Vol. VIII (1958) : 436.

[645] Vermes, "The Torah Is A Light," 436-7.

[646] TLG data base search of "φωτισ" and "φωτιζ". For a review of Philo's thought see Henry Chadwick, "Philo," in *The Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Medieval Philosophy*, ed. A. H. Armstrong (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1967), 137-57; Louth, *Origins*, 18-35.

sun, moon or fire.[647] In his writings Philo draws on the Platonic concept of knowledge as illumination.[648] An example of Philo's doctrine of enlightenment is found in his work *De fuga et inventione* where he describes the power of the divine Word of God to bring enlightenment. He wrote: "This divine ordinance both enlightens (φωτίζει) and sweetens the soul which is able to see, flashing forth the splendor of truth and winning over by the sweet virtue of persuasion those who hunger and thirst for goodness."[649] Philo in this passage indicates that it is the "divine ordinance," i.e., the Law, which enlightens the soul as well as satisfying its hunger and thirst for goodness. Whether this is a reference to Philo's doctrine of the Logos is not clear, but may very well be since earlier he spoke of the λόγον θεῖον, "The Divine Word, from which all kinds of instruction and wisdom flow in perpetual stream."[650] According to the Jews of this time, the Law of Moses was a source of divine truth that gave people light because the Torah was light. Philo appears to go beyond this in his personification of the Divine Word in establishing it as an intermediary or divine power of God which gives light to those who seek God.[651] We will not discuss here the intricacies of Philo's doctrine of the Logos, but merely observe that he associates the Logos or Divine Word with enlightenment which is given to those seeking God.

Philo also wrote about the power of virtue to bring enlightenment when, commenting on Genesis 15:17 "but when the sun was at its setting a flame arose," he interpreted the flame as virtue. Philo wrote: "He likens virtue to a flame, for just as the

---

[647] Philo *De mutatione nominum* 67.5; F. H. Colson and G. H. Whitaker, trans., *Philo*, vol. 5, LCL, (London: William Heinemann; New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1934), 176-7; *De decalogo* 49.1; F. H. Colson, trans., *Philo*, vol. 7, LCL (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press; London: William Heinemann, 1937; reprint, 1984), 30-1; *De specialibus legibus* 141.3; Colson, *Philo*, vol. 7, 390-3. Cf. Ysebaert, 158-9, 161-2.

[648] Conzelmann, "φῶς," 331.

[649] Philo *De fuga et inventione* 139; Colson and Whitaker, *Philo*, vol. 5, 84-5. Translation my own. See Conzelmann, "φῶς," 331.

[650] Philo *De fuga* 137; Colson and Whitaker, *Philo*, vol. 5, 82-3.

[651] Chadwick, "Philo," 143-4. For references to the Logos in Philo see *De agricultura* 51; F. H. Colson and G. H. Whitaker, trans., *Philo*, vol. 3, LCL (London: William Heinemann; New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1930), 134-5; *De confusione linguarum* 146; Colson and Whitaker, *Philo*, vol. 4, 88-91; *Quis rerum divinarum heres* 205-6; Colson and Whitaker, *Philo*, vol. 4, 384-7.

flame consumes the fuel which lies at hand but gives light (φωτίζει) to the air in its neighbourhood, so virtue burns up the sins but fills the whole mind with its beauty."[652] This idea of virtue as giving light may have Platonic as well as Jewish origins. According to the psalmist and the prophet the life lived in conformity to the Law would cause the righteous man to shine like a light.[653]

d. Conclusion

The most important aspect of the Jewish use of the words φωτίζειν and φωτισμός is in the metaphorical use of the word to indicate something that is being brought to the light or made known. God himself enlightens the eyes of His people so that they may understand His will whether through the Law of Moses or through the revelations of the Urim and Thumim. The Law or Torah was also a source of enlightenment to all people and which therefore must be both preserved in the community of faith and taught. Enlightenment therefore became closely connected to teaching. God's light enabled one to rightly understand the Law and live true to its commands as the Qumran community sought to do by its interpretation and praxis. Philo's special contribution was to add to God's revelation through the Law a philosophical term which represented an intermediary between God and man – the Logos. It is God's Divine Word which Philo credits with illumination as well as righteous and virtuous living. These points, as well as the importance of the person of Moses (mentioned in the introduction), combine to give a framework for enlightenment from which the New Testament writers and later Greek Christian writers drew. Before proceeding to the Church Fathers, the New Testament and its use of φωτίζειν and φωτισμός, which forms the essential standard of understanding of enlightenment for the Church, will be examined.

---

[652] Philo *Quis rerum divinarum heres* 307; Colson and Whitaker, *Philo*, vol. 4, 440-1.
[653] Psalm 112:4; Isaiah 42:6; 58:8, 10.

3. *The New Testament: The Beginning of the Christian Doctrine of Enlightenment*

The following is a summary of the doctrine of enlightenment in the earliest Christian reflections upon the subject. The study will follow the New Testament writers' use of φωτίζειν and φωτισμός along with other texts to show the *beginnings* of the Christian doctrine of enlightenment which influenced the Greek Church in its theology and practice. The New Testament statements about enlightenment were foundational to the later doctrine of enlightenment in the Greek Church. This section will look at the themes in regards to enlightenment which emerge in Scripture that set the stage for the Patristic exegesis: the persons of the Trinity, their role in enlightenment, and the importance of enlightenment to the work of the Church in converting sinners to the way of God's truth.

a. God, His Angels and Enlightenment

The New Testament doctrine of enlightenment is founded upon the doctrine of the person of God who is light (1 John 1:5). God is light and so He gives light to His creation and to His people. God at the end of time will be the light for His people in the New Jerusalem that He creates for His faithful saints (Rev. 21:23). In God's city there will be no need for the light of the sun or the moon according to the seer's vision: "And night shall be no more; they need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light (φωτίσει), and they shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev. 22:5, RSV).[654] This is based upon the Jewish understanding of God's glory being greater than the light of the sun and the moon (Isaiah 24:23) and the eschatological promise to the nation of Israel

---

[654] The traditional authorship of Revelation, the epistles of John and the Gospel of John are disputed among modern scholars and were to some extent among the Early Church. The Early Church gave the Gospel apostolic authority and thus canonical authority based upon its claim to be primarily the witness of the beloved disciple of Christ, John the son of Zebedee. The same apostolic authority was assigned to Revelation and the Epistles. It is this traditional view of the authorship of the Gospel of John, Revelation and Epistles that is assumed in this survey of enlightenment in the NT. For reviews of the authorship issues, ancient and modern, see Raymond E. Brown, ed. and trans., *The Gospel According to John (i-xii)*, The Anchor Bible Commentary (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, 1966), LXXXVII-CII; David E. Aune, *Revelation 1-5*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 52 (Dallas, Texas: Word

that they would no longer need the sun or the moon for their God would be their "everlasting light" (Isaiah 60:20; cf. 60:1). God's angels also shine with God's glory and the earth is illuminated when they appear (Rev. 18:1; cf. Luke 2:9). God's kingdom is a kingdom of light and is in contrast to the kingdom of darkness (Co. 1:12, 13; 1 Pet. 2:9). Conversion to Christ involves a calling by God and transfer from darkness of the world to the light of God, living a new life as children of the light (Eph. 5:8-14; 1 John 1:5-7).

b. The Son of God and Enlightenment

The Gospel of John has as its main theme the incarnate Son of God (Jn. 1:1-18). It describes Jesus, the Son of God, through a series of "I am" statements which Jesus spoke in reference to himself. One of these statements which articulates an early Christian understanding of Jesus as the Son of God is found in John 8:12: "I am the light of the world" (cf. Jn. 9:5). In the prologue John introduces this important theme in his Gospel in his description of the Son of God as the "true light" whose mission was to come and enlighten (φωτίζει) people with the knowledge of the Father (John 1:9; cf. 1:14, 18). This work of enlightenment essentially flows from the very person of the Son of God whose life was the light of the world (Jn. 1:4). In John's Gospel there is an important link between the Son of God, the Word of God, as "the life" (Jn. 14:6), as "the resurrection and the life" (Jn. 11:25) and as the one who will give "the light of life" (Jn. 8:12). Some have linked these two themes of light and life to Hellenistic religious syncretism and Gnostic myths[655] while others think the connection between these two ideas has its source in the Wisdom literature of the Old Testament and Philo.[656]

Books, 1997), xlvii-lvi; J. Massyngberde Ford, ed. and trans., *Revelation*, The Anchor Bible Commentary (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, 1975), 3-57.

[655] Conzelmann, "φῶς," 351.

[656] James Dunn comments on John 1:4 and 5: "The thought is again very similar to what we find in Wisdom and Philo: according to Proverbs 'he who finds me (Wisdom) finds life' (Prov. 8.35; cf. Sir. 4.12); according to Philo, 'he who lives an irrational (ἀλόγως) life has been cut off from the life of God' (*Post.* 69) – that is, to live in accordance with right reason (ὀρθὸς λόγος) is to know the life of the Logos, of God (see above pp. 222, 224). In each case, as the metaphors of light and life also imply, the

What the prologue also tells us is that the Word of God, who is the true light, came into the realm of darkness, was not overcome by it, was rejected by some and received by others.[657] By His very being, which is light giving life, Jesus came into conflict with the powers of darkness and people who "loved the darkness rather than light" (Jn. 3:19).

Paul in two different places picks up these same themes of the two purposes of enlightenment – to bring knowledge of God and his salvation and to expose the things which are hidden. The first example of Paul's use of φωτίζειν is in 2 Timothy 1:10 where he describes the appearance on earth of Jesus the Savior who brought to light (φωτίσαντος) life and immortality through the gospel (2 Tim. 1:10). Again there is the combination of light and life in the work of the Son of God. Jesus is Savior because He gives the power to overcome death through the life which He gives. When He first appeared on earth He brought to light this message, which is the gospel. This is in harmony with the message of the Gospel of John which was that the Word of God was full of life and that life was a light to the people of the world. According to Paul at the end of time Christ will bring to light (φωτίσει) all the hidden things of this life in preparation for the judgment (1 Cor. 4:5). Paul understands Christ's work is to enlighten, to bring to light both in his first appearance and in his second appearance when he will judge the world.

c. The Spirit of God and Enlightenment

The Pauline teaching upon the theme of enlightenment includes the work of the Spirit in Ephesians 1:17-19.[658] It is the gift of the Spirit which comes from the Father

---

Logos-Wisdom is best understood less in personal terms and more in terms of the vivifying power and revelation of God, as God giving life and revealing how that life should be lived." James D. G. Dunn, *Christology in the Making: A New Testament Inquiry into the Origin of the Doctrine of the Incarnation*, 2d ed. (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1989), 242.

[657] Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel and Epistles of John: A Concise Commentary* (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1988), 22-3.

[658] The authorship of Ephesians is disputed among modern scholars, but the Early Church regarded the Apostle Paul as its author. This thesis assumes Paul is the author of Ephesians because of the

that gives knowledge of the riches of Christ to the believer. This gift of enlightenment is something ongoing and is not limited to baptism though it may include the gift of the Spirit given at baptism (cf. Eph. 1:13, 14). Paul's prayer to the Christians at Ephesus was for their enlightenment by the Spirit of God:

> ...that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, having the eyes of your hearts enlightened (πεφωτισμένους), that you may know (εἰς τὸ εἰδέναι) what is the hope to which he has called you...[659]

Paul feels the need to pray for the church in Ephesus that they will continue to grow in wisdom and knowledge of their salvation in Christ (Eph. 1:16ff; 3:14ff). The purpose of the epistle is to make known the mystery of Christ which he had written to them previously.[660]

Paul establishes a connection between enlightenment, the Spirit and knowledge of God. The human condition that is needed is faith in Christ for receiving the Spirit (Eph. 1:13). The illuminator is God working through the Spirit to give knowledge to His people so that they may be strong and mature in their faith. In this case knowledge strengthens faith or is added to faith according to Paul. This enlightenment is not associated by Paul directly with baptism, but is a work of the Spirit. Enlightenment of a believer's heart and growth in the knowledge of Christ and his salvation is also a result of the prayers of the Church.

d. The Church and Enlightenment

The work of enlightenment is carried out not only by the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, but also by the apostolic proclamation of the Church to the world. This

---

tradition of the Church which gave the epistle authority because of its apostolic authorship. For discussions of the authorship issue of the book of Ephesians in particular see Markus Barth, ed. and trans., *Ephesians*, vol. 1, The Anchor Bible Commentary (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, 1974), 36-41; Andrew T. Lincoln, *Ephesians*, Word Bible Commentary, vol. 42 (Dallas, Texas: Word Books, 1990), lix-lxxiii.

[659] Ephesians 1:17-8 (RSV).

[660] Paul mentions his previous epistle in Ephesians 3:3ff. Most commentators identify this as the first two chapters of the epistle to the Ephesians. Cf. Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 175.

proclamation is a revealing, a making known the mystery of Christ that has been hidden before. This was Paul's mission as an apostle:

> to make everyone see (φωτισαι) what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things; so that through the church the wisdom of God in its rich variety might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places.[661]

In his second epistle to the Corinthians he also explained that the proclamation of the gospel brought enlightenment and conversion to those whose minds had previously been blinded. Paul had been speaking of the conversion to Christ and the Spirit enabling one to see the glory of Christ:

> And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled only to those who are perishing. In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel (τὸν φωτισμὸν τοῦ εὐαγγελίου) of the glory of Christ, who is the likeness of God. For what we preach is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. For it is the God who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge (πρὸς φωτισμὸν τῆς γνώσεως) of the glory of God in the face of Christ.[662]

Conversion has to do with a perception of the glory of God that is in Christ. This is what the good news does – it enlightens minds with the truth of the gospel so that they may see the glory of God in Christ and be saved. As Ysebaert points out enlightenment means conversion here and it is a work carried out by the apostle, but also by God who speaks the word and causes the light of knowledge to shine in human hearts.[663]

e. Conversion-Initiation and Enlightenment

A final word that could be said about enlightenment in the New Testament is that it is associated with conversion-initiation which would have involved baptism. In Hebrews 6:4 the writer to the Hebrews describes conversion to Christ as enlightenment:

> For it is impossible to restore again to repentance those who have once been enlightened (φωτισθέντας), who have tasted (γευσαμένους) the heavenly gift, and have become partakers (μετόχους) of the Holy Spirit,

---

[661] Ephesians 3:9, 10 (NRSV).
[662] 2 Corinthians 4:3-6 (RSV).
[663] Ysebaert, 170-1.

> and have tasted (γευσαμένους) the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the age to come, if they then commit apostasy (παραπεσόντας), since they crucify the Son of God on their own account and hold him up to contempt.[664]

Enlightenment in this passage and Hebrews 10:32 is not clearly referring to baptism, but could be taken in these texts to include baptism – the initiation rite into Christ and his body. The main argument that is used for saying that φωτισθέντας is referring to baptism is the use of aorist forms of the verbs which communicate the once for all nature of the event of this enlightenment.[665] James Dunn though concludes that φωτισθέντας used here does not equate to βαπτισθέντας but rather that this illumination is "the saving illumination brought by the Spirit through the gospel."[666] Another example of the light and enlightenment language in the New Testament that could be taken as a reference to baptism is in Ephesians 5:14.[667] It is texts such as Hebrews 6:4 and Ephesians 5:14 that may be the source of later second century description of baptism as φωτισμός.

The importance of light in the teaching of the New Testament is its description of God's person and His work of enlightening the world both literally and metaphorically. The work of the Trinity is to enlighten the world. Conversion is a turning to this light, the gospel, Christ, God and being enlightened with the knowledge of God. The Jewish theme of the light that comes from the glory of God is taken and developed further in the context of the New Testament's description of the mission of the Logos and the beatitude of the saints in the New Jerusalem. Paul also takes up the theme of God's glory and said that it is the proclamation of the gospel by the Church which reveals this glory to the minds and hearts of people. Ultimately enlightenment is

---

[664] Hebrews 6:4-6 (RSV). Cf. 10:32.

[665] Ysebaert, 171. Conzelmann, "φῶς," 355. Conzelmann wrote: "Baptism is in view. But the use of the verb is not developed and there is no fixed baptismal terminology" (Cf. p. 357, 19ff.). "Illumination takes place at baptism, but the verb does not denote this technically; it simply refers to the process of illumination as such."

[666] Dunn, *Baptism in the Holy Spirit*, 210.

[667] Ralph P. Martin, *Worship in the Early Church* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1974; reprint, 1998), 108-9.

a work of God who must cause the light of the knowledge of Christ to shine in the human heart. It is the New Testament description of conversion as enlightenment that later second century writers such as Justin and Clement pick up and develop more clearly as a technical term for baptism. The beginning of the streams of Patristic thought upon this doctrine and subsequent use of it can be seen in these New Testament texts which cover theological, ecclesial, sacramental as well as spiritual aspects of enlightenment.

B. The Doctrine of Enlightenment in the Greek Church from Justin to Cyril of Jerusalem

The doctrine of enlightenment in the Greek Church stems from the first Christian writers who described the work of Christ and the Church in terms of enlightenment. The Greek Church picked up especially on the key texts in the New Testament already mentioned which use the words φωτίζειν and φωτισμός and developed the embryonic doctrine to a greater clarity and function in the theology and practice of the Church. There were certain influences from the Greek and Jewish sources which they drew upon as well to develop this doctrine of enlightenment. The following is an examination of the streams of thought about enlightenment in the Early Church writers from Justin to Cyril of Jerusalem. What will be seen is that there emerged over the two centuries of theological reflection, spiritual teaching and Church practice three main streams of thought on the doctrine of enlightenment. The first was that of theological reflection on the nature of God as light and the work of God to enlighten. The second point of development of the doctrine of enlightenment was the sacramental-liturgical tradition which taught that enlightenment was a gift of God given through the sacrament of baptism in conversion-initiation. The third was the spirituality of the Church and its teaching on the life of the Spirit which involved enlightenment and the growth in the knowledge of God. Each of these three traditions will be looked at as they were touched upon by the writers of the Early Church.

1. Theological Features of the Doctrine of Enlightenment

The theological stream of thought about enlightenment among the Greek Fathers focused on the persons of the Trinity, primarily the Logos or the Son of God and the Spirit of God. What was most often written about was the economy of the Trinity in bringing enlightenment to the created order, especially the human soul. Enlightenment therefore was a work of God first and foremost.

Before beginning an examination of Origen's and Athanasius' use of φωτίζειν and φωτισμός it is important to note that the most common usage of the word φωτίζειν by the Greeks and later Hellenistic writers was in reference to the illumination given by the sun, moon and the stars.[668] This literal definition of φωτίζειν as the illumination of the sun provided a very important analogy for the spiritual illumination of God in the writings of the Greek Church Fathers. The Christian analogy of the sun has its roots in the Greek philosophic heritage such as in the allegory of the cave in Plato's *Respublica* 7.[669] In this allegory, Plato interprets the sun as the "idea of the good" and "the cause of all things of all that is right and beautiful, giving birth in the visible world to light and the author of light and itself in the intelligible world being the authentic source of truth and reason."[670] The allegory of the cave shows Plato's understanding of the different levels of knowledge and the greater glory of the knowledge of the Forms, supreme of which is the "good" represented by the sun. It also reveals the integral relationship of vision (literal and figurative) to knowledge and wisdom in the Greek framework of philosophy.[671]

The Hebrews also used the analogy of the sun to refer to God as well as to the Law of Moses, but most of the analogies are more general referring to God's Word and wisdom as a light.[672] Especially significant are the references in Isaiah and the book of Revelation which speak of the glory of God shining on His people so that they no longer need the sun or moon.[673] In Revelation 22:5 the writer describes the state of the

---

[668] See above pp. 162.

[669] Plato *Respublica* 7.514A-518B; Shorey, *Republic*, vol. 6, 118-133.

[670] Plato *Respublica* 7.517B-C; Shorey, *Republic*, vol. 6, 130-1.

[671] T. F. Torrance notes the importance of vision in Hellenistic philosophy in *The Trinitarian Faith* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1995), 69.

[672] In Ps. 19:4-7 the sun is a symbol of the "law of the Lord", Ps. 84:11, "For the Lord God is a sun and shield"; Mal. 4:2, "the sun of righteousness shall rise, with healing in his wings." See other references to light: "light and word" in Ps. 119:105; "light and wisdom" in Eccl. 2:13, Sir. 3:25, Bar. 3:14; "light and law" in Wis. 18:4; "light and teaching" in Prov. 6:23; "sun and truth" in Wis. 5:6. See also "light and law" in Test. Levi 14:4 in Kee, "Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs," 793. It is interesting to note that the word for sun in Hebrew (שֶׁמֶשׁ) is not used in the Hebrew text until Genesis 15. In Genesis 1 the sun is referred to as the "the great light or luminary" (הַמָּאוֹר הַגָּדֹל) (Gen. 1:16 MT).

[673] Isaiah 24:23; 60:19-20; Revelation 21:23; 22:5.

blessed in the city of God, "they need no light of lamp or sun (φωτὸς λύχνου καὶ φωτὸς ἡλίου), for the Lord God will be their light (φωτίσει ἐπ' αὐτούς) (RSV)." The great difference was that the Greeks considered the sun a god who was to be worshipped while the Hebrews and Christians did not consider the sun a deity nor worshipped it, but considered it as part of God's creation which He ruled and governed.[674]

For Plato the analogy of the sun in the allegory of the cave served the purposes of explaining the process of enlightenment and the knowledge of the Forms. Similarly the Hebrews and New Testament writers spoke of the sun's brilliance as a metaphor for the glory of God, His wisdom and His Law. The Church Fathers drew upon both of these traditions of the analogy of the sun to develop their emerging Logos theology emphasizing His glory and His power to enlighten people with the knowledge of God. This synthesis of Jewish and Greek uses of the sun analogy is an important part of the Logos theology of Origen, Athanasius and, later, Basil's theology of the Spirit of God.

a. Origen: Enlightenment as the Work of God

Enlightenment in Origen is a very important word and concept. Various forms of φωτίζειν and φωτισμός appear in Origen's writings approximately 264 times.[675] Part of the reason for Origen's frequent usage of these terms is due to the number of commentaries on Scripture that he produced. More importantly it is due to his focus on the importance of the knowledge of God in his theology.[676] Most of the references to enlightenment arise from Scripture itself, especially such verses as John 1:9, Ephesians 1:18, Psalms 18:9, 26:1 (LXX) and Hosea 10:12 (LXX). Origen's use of φωτίζειν and φωτισμός is not, as it is in Justin and Clement, directly linked to the sacrament of

---

[674] Plato *Respublica* 6.508A; Shorey, *Republic*, vol. 6, 100-1; Ex. 20: 4, Deut. 4:19, Rom. 1:25. Although Plato refers to the sun as a god in this passage, it is given its being by the good (Plato *Respublica* 6.508B-C; Shorey, *Republic*, vol. 6, 100-3).

[675] TLG data base search of "φωτισ" and "φωτιζ".

baptism, but for Origen it is more specifically connected to the work of God to make himself known to humanity. Probably the most frequent reference to enlightenment in Origen's works is to the person and work of the Logos of God who is the Light of the World. I will now turn to a discussion of Origen's use of φωτίζειν and φωτισμός in his works which deal with the doctrine of enlightenment in relationship to the economy of the Trinity, especially Christ, the Logos, and the Holy Spirit as agents of enlightenment.[677]

The Trinity

Enlightenment is a work of each of the three persons of the Trinity – Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Father gives the grace of enlightenment (Eph. 1:17-8), the Son since he is the Light of the world (Jn. 1:9) illumines the human spirit or mind with the knowledge of God and the Spirit illumines human understanding especially with reference to the word of God (2 Tim. 3:16). In Origen's *Commentarium in Evangelium Matthaei* he concludes that all three – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – could be interpreted as the cloud in the Transfiguration of Christ and thus be a source of protection and illumination for the righteous person.[678] Before beginning his work *De oratione*, Origen says that "the discussion of prayer is so great a task that it requires the Father to reveal it (φωτίζοντος), His Firstborn Word to teach it, and the Spirit to enable us to think and speak rightly of so great a subject."[679] These examples show Origen's concept of the

---

[676] Henri Crouzel, S. J., *Origène et la "Connaisance Mystique"*, Museum Lessianum section théologique n° 56 (Toulouse: Desclée De Brouwer, 1961), 13, 17-8, 130-54. See also Henri Crouzel, S. J., *Origen*, trans. by A. S. Worrall (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1989; paperback edition, 1998), 126-7.

[677] For a discussion of the roles of each person of the Trinity in enlightenment see Crouzel, *Origène et la "Connaisance Mystique"*, 131-39, 142 and Crouzel, *Origen*, 126.

[678] Origen *Commentarium in Evangelium Matthaei* 12.42; Ernst Benz and Erich Klostermann, eds., *Origenes Matthäuserklärung*, vol. 1, *Die griechisch erhaltenen Tomoi*, vol. 10 of *Origenes Werke*, GCS (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1935), 165, l. 5 - 167, l. 10; ANF X, 472-3.

[679] Origen *De oratione* 2.6; Paul Koetschau, ed., *Buch V-VIII Gegen Celsus, Die Schrift Vom Gebet*, vol. 2 of *Origenes Werke*, GCS (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1899), 303, l. 17-20; Rowan A. Greer, trans., *Origen: An Exhortation to Martyrdom, Prayer, First Principles: Book IV, Prologue to the Commentary on the Song of Songs, Homily XXVII on Numbers*, The Classics of Western Spirituality (New York: Paulist Press, 1979), 86.

economy of the Trinity which work together to give enlightenment. Origen at times will refer generally to "God" illuminating the minds of people.[680]

The Logos

Much of what Origen says about the topic of enlightenment is focused on the work of the Logos who is the true Light (Jn. 1:9). Enlightenment of the human being comes through the Logos of God, Jesus Christ. Since the Logos is also the Light of the world, then the pair of Logos (Reason, Word) and Light are the sources for the illumination of human reason. Jesus Christ who came as the Light of the World to enlighten everyone (Jn. 1:9) is the source of enlightenment for all rational beings which, in Origen's system of thought, includes humans as well as the sun, moon and stars.[681] Two examples of Origen's discussion of Christ as the illumination of humans can be found in his *Commentarium in Evangelium Johannis*:

> Now the sensible light of the world is the sun (Φῶς δὴ κόσμου αἰσθητὸν ὁ ἥλιός ἐστιν), and after it comes very worthily the moon, and the same title may be applied to the stars ; but these lights of the world are said in Moses to have come into existence on the fourth day, and as they shed light (φωτίζουσι) on the things on the earth, they are not the true light. *But the Saviour shines* (ὁ δὲ ἐλλάμπων) *on creatures which have intellect and sovereign reason, that their minds may behold their proper objects of vision, and so he is the light of the intellectual world, that is to say, of the reasonable souls which are in the sensible world,* and if there be any beings beyond these in the world from which He declares Himself to be our Saviour.[682]
>
> Now Christ is called "the light of men" and "the true light" and "the light of the world", because He brightens and irradiates the governing parts of people, or, in a word, of all rational beings (Ὥσπερ δὲ παρὰ τὸ

---

[680] Origen *Contra Celsum* 4.66; Paul Koetschau, ed., *Die Schrift vom Martyrium, Buch I-IV Gegen Celsus*, vol. 1 of *Origenes Werke*, GCS (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1899), 336, l. 32; ANF IV, 527. *De oratione* 17.1; Koetschau, *Buch V-VIII Gegen Celsus*, 338, l. 22; Greer, *Origen*, 116.

[681] On the topic of the sun, moon and stars being rational beings with physical bodies created by God see *De principiis* 1.7.3; Paul Koetschau, ed., *De Principiis (ΠΕΡΙ ΑΡΧΩΝ)*, vol. 5 of *Origenes Werke*, GCS (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1913), 87, l. 24 - 89, l. 11; G. W. Butterworth, ed. and trans., *Origen, On First Principles*, with an introduction by Henri de Lubac (London: SPCK, 1936; Torchbook edition, New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1966; reprint, Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1973), 61. See also *Contra Celsum* 5.10; Koetschau, *Buch V-VIII Gegen Celsus*, 11, ll. 13-18; ANF IV, 547.

[682] Origen *Commentarium in Evangelium Johannis* 1.24; Erwin Preuschen, ed., *Der Johanneskommentar*, vol. 4 of *Origenes Werke*, GCS (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1903), 30, l. 29 - 31, l. 8; ANF X, 311. Emphasis mine.

> φωτίζειν καὶ καταλάμπειν τὰ ἡγεμονικὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἢ ἁπαξαπλῶς τῶν λογικῶν, . . .).[683]

Origen writes in his commentary that Jesus, the Logos is "the light of the intelligible world (τοῦ νοητοῦ κόσμου ἐστὶ φῶς)." He enlightens that part of rational beings that Origen often calls the τὸ ἡγεμονικόν, the ruling principle of man. This is a term borrowed from Stoic philosophy meaning both the "authoritative part of the soul (reason)" as well as "the governing part of the universe."[684] In the quote above from his commentary, Origen sees Christ, the Savior, as the Light who shines (ὁ δὲ σωτὴρ ἐλλάμπων) on intelligible and rational beings (τοῖς λογικοῖς καὶ ἡγεμονικοῖς).[685] The light of the Logos then is what illuminates and shines on the rational part of the soul of rational beings. Those who receive the rays of the light of Christ are enlightened with the knowledge of God and are able to share that light with others.[686]

The Spirit

Less often but not less importantly, Origen writes about the enlightenment of the Spirit of God. It is the Spirit of God which inspired and illumined the prophets with the oracles of God.[687] The Spirit also revealed to the prophets and the apostles the mysteries of God which they wrote about figuratively in the Scriptures.[688] According to Origen the Spirit has two aims in relation to the Scriptures which He wrote through the prophets and apostles. The first is to "enlighten (φωτίζοντι) holy souls" and the second is to "hide secret mysteries" from those who will not search out the meaning of the

---

[683] Origen *Commentarium in Evangelium Johannis* 1.25; Preuschen, *Der Johanneskommentar*, 33, ll. 26-28; ANF X, 312 (translation altered).

[684] LS, 763.

[685] Origen *Commentarium in Evangelium Johannis* 1.24; Preuschen, *Der Johanneskommentar*, 30, l. 33 - 31, l. 1; ANF X, 311.

[686] Origen *Commentarium in Evangelium Johannis* 1.24; Preuschen, *Der Johanneskommentar*, 31, ll. 8-17; ANF X, 311.

[687] Origen *Contra Celsum* 7.7; Koetschau, *Buch V-VIII Gegen Celsus*, 159, ll. 1-7; ANF IV, 613-4.

[688] Origen *De principiis* 4.2.7; Koetschau, *De Principiis*, 318, l. 7 - 319, l. 32; Butterworth, *Origen*, 282-4.

Scriptures.[689] Thus the Holy Spirit is the one who inspired the writers of the text of Scripture and he is the one who reveals its mysteries to those who are worthy.

In Origen's system of thought the sensible world is contrasted with the intelligible or spiritual world. The Holy Spirit reveals the mysteries that are hidden within the sensible realm of narratives, laws and prophecies of Scripture. Just as the sun is the sensible light in the world and the Logos is the intelligible and invisible light of the world, so too the Scripture is a symbol in the sensible world and the Spirit of God (the author of Scripture) reveals the intelligible and hidden mysteries in Scripture to those who seek to know them.

It is especially important to note that it is the Spirit who makes known the mysteries of Christ, the Logos, and of the Trinity through the Scriptures.[690] It is the Spirit in conjunction with the Scriptures that is the source of spiritual knowledge.[691] Origen wrote on this: "For all knowledge of the Father, when the Son reveals him, is made known to us through the Holy Spirit."[692] In his discussion of the Holy Spirit, Origen demonstrates through his allegorical exegesis of Isaiah 6:2 and Hab. 3:2 (LXX) that it is both the Son and the Spirit that reveal God to a person. This agrees with all that Origen has to say about the Spirit and enlightenment.

Conclusion

Origen primarily focused on the enlightenment of the Logos given to the minds of intelligible beings, but his development of the work of the Spirit to enlighten the mind of the believer, especially through the Scriptures, was very significant as well and comes from his own reflections as an exegete of Scripture. Origen's view of enlightenment is shaped by his emphasis upon the knowledge of God which comes through the biblical text and is communicated to the *nous* of the human person. The

---

[689] Origen *De principiis* 4.2.8; Koetschau, *De Principiis*, 320, ll. 1-5; Butterworth, *Origen*, 284.

[690] Origen *De principiis* 4.2.7; Koetschau, *De Principiis*, 319, ll. 5-10; Butterworth, *Origen*, 283. *De principiis* 1.3.1; Koetschau, *De Principiis*, 48, l. 17 - 49, l. 19; Butterworth, *Origen*, 29.

[691] Origen *De principiis*, 1.1.2; Koetschau, *De Principiis*, 18, ll. 16-9; Butterworth, *Origen*, 8.

relationship between the three persons of the Trinity and the knowledge of God will be further explored in the section on spirituality. At this point it is safe to say that through Origen's use of the terms φωτίζειν and φωτισμός there is a clear development of economic Trinitarian theology. Enlightenment in Origen's theology was a work of God through the Logos, His Son, and through His Spirit to give those who sought Him divine knowledge.

b. Athanasius: Enlightenment Is Given by the Son and the Spirit

I will now shift from Origen's works in the early third century to the dogmatic writings of Athanasius of Alexandria in the fourth century in order to examine the important theological features of the doctrine of enlightenment which he developed. The words φωτίζειν and φωτισμός occur approximately 139 times in Athanasius' writings.[693] The most frequent use of these words in a single work occurs in the (spurious) *Expositiones in Psalmos* with a total of 26 occurrences. In the works reviewed for this study there are approximately 50 or more occurrences of various forms of these two words. This study will examine the concept of enlightenment by following the use of φωτίζειν and φωτισμός in three of Athanasius' dogmatic and apologetic works written in defense of the divinity of Christ and the Spirit: *Contra gentes – De incarnatione*, *Orationes tres contra Arianos*, and *Epistulae iv ad Serapionem.*

Athanasius' work *Contra gentes – De incarnatione*, is a single work in which Athanasius defended the divinity of Christ as well as His humanity. He declared that the cross was not a defeat, but a victory over death and a restoration to humanity of the immortality which it lost in the fall. This work is traditionally dated early in Athanasius' career (316-18) before the Arian Controversy broke out, but has also been dated later

---

[692] Origen *De principiis*, 1.3.4; Koetschau, *De Principiis*, 53, ll. 11-2; Butterworth, *Origen*, 32.
[693] TLG data base search of "φωτιζ" and "φωτισ".

during his exile in Treves in 336.[694] The second work, *Orationes tres contra Arianos* belongs to a later period of Athanasius' career. In these orations Athanasius meets Arian objections point by point in order to refute their specific objections to the divinity of Christ. He addresses the specific texts of Scripture which they use and interprets them from an orthodox perspective. They were composed in the late 350's most likely during his third exile (356-61).[695] The third work is *Epistulae iv ad Serapionem*, a collection of four letters written to the bishop Serapion of Thmuis in order to help him respond to the *Tropici* who were denying the deity of the Holy Spirit. These epistles are also dated during the period of his third exile, in 359 or 360.[696]

The following is a study of the theological themes of enlightenment in these three works of Athanasius which speak about the enlightenment given by the Trinity. In the first half of this section I will take *Contra gentes – De Incarnatione* and examine the enlightenment which comes from the Logos who governs the universe giving light and life to all creation. The second part of this study will look at *Orationes tres contra Arianos* which highlights the Son of God who is the radiance of the Father and, following that, the *Epistulae iv ad Serapionem* will be examined in order to understand Athanasius' view of the role of the Holy Spirit in the process of enlightenment of the believer.

The Logos and Creation: Illumination and Providence

In *Contra gentes*, Athanasius argues that the Logos is the creator of all things and providentially cares for creation, maintaining its harmony and sustaining it with His power and wisdom. Athanasius defines what he means by the Logos in *Contra gentes* 40:

---

[694] Johannes Quasten, *Patrology*, vol. 3, *The Golden Age of Greek Patristic Literature from the Council of Nicea to the Council of Chalcedon* (Utrecht: Spectrum Publishers; Westminster, Maryland: The Newman Press, 1960), 25. Cf. Timothy D. Barnes' review of the possible dates and their arguments in his *Athanasius and Constantius: Theology and Politics in the Constantinian Empire* (Cambridge, Mass. and London: Harvard University Press, 1993), 12-3.

[695] Quasten, *Patrology*, vol. 3, 26-7.

[696] Quasten, *Patrology*, vol. 3, 57-8.

> But I mean the living and powerful Word of the good God, the God of the Universe, the very Word which is God, Who while different from things that are made, and from all Creation, is the One own Word of the good Father, Who by His own providence (προνοίᾳ) *ordered* (διεκόσμησε) and *illumines* (φωτίζει) this Universe. For being the good Word of the Good Father He produced the order of all things, combining one with another things contrary, and reducing them to one harmonious order. He being the Power of God and Wisdom of God causes the heaven to revolve, and has suspended the earth, and made it fast, though resting upon nothing, by His own nod. *Illumined* by Him (Τούτῳ φωτιζόμενος), the sun gives light to the world, and the moon has her measured period of shining. By reason of Him the water is suspended in the clouds, the rains shower upon the earth, and the sea is kept within bounds, while the earth bears grasses and is clothed with all manner of plants.[697]

Athanasius writes that the Logos by His providence has ordered and illumined the universe. In this passage the Logos is described by analogy to the sun. The Logos enlightens the world just as the sun does. But Athanasius goes beyond this common analogy to say that the sun receives *its* illumination from the Logos. There is transcendent light which the Logos gives to the created order and on which the whole universe depends.

Another description of the work of the Logos reiterates His work of giving light and sustaining the created order:

> The holy Word of the Father, then, almighty and all-perfect, uniting with the universe and having everywhere unfolded His own powers, and having *illumined* all (φωτίσας), both things seen and things invisible, holds them together and binds them to Himself, having left nothing void of His own power, but on the contrary quickening and sustaining all things everywhere, each severally and all collectively.[698]

In Athanasius' thought the Logos is closely bound to creation to the extent that He is even in creation and governs it by His power and wisdom.[699] Because He is in creation

---

[697] Athanasius *Contra gentes* 40.4, 5; Robert W. Thomson, ed. and trans., *Athanasius: Contra Gentes and De Incarnatione* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), 110-2, ll. 23-40; PG 25, 81A-B; NFNF II, IV, 25-6. Emphasis mine.

[698] Athanasius *Contra gentes* 42.1; Thomson, *Athanasius*, 114, ll. 1-6; PG 25, 84B; NPNF II, IV, 26. Emphasis mine.

[699] Athanasius *De incarnatione* 41.5-7; 42.1, 3, 6; 43.6; Charles Kannengiesser, ed. and trans., *Athanase d'Alexandrie: Sur l'incarnation du verbe*, SC 199 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 2000), 412-8, 422; NPNF II, IV, 58-60.

the Logos is the immanent unifying power for the material and invisible world. Athanasius describes this in *De incarnatione* 42:

> For by His own power He is united wholly with each and all, and orders all things without stint, so that no one could have called it out of place for Him to speak, and make known Himself and His Father, by means of sun, if He so willed, or moon, or heaven, or earth, or waters, or fire ; inasmuch as He holds in one all things at once, and is in fact not only in all, but also in the part in question, and there invisibly manifests Himself.[700]

The Logos' presence in all things is the basis for Athanasius' argument that the Logos could become incarnate. Because of His immanent presence all the Logos had to do was to choose the body in which He wanted to make Himself known to the world. What results from this line of reasoning is the emphasis upon the Logos' immanence to the created order. He is completely involved in all that is happening in creation and has bound Himself to creation, sustaining, ordering, harmonizing, illuminating and maintaining all the various components of it. The next section reveals more of the Logos' work to enlighten.

The Logos and Creation: Enlightening and Enlivening

According to Athanasius the Logos is light and life. This is a central theme to the apologetic pair of works *Contra gentes* and *De incarnatione verbi Dei*. Athanasius is, in these two works, developing a doctrine of the Logos based on the Gospel of John, especially John 1:1-18. The Logos illumines the visible and the invisible world and holds the created order together through His power. The Logos' life is light and gives life and light to creation uniting the universe in a perfect harmony. This harmony is powerfully illustrated according to Athanasius by the power of the Logos to unite the various parts of creation which tend to oppose one another such as heat and cold, wet and dry, fire and cold.[701] The harmony of creation is one of the testimonies of the power of the Logos to bring life and order to the universe.

---

[700] Athanasius *De incarnatione* 42.6; Kannengiesser, *Sur l'incarnation*, 416-8; NPNF II, IV, 59.
[701] Athanasius *Contra gentes* 42.1-2; Thomson, *Athanasius*, 114-6, ll. 1-12; NPNF II, IV, 26.

Athanasius develops a clear theme that the Logos gives and enlightens life. sustaining it by His power. He often uses a pair of verbs to describe the activity of the Logos in creation. Almost always φωτίζειν is one of those two or three verbs which Athanasius uses. For example Athanasius writes:

διεκόσμησε καὶ φωτίζει[702]
διεκοσμήσει φωτιζομένη[703]
φωτίζων καὶ ζωοποιῶν[704]
Φωτίζει καὶ καθαρίζει[705]
φωτίζεσθαι καὶ ζωογονεῖσθαι καὶ εἶναι[706]
φωτίζειν καὶ κινεῖν[707]
φωτίζεσθαι καὶ ἐνεργεῖν[708]
ἐνεργουμένου καὶ φωτιζομένου[709]
φωτίζεσθαι καὶ κινεῖσθαι[710]
κινεῖσθαι καὶ φωτίζεσθαι[711]
φωτίζεσθαι καὶ κινεῖσθαι καὶ ζῆν[712]

The majority of these examples come from chapters 40-42 in *De incarnatione* which is Athanasius' reply to the objections to the incarnation of the Logos often given by the Greeks. Athanasius picks up themes which he used in the *Contra gentes* to emphasize that the Logos gives light and life to creation. All these verbs describe the action of the Logos. The constant repetition of φωτίζειν emphasizes Athanasius' teaching that the Logos is the member of the Godhead who enlightens the created order. The Logos' constant action is one of illuminating the heavens and the earth, the visible and invisible realms.[713] The purpose of this illumination is to make the Father known.[714] From contemplating the created order and its harmony one can begin to grasp the glory of the

---

[702] Athanasius *Contra gentes* 40.4; Thomson, *Athanasius*, 110, l. 31.
[703] Athanasius *Contra gentes* 41; Thomson, *Athanasius*, 114, l. 24.
[704] Athanasius *Contra gentes* 44.2; Thomson, *Athanasius*, 120, ll. 17-18.
[705] Athanasius *De incarnatione* 17.7; Kannengiesser, *Sur l'incarnation*, 328, l. 7.
[706] Athanasius *De incarnatione* 41.4; Kannengiesser, *Sur l'incarnation*, 412, l. 15.
[707] Athanasius *De incarnatione* 41.6; Kannengiesser, *Sur l'incarnation*, 414, l. 29.
[708] Athanasius *De incarnatione* 41.7; Kannengiesser, *Sur l'incarnation*, 414, l. 31.
[709] Athanasius *De incarnatione* 42.1; Kannengiesser, *Sur l'incarnation*, 414, l. 2.
[710] Athanasius *De incarnatione* 42.1; Kannengiesser, *Sur l'incarnation*, 414, l. 8.
[711] Athanasius *De incarnatione* 42.1; Kannengiesser, *Sur l'incarnation*, 414. ll. 9-10.
[712] Athanasius *De incarnatione* 42.4; Kannengiesser, *Sur l'incarnation*, 416, ll. 21-2.
[713] Athanasius *Contra gentes* 44.1-2; Thomson, *Athanasius*,120-2, ll. 1-29; NPNF II, IV, 27.
[714] Athanasius *Contra gentes* 44.3; 45.1; Thomson, *Athanasius*, 122, ll. 29-34 and ll. 1-5; NPNF II, IV, 27, 28.

Logos, its creator, and from there begin to contemplate the glory of the Father. Also the incarnation of the Logos is a part of making the Father known to human beings.[715]

Athanasius' Argument in Defense of the Incarnation

Athanasius' argument in defense of the incarnation of the Logos is a synthesis of the teaching of the Gospel of John and the cosmology of Plato's *Timaeus*. It is through the argument of the universe as a body, drawn from Plato's *Timaeus*, that Athanasius speaks of the Logos being the uniting power within the creation.[716] Athanasius argues according to this Platonic cosmology that if it is true that the universe is a body and the Logos created, illumines and enlivens it, then a human body can also be illumined by the Logos to make Himself known to humans.[717] Athanasius states that the incarnation is possible based on the logic of Greek thought. Illumination in this case represents the light which is the human life within the body, the light of the Logos which enlivens the created realm.[718]

In John's Gospel the Logos is the life (ἡ ζωὴ) and the light (τὸ φῶς). The prologue to the Gospel describes the Logos: "without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men."[719] In Athanasius' thought the Logos makes the created order and gives it life and light.[720] Athanasius connects the prologue of the Gospel to the Greek cosmology of Plato's *Timaeus* which proposes that the universe is like a body in order to establish the validity of the incarnation to his Greek critics. He even refers to Paul's quote of Epimenides in Acts 17:28, "In him we live and move and have our being" (ἐν αὐτῷ ζῶμεν, καὶ κινούμεθα, καὶ ἐσμέν) in

---

[715] Athanasius *De incarnatione* 42.6; NPNF II, IV, 59.

[716] Plato *Timaeus* 30ff; NPNF II, IV, 58, note 5.

[717] Athanasius *De incarnatione* 41.5-7; NPNF II, IV, 58-9.

[718] This argument of Athanasius' seems to arise from an understanding among the Greeks that the human person has light coming from them (Torrance, *The Trinitarian Faith*, 69). Clement bears witness to this concept in *Paedagogus* I.6 where he writes that he holds the ancients called man φώς because he was by nature akin to light (*Paedagogus* I.6; ANF II, 216).

[719] John 1:3-4 (RSV).

[720] Athanasius *Contra gentes* 41; 44.2-3; Thomson, *Athanasius*, 114-5, ll. 21-31, 120-2, ll. 15-29; PG 25, 88B-C; NPNF II, IV, 27; *De incarnatione* 41.4-7; Kannengiesser, *Sur l'incarnation*, 412-14; NPNF II, IV, 58-9; *De incarnatione* 42.4; Kannengiesser, *Sur l'incarnation*, 416; NPNF II, IV, 59.

order to argue his point – the possibility that the Logos could use a body to manifest Himself to humans.[721] Athanasius in this passage is arguing that humanity is in the Logos. He then states that the Logos is united to His creation. It is the fact that the Logos is in creation and not separate from it which Athanasius bases his defense of the incarnation to the Gentiles. Athanasius is appealing to the Greek philosophic understandings of reality to convey the possibility and fact of the incarnation of the Logos.

The following is a summary of Athanasius' thought discussed so far. The Logos created the whole universe and sustains it by His power. He orders it and unites it to Himself, harmonizing those things that are in opposition to one another. A crucial aspect in the providential care of the Logos over His creation is expressed by the verb φωτίζειν, to enlighten with light, to shine. The Logos is light and life according to John's Gospel and this plays an important role in Athanasius' own description of the work of the Logos in creation to give life and light to the created order. The Logos' role in creation gives Athanasius the means by which he can argue for the validity of the incarnation of the Logos against the criticisms of the Greeks. He draws from Greek philosophy, namely Plato, to furnish a proof for his defense of the Incarnation. To do this he uses the verb φωτίζειν to explain the power of the Logos to illumine the universe and a human body. The analogy with the sun underlies an argument for the incarnation derived from Hellenism. The Greek and Hellenistic view was that the light of the sun is life-giving. Likewise, in Athanasian thought the Logos is the source of light and life for all creation.

The Father and the Son – The Light and the Radiance

The relationship between the Son and the Father is explored and defined by Athanasius primarily in his work *Orationes tres contra Arianos*. One of Athanasius'

---

[721] Athanasius *De incarnatione* 42.4; Kannengiesser, *Sur l'incarnation*, 416, l. 23; NPNF II, IV, 59.

favorite analogies to explain the inner relationship between the Father and the Son is the analogy of light and its radiance (φῶς καὶ ἀπαύγασμα).[722] Athanasius draws from the analogy of light and its radiance in order to argue his case for the divinity of the Son of God against the Arians. This nomenclature of light arises primarily from New Testament texts such as John 1:4-9 and Hebrews 1:3. From these same texts and others the Nicene formulary derived the phrase: "God from God, light from light, true God from true God, consubstantial with the Father" (θεὸν ἐκ θεοῦ, φῶς ἐκ φωτός, θεὸν ἀληθινὸν ἐκ θεοῦ ἀληθινοῦ, γεννηθέντα οὐ ποιηθέντα, ὁμοούσιον τῷ πατρί).[723] This language of light to describe the inner life of the Godhead is used fairly consistently by Athanasius throughout his works, even in the *Epistulae iv ad Serapionem* which explains the nature of the Spirit in its relationship to the life of the Father and the Son. This analogy of the light and its radiance serves two purposes in Athanasius' writings. First it gives Athanasius orthodox language with which to speak of the divine nature of the Godhead and its unity and second, it gives him language about the Godhead to explain its activity to create and redeem. I will briefly explore both the issue of unity in being and the Godhead's unity in activity in Athanasius' *Orationes tres contra Arianos.*

Unity in Being (οὐσία)

In his third oration against the Arians, Athanasius describes the relationship between Father and the Son using the scriptural metaphor of light, as signifying their unity in being:

---

[722] This analogy is used throughout the *Orationes tres contra Arianos* along with another analogy – the fountain and the stream (*Oratio i contra Arianos* 6.19; *Oratio iii* 23.3; PG 26, 328A-B; NPNF II, IV, 317, 395). The Nicene formulary does not use this analogy, but Athanasius makes use of it frequently to describe the unity of the Godhead. Another analogy Athanasius uses is the Emperor and his image (*Oratio iii contra Arianos* 23.5; NPNF II, IV, 396). Both of these analogies–the fountain and the image–come from texts in Scripture. Some of the most common used by Athanasius were Jer. 2:13, Bar. 3:12 (Fountain) and Col. 1:15 (Image).

[723] Concilium Nicaenum *Expositio fidei CCCXVIII patrum*; Norman P. Tanner, S. J., ed., *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, vol. 1, *Nicea I to Lateran V* (London: Sheed & Ward; Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1990), 5.

> Wherefore neither is the Son another God, for He was not procured from without, else were there many, if a godhead be procured foreign from the Father's ; for if the Son be other, as an Offspring, still He is the Same as God ; and He and the Father are one in propriety and peculiarity of nature, and in the identity of the one Godhead, as has been said. For the radiance also is light (Καὶ γὰρ καὶ τὸ ἀπαύγασμα φῶς ἐστιν), nor second to the sun, nor a different light, nor from participation of it, but a whole and proper offspring of it. And such an offspring is necessarily one light ; and no one would say that they are two lights, but sun and radiance two, yet one the light from the sun *enlightening* in its radiance all things (ἕν δὲ τὸ ἐξ ἡλίου φῶς ἐν τῷ ἀπαυγάσματι φωτίζον τὰ πανταχοῦ). So also the Godhead of the Son is the Father's ; whence also it is indivisible ; and thus there is one God and none other but He.[724]

Athanasius argues that the Son is one with the Father just as the radiance is one with the light. The Son is not another God but is the Offspring of the Father. The radiance is not separate from the light. In Athanasius' reasoning one would not talk about two lights, but one light. The emphasis in *Orationes tres contra Arianos* is that God the Father and the Son are one in essence, as are the light and its radiance. The Father has begotten the Son and the Son is one with the Father. Athanasius, in another place, writes that when one sees the Son one sees the Father; when one hears the Son, one hears the Father, "as he who is irradiated by the radiance, knows that he is *enlightened* by the sun (ὥσπερ καὶ ὁ τῷ ἀπαυγάσματι καταυγαζόμενος οἶδεν, ὅτι καὶ ὑπὸ ἡλίου φωτίζεται.)" (emphasis mine).[725] Previous to this Athanasius wrote:

> And this one may see in the instance of light and radiance ; for what the light enlightens, that the radiance irradiates (καὶ γὰρ ὅπερ φωτίζει τὸ φῶς, τοῦτο τὸ ἀπαύγασμα καταύγαζει) ; and what the radiance irradiates, from the light is its enlightenment (ὅπερ δὲ καταυγάζει τὸ ἀπαύγασμα, ἐκ τοῦ φωτός ἐστιν ὁ φωτισμός). So also when the Son is beheld, so is the Father, for He is the Father's radiance ; and thus the Father and the Son are one.[726]

Athanasius in these quotes stresses the unity of being between the Father and the Son through the analogy of light and its radiance. The nature of the Father and the Son, that they are one, is best captured by this analogy of light because of its foundation in the Biblical witness of God and of the tradition of the Church most authoritatively

---

[724] Athanasius *Oratio iii contra Arianos* 23.4; PG 26, 329A; NPNF II, IV, 395. Emphasis mine.
[725] Athanasius *Oratio iii contra Arianos* 25.14; PG 26, 352B-C; NPNF II, IV, 402.

expressed for Athanasius in the Nicene formulary.[727] This inherent unity of essence illustrated by the analogy of light lends itself to a deeper understanding of Christian enlightenment.

Unity in Activity (ἐνέργεια)

One of the ways Athanasius describes the inner relationship between the Father and the Son is to speak of the Father *in* the Son accomplishing His work. Athanasius writes about the inner relationship between the Father and the Son in this way: "For as the light enlightens (φωτίζει) all things by its radiance, and without its radiance nothing would be illuminated (φωτισθείη), so also the Father, as by a hand, in the Word wrought all things, and without Him makes nothing."[728] The light of the Father enlightens all things through His radiance who is the Son. The analogy is specifically applied to Creation. God creates *through* the Son, "as by a hand." But Athanasius also applies this unity in activity of the Father and the Son to the giving of grace and peace to believers.[729] A classic expression of this unity in activity is found in baptism. Athanasius expresses this point in *Oratio ii*:

> For where the Father is, there is the Son, and where the light, there the radiance ; and as what the Father works, He works through the Son, and the Lord Himself says, 'What I see the Father do, that do I also'; so also when baptism is given, whom the Father baptizes, him the Son baptizes ; and whom the Son baptizes, he is consecrated in the Holy Ghost. And again as when the sun shines, one might say that the radiance illuminates (τὸ ἀπαύγασμα φωτίζειν), for the light is one and indivisible, nor can be detached, so where the Father is or is named, there plainly is the Son also ; and is the Father named in Baptism? Then must the Son be named with Him.[730]

---

[726] Athanasius *Oratio iii contra Arianos* 25.13; PG 26, 349B; NPNF II, IV, 401.

[727] According to Athanasius, the Scriptures and the Fathers both taught that Christ is one with the Father in essence. Some of the key scriptural texts to prove the consubstantial nature of the Father and the Son were descriptions of God and his Son as light such as Ps. 36:9; Jn. 1:9; Jn. 8:12. Cf. Athanasius *De synodis* 45, 49, 53; NPNF II, IV, 473-4, 476, 478-9.

[728] Athanasius *Oratio ii contra Arianos* 18.31; PG 26, 212B-C; NPNF II, IV, 364-5. Καθάπερ γὰρ τὸ φῶς τῷ ἀπαυγάσματι τὰ πάντα φωτίζει, καὶ ἄνευ τοῦ ἀπαυγάσματος οὐκ ἄν τι φωτισθείη.

[729] Athanasius *Oratio iii contra Arianos* 25.11; PG 26, 345A; NPNF II, IV, 400.

[730] Athanasius *Oratio ii contra Arianos* 18.41; PG 26, 236A; NPNF II, IV, 370. Translation altered.

Here Athanasius uses the baptismal formula of Father, Son and Holy Spirit to describe the unity in action of the Trinity (cf. Matt. 28:19).[731] The Father is present in baptism and so are the Son and the Holy Spirit who is said to consecrate the baptizand. Baptism cannot occur without the Son. The emphasis in this passage is the unity of being and activity of the Father and the Son.

Athanasius uses φωτίζειν in *Contra gentes – De Incarnatione* to describe the shining of the sun and the illumination which it brings through its radiance. He uses this same word in his *Orationes tres contra Arianos* to communicate the unity of being and activity of the Father and the Son. Enlightenment is a natural activity of the Father and the Son, because of their common nature which is best described by the analogy of light. This language about the Father and the Son became basic to the Nicene faith of the fourth century and Athanasius used it to his advantage in speaking of the unity in being and activity of the Father and the Son. Athanasius explains that one of the activities of the Trinity is the consecrating of a convert in baptism. Baptism was an important example in Athanasius' argument showing the unity of being and saving activity of the Trinity.

The Son and the Spirit

In Athanasius' epistles to Bishop Serapion he says that it is both the work of the Son and of the Spirit to enlighten. The two work together, the one in the other, to bring enlightenment much as the Father creates and gives to Christians through the Son as was noted above. The following is Athanasius' clearest description of enlightenment and the Spirit:

> As then the Father is light and the Son is his radiance–we must not shrink from saying things about them many times–we may see in the Son the Spirit also by whom we are *enlightened* (ἐν ᾧ φωτιζόμεθα). 'That he may give you', it says, 'the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him, having eyes of your heart *enlightened*

---

[731] Athanasius uses the Matthean baptismal formulary in his *Orationes tres contra Arianos* to show the unity of the Godhead in baptism. See *Oratio i contra Arianos* 9.34; *Oratio ii* 18.41, 42; NPNF II, IV, 326, 370-1.

> (πεφωτισμένους)'. But when we are *enlightened* by the Spirit (Τῷ δὲ Πνεύματι φωτιζομένων ἡμῶν), it is Christ who in him *enlightens* us (ὁ Χριστός ἐστιν ὁ ἐν αὐτῷ φωτίζων). For it says: 'There was the true light which *lighteth* (ὃ φωτίζει) every man coming into the world.'[732]

In this passage Athanasius begins by restating what he says so often elsewhere – the relationship between the Son and the Father is like light and its radiance. Then he adds that it is in the Son that one sees the Spirit. Athanasius is quick to establish the unity of being (οὐσία) between the Spirit and the Son. According to Athanasius' interpretation of Ephesians 1:17, 18, it is the Spirit who enlightens a Christian and when a person is enlightened by the Spirit it is Christ *in* the Spirit who is enlightening. Athanasius quotes John 1:9 to indicate the centrality of the Son in bringing enlightenment to people. He is the true light who enlightens everyone. Athanasius teaches that the Son and the Spirit are one in their activity (ἐνέργεια) of enlightening.[733]

In this passage Athanasius seems to also imply that the Spirit is a part of the analogy of the light and the radiance. The Spirit in Athanasius' analogy appears to be the action of enlightenment which the radiance gives or the effect of the radiance upon those who are enlightened. It is clear from this example that the Spirit is a part of the economy of the Trinity, but its nature as being one with the Father is not clearly stated here. The Spirit therefore is connected through its completion of the action of the Trinity, but not necessarily united in nature by this analogy to the degree that the Son is to the Father.[734] Though it could be said that Athanasius is arguing from the unity of activity to the unity of being.[735] Enlightenment as a divine ἐνέργεια is chosen by

---

[732] Athanasius *Epistula i ad Serapionem* 19; PG 26, 573C-D; C. R. B. Shapland, trans., *The Letters of St. Athanasius Concerning the Holy Spirit* (London: The Epworth Press, 1951), 110-11. Emphasis mine.

[733] T. F. Torrance, "Spiritus Creator: A Consideration of the teaching of St. Athanasius and St. Basil" in *Theology in Reconstruction* (London: SCM Press, 1965), 216.

[734] This seems to be a case of the inadequacy of an analogy. Athanasius' analogies fountain-stream, light-radiance work for the being of the Son and the Father, but it seems to be a stretch to tack on the Spirit. For a defense of Athanasius' analogies in *Epistula i ad Serapionem* see Haykin, *The Spirit of God*, 71-6.

[735] G. L. Prestige argues that Athanasius emphasizes the unity of activity of the Spirit and the Son and thereby proves the unity of being. The Spirit enlightens, but it is the Son who is in the Spirit

Athanasius since it fits one of the most important Nicene analogies for the Trinity. The language used by the Church Fathers for speaking of the essence of God was based on particular Scriptures which describe God as light (1 Jn. 1:5) and the Son as the true light (Jn. 1:9).[736]

Athanasius describes the being and activity of the Spirit and the Son again in another place:

> As the Son is an only-begotten offspring, so also the Spirit, being given and sent from the Son, is himself one and not many, nor one from among many, but Only Spirit. As the Son, the living Word, is one, so must the vital activity and gift whereby he sanctifies and enlightens (τὴν ἁγιαστικὴν καὶ φωτιστικὴν) be one perfect and complete; which is said to proceed from the Father, because it is from the Word, who is confessed to be from the Father, that it shines forth (ἐκλάμπει) and is sent and is given.[737]

From this text Athanasius teaches that the Spirit proceeds from the Father and is sent by the Son. The Spirit is called the one "perfect and complete" gift from the Son through whom the Son "sanctifies and enlightens." It is the work of the Son which effects human salvation – sanctifying and enlightening which the Son accomplishes through the Spirit.

The unity of the Spirit with God the Father is mediated in the above quote by the Son who sends and gives the Spirit. The Spirit is not clearly linked by Athanasius to the Father apart from the Son. There is no mention of the Father enlightening through the Spirit without the Son. The work that the Father does is always through the Son. The Son therefore is always the person giving and sending the Spirit. The Spirit is one with the Father because the Son is one with the Father. Athanasius is always stressing the unity of the three persons. The unity of the Trinity in Athanasius' system is between the Father and the Son or the Son and the Spirit. The Son is the link between the Father and

---

bringing enlightenment according to John 1:9. Cf. G. L. Prestige, *God in Patristic Thought* (London: William Heinemann, 1936; reprint, London: S.P.C.K., 1952; paperback, 1964), 157-9. Cf. Shapland, *The Letters*, 110, note 11.

[736] Athanasius *Epistula i ad Serapionem* 19; PG 26, 573C-D; Shapland, *The Letters*, 109, 111.

[737] Athanasius *Epistula i ad Serapionem* 20; PG 26, 580A; Shapland, *The Letters*, 116-7.

the Spirit and makes the Spirit one with the Father through his own unity with the Father. Therefore the unity of the Trinity depends most upon the unity of the Son with the Father. The Spirit does not have its own established unity with the Father apart from the Son in Athanasius' thought.

The inseparable nature of the three in their essence and activity is spoken of by Athanasius further on in this epistle:

> And when the Spirit is in us, the Word also, who gives the Spirit, is in us, and in the Word is the Father. So it is as it is said: "We will come, I and the Father, and make our abode with him." For where the light is, there is also the radiance; and where the radiance is, there also is its activity and lambent grace.[738]

With this quote the fullness of the Athanasian Trinitarian system is made clearer – the Spirit is expressed as the activity and grace of the Trinity which brings the presence of the Word and the Father to the believer. It is through the Spirit that a Christian has communion with God the Father and His Son and apart from the Spirit there can be no communion with the Trinity.[739] Thus enlightenment is the work of the Trinity who is light, radiance and "lambent grace." That this "lambent grace" was given at baptism according to Athanasius can be inferred through the following reference to baptism which stresses the gift of God the Father given through the Son in the Spirit to the believer: "So also when baptism is given, whom the Father baptizes, him the Son baptizes ; and whom the Son baptizes, he is consecrated in the Holy Ghost."[740] Although Athanasius does not state it directly, enlightenment, as a work of the Trinity, can be assumed to occur as an aspect of that grace given at baptism.

Conclusion

The use of φωτίζειν and φωτισμός for discussion of the being and operations of the Godhead was developed by Origen and Athanasius. It seems to arise most naturally from the texts of Scripture especially the Gospel of John, John 1:9 being a

---

[738] Athanasius *Epistula i ad Serapionem* 30; PG 26, 600B-C; Shapland, *The Letters*, 142.
[739] Athanasius *Epistula i ad Serapionem* 30; PG 26, 600C; Shapland, *The Letters*, 142.

well used proof-text, to describe the being and activities of the Godhead. Origen's work on the Trinity and enlightenment emphasizes the roles of the three persons almost, it seems, without much reference to their inter-relationship, whereas Athanasius stresses the consubstantial nature of the Trinity in their being and in their enlightening activity. This may be due to the ambiguity in Origen's works of the relationship between the Son and the Spirit to God the Father.[741] Athanasius' clarity on the issue demonstrates the fruitful reflection of later generations concerned with solidifying this relationship in order to differentiate orthodoxy from heresy. Athanasius developed ideas of the enlightening activity of the Son and the Spirit which served as a foundation for the Church's understanding of the Trinity and as an important guide to Basil's work on the topic.

2. Sacramental/Liturgical Features of the Doctrine of Enlightenment

At the heart of this study of φωτίζειν and φωτισμός I am tracing the sacramental tradition of the Church which referred to baptism as "enlightenment" and the catechumens as "the enlightened ones." Justin is the first witness to this trend in the Church. First Justin's use of φωτίζειν and φωτισμός in his *I apologia* will be examined followed by a study of Cyril's use of the terms in his *Procatechesis, Catecheses ad illuminados* and *Catecheses Mystagogicae.*

a. Justin: Enlightenment and Baptism in His *I apologia*

Justin was a second century apologist, evangelist and teacher in the Church. In his works he used φωτίζειν and φωτισμός eleven times.[742] They cluster around two main ideas – enlightenment in baptism and enlightenment by Christ which leads to the conversion of the Gentiles. The former is found primarily in *I apologia* 61 and 65. The latter is discussed in the *Dialogus cum Tryphone* chapters 121-2. This section will

---

[740] Athanasius *Oratio ii contra Arianos* 18.41; PG 26, 236A; NPNF II, IV, 370.

[741] For an example of Origen's ambiguity in the relationship of the Spirit (and the Son) to the Father see Haykin, *The Spirit of God*, 9-18.

examine the importance of knowledge about God as the essence of baptismal enlightenment in Justin which arises from *I apologia*. Justin's use of φωτίζειν and φωτισμός is the beginning of the known tradition in the Greek Church which described baptism as enlightenment and therefore is an important source for understanding the development of the use of enlightenment language in the sacramental life of the Church.

Not until Justin Martyr's *I apologia* (c. 151 A.D.) do we find the technical usage of φωτίζειν and φωτισμός to refer clearly to baptism in the writings of the Church.[743] In his defense of the Christians, Justin includes a discussion of the sacraments of the Christian faith which were often held in suspicion by outsiders. In chapter 61 he describes to the emperor the rite of baptism and its significance for Christians. The rite is the means by which Christians dedicate themselves to God. The convert is first persuaded (πεισθῶσι) by the teaching of the Church, believes (πιστεύωσιν) that what the Church teaches is true and commits to living according to the teaching of Jesus.[744] Then the convert fasts, repenting of his past sins and prays for God's forgiveness. The leaders of the congregation or members fast with the convert.[745] The one seeking baptism is brought to where there is water and is washed in the name of "God the Father and Master of all," "our Saviour Jesus Christ" and the Holy Spirit.[746] According to chapters 65 and 66 after the washing in the three names of the Trinity the newly baptized is then brought into a room where the Church is gathered, is prayed over and is able to partake of the Eucharist.

There are two important observations about the washing in the three names of the Trinity in Justin's description of baptism. First, in his discussion of the rite in

---

[742] TLG data base search for "φωτισ" and "φωτιζ" in Justin's works.

[743] Cyril C. Richardson, ed., *Early Christian Fathers*, The Library of Christian Classics 1 (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Collier Books, 1970), 230. Henry Chadwick dates the work as being soon after 151 (Chadwick, *The Early Church*, 75).

[744] Justin Martyr *I apologia* 61.2; Wartelle, *Apologies*, 182; Richardson, *Fathers*, 282.

[745] Justin Martyr *I apologia* 61.2; Wartelle, *Apologies*, 182. Cf. *Didache* 7.4; Richardson, *Fathers*, 174.

[746] Justin Martyr *I apologia* 61.3; Wartelle, *Apologies*, 182. Cf. *Didache* 7.1-3; Richardson, *Fathers*, 174.

chapter 61 Justin twice repeats that the convert to the Christian faith is baptized in the three names of God the Father and Master of all, Jesus Christ (one time "our Saviour Jesus Christ") and the Holy Spirit. The second important observation is that Justin does not use the Matthean baptismal formula – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – but writes "God the Father and Master of all" and always substitutes Jesus Christ instead of "the Son."[747] One wonders why this would be, whether for the purposes of the continuity of his *Apology*, because he is not familiar with the use of the Matthean baptismal formula of Father, Son and Holy Spirit or because this is related to the baptismal formula of Rome in the middle of the second century.[748] What is important is that Justin in chapter 61 describes baptism as being in the names of the three persons of the Trinity. This reference to the Trinity by Justin gives an indication of the stage to which Trinitarian language had developed by the second century in the church at Rome. Justin's repetition of the point that the baptized was washed in the three names of the Trinity indicates how important it was to him, and to the Church, in demarcating their faith from that of other religions.[749]

The meaning of baptism for Justin is twofold. It is for the rebirth of the convert and for the remission of past sins.[750] Justin calls the rite a rebirth (ἀναγέννησις) quoting John 3:3, 4 several times, which states that one must be born again in order to enter the Kingdom of God.[751] Baptism is also a washing (τὸ λουτρόν) that cleanses the

---

[747] Compare to Matthew 28:19 and *Didache* 7.1, 3.

[748] Hippolytus *Traditio apostolica* 21.12-18; Bernard Botte, ed. and trans., *La Tradition Apostolique d'après les Anciennes Versions*, 2d ed. (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1968), 84-7; E. C. Whitaker, *Documents of the Baptismal Liturgy*, 2d ed. (London: SPCK, 1970; paperback, 1977), 5-6. "Christ Jesus the Son of God" is used in the baptismal confession of Rome, the earliest record, of the baptismal liturgy of Rome. Justin's use of "Jesus Christ" may be a more primitive usage of the Roman church or it could be particular to Justin and his *Apology*.

[749] For Justin's argument that other religious washings are demonic imitations of the true baptism see Justin Martyr *I apologia* 62; Wartelle, *Apologies*, 184-5; Richardson, *Fathers*, 283.

[750] Justin Martyr *I apologia* 61, 66.1; Wartelle, *Apologies*, 182, 190-1; Richardson, *Fathers*, 282, 286.

[751] Justin Martyr *I apologia* 61.3-5; 66.1; Wartelle, *Apologies*, 182, 190.

convert from sin.[752] He teaches that according to the prophet Isaiah washing is necessary for the remission of sins. He quotes Isaiah 1:16-20 as an interpretation of what is happening to the convert in baptism.[753] Alongside these fundamental teachings about the significance of Christian baptism Justin also describes baptism to the emperor as a dedication of oneself to God.[754]

Baptism and Enlightenment in I apologia *61.12, 13.*

The last description of Christian baptism that Justin gives in chapter 61 is that it is understood to be an enlightenment. He writes in verse 12, "This washing is called illumination, because those who learn these things are illuminated in their understandings" (Καλεῖται δὲ τοῦτο τὸ λουτρὸν φωτισμός, ὡς φωτιζομένων τὴν διάνοιαν τῶν ταῦτα μανθανόντων).[755] And in verse 13 he adds "And in the name of Jesus Christ, who was crucified under Pontius Pilate, and in the name of the Holy Ghost, who through the prophets foretold all things about Jesus, he who is *illuminated* (ὁ φωτιζόμενος) is washed."[756] In order to understand what Justin means by baptism being an enlightenment this passage will be divided into four sections: 1) "This washing is called illumination," 2) "because those who learn these things," 3) "are illuminated in their understandings" and 4) "he who is illuminated is washed."

i) "This washing is called illumination" (Καλεῖται δὲ τοῦτο τὸ λουτρὸν φωτισμός)

This phrase is a seminal phrase in liturgical history for it is the first time that Christian baptism has been called "enlightenment." Enlightenment, though, had became a standard term for baptism by the fourth century. Some have sought to link this

---

[752] Justin Martyr *I apologia* 61.3, 10, 12; 66.1; Wartelle, *Apologies*, 182, 184, 190. For examples of λουεῖν, *I apologia* 61.7, 10, 13; 65.1 and 66.1; Wartelle, 182, 184, 188, 190. Cf. Titus 3:5.

[753] These two texts John 3:3, 4 and Isaiah 1:16-20 were most likely a part of the texts read in the service of baptism or used in the catechetical process of those converting to the Christian faith. For examples of the use of Isaiah 1:16: Cf. Cyril of Jerusalem *Catechesis* 1.title, 1; NPNF II, VII, 6 and Basil *Homilia exhortatoria ad sanctum baptisma* 1; PG 31, 425A-B. For an example of the use of John 3:3 see Cyril of Jerusalem *Catechesis* 3.4; NPNF II, VII, 15.

[754] Justin Martyr *I apologia* 61.1; Wartelle, *Apologies*, 182-3; Richardson, *Fathers*, 282.

[755] Justin Martyr *I apologia* 61.12; Wartelle, *Apologies*, 182, 184; ANF I, 183; Richardson, *Fathers*, 283.

[756] Justin Martyr *I apologia* 61.13; Wartelle, *Apologies*, 184-5; PG 6, 421B; ANF I, 183.

technical usage of φωτισμός to the mystery religions of the Roman empire (Koffmane. Harnack, Hatch and Wobbermin), while others (Anrich, Nock and Benoit) have been unable to see the connection and have concluded there is none, that is there is no direct borrowing by the Christians from the Mystery religions that can be clearly established.[757] According to Ysebaert it cannot be firmly established that this term was a technical term in the mysteries and thus was borrowed subsequently by the Christian community.[758] At most what can be said is that φωτισμός was used generally in a religious context to speak of the making known of something to the initiate that was held as a secret from the non-initiates.[759] It could be that φωτίζειν in the participle form became a term used by the Church as early as Ignatius' Epistle to the Romans to speak about Christians as those who are enlightened which may be a reference to Hebrews 6:4.[760] Yet Justin is the first evidence of *baptism* being called illumination. Justin applies the term "illuminated" to Christians as Ignatius had. Ignatius is the beginning of Christians being described by the term illuminated.

Justin emphasizes in his explanation of baptism to the emperor that baptismal enlightenment is an understanding of God and his truth which comes from the teaching of the Church. As will be discussed further down, the baptismal enlightenment was something which they who were baptized learned, possibly the tradition which they received about the three persons of the Godhead in their catechism. The tradition of calling the baptized, the "illuminated," developed more clearly in the fourth century.[761] Justin calls baptism "enlightenment" and then gives an explanation of what he means by this. He does not define baptism as enlightenment given through a mystical experience or the gift of the Spirit to the believer. Rather his use of enlightenment for baptism is a

---

[757] Ysebaert, 159-60.
[758] Ysebaert, 162-3.
[759] Ysebaert, 162.
[760] Ignatius *Epistula ad Romanos* Inscription; Holmes, *The Apostolic Fathers*, 166-7.
[761] Cyril of Jerusalem *Procatechesis* 1; *Catechesis* 1.title; PG 33, 332A-333A; 369, title.

result of the fact that those who have learned these things have been enlightened in their understandings.

ii) "because those who learn these things" (τῶν ταῦτα μανθανόντων).

From the context there are at least two options to Justin's reference of things the converts have learned and a third if one considers the wider context of the whole *Apology*. Justin, before his description of baptism as enlightenment, wrote about the ineffability of God's name and that there is no proper name for God. This seems to be the most direct reference to the "things" which the illumined person knows. It is also an important doctrine of the nature of God in Justin's writings and something which distinguishes God from the pagan deities.[762]

Another possibility for what the illumined have learned is the tenets of the Christian faith which included primarily an understanding of the three persons of the Trinity. These tenets can be easily gathered from the description of the sacrament of baptism given by Justin and point to what was most likely baptismal interrogations (Dost thou believe...?) which were understood and agreed to by the one being baptized.[763] The mentioning of each of the three persons of the Trinity would correspond then to the three questions asked by the bishop of the one being baptized.

Justin's description of the three persons in this passage gives some insight into the thought of his time about the Trinity and indicate its importance for the profession of faith in conversion to Christianity. First, Justin speaks about the baptism being done in the name of God the Father and Master of all whose name is ineffable.[764] The one who is illumined is also washed in the name of Jesus Christ, "who was crucified under Pontius Pilate."[765] Also the illumined one was baptized in the name of the Holy Spirit,

---

[762] Justin Martyr *I apologia* 10, 61, 63; *II apologia* 6; ANF I, 165, 183-4, 190; Wartelle, *Apologies*, 108-9, 182-5, 184-9, 204-5.

[763] J. N. D. Kelly, *Early Christian Creeds*, 3rd ed. (London: Longman Group Limited, 1972; paperback, 1981), 43, 73.

[764] Justin Martyr *I apologia* 61.13; ANF I, 183; Wartelle, *Apologies*, 184. Justin calls God the "Father and Maker of all" in other place in his *I apologia* 8, 58, 67; Wartelle, *Apologies*, 106, 178, 190.

[765] Justin Martyr *I apologia* 61.13; ANF I, 183; Wartelle, *Apologies*, 184.

"who through the prophets foretold everything about Jesus."[766] Thus what is present in the details of the three names of the Trinity are segments of what could have been aspects of a confession of faith that was probably learned beforehand through the process of catechism and then confessed by way of affirmations to questions in the baptismal liturgy.

The third possibility of what "things" were learned is the general truths of the gospel of Jesus Christ that have been assented to by the convert as Justin explained in his defense of the Christian faith. For example, the most important argument in Justin's *Apology* is the middle section which is a demonstration from Old Testament Scriptures that Jesus is the Son of God and the promised Messiah of the Jews.[767] This is at the heart of the kinds of things which a convert learned and agreed with in order to become a Christian. In other words they must confess Christ as Lord. Whether this kind of demonstration of the divinity of Christ was a part of the catechism at the time of Justin we cannot tell, but it seems likely that it could have been.[768]

All three of these options, the ineffable name of God, the three names and persons of the Godhead and the truths about the person of Christ, seem to be possible aspects of the things which the convert learned and which enlightened their understanding. In both chapter 61 and 66 Justin emphasizes the teaching of the Church to which the converts give their assent and believe. It seems likely that this kind of teaching could have been learned through a catechetical process preceding the washing in water and was assented to by the one seeking to become a Christian. Thus the liturgical rite itself is not completely responsible for the illumination of the Christian, but may be the culmination of a process of learning the truths of the gospel and the

---

[766] Justin Martyr *I apologia* 61.13; ANF I, 183; Wartelle, *Apologies*, 184.

[767] Justin Martyr *I apologia* 30-53; Wartelle, *Apologies*, 136-73; Richardson, *Fathers*, 260-277. See Hardy's assessment of Justin's work in his outline on p. 236.

[768] Kelly, *Early Christian Creeds*, 73-5. Kelly finds in Justin's *I apologia* plenty of examples of a Christological kerygma which could have been learned by the catechumen through the teaching of the Church before baptism.

traditions of the Church in the form of the baptismal confession which, all together, brings illumination. But because the rite is called enlightenment, the catechism cannot be isolated from the rite. The two, catechism and baptism, go together giving the Christian enlightenment in their understanding of God.

*iii) "are enlightened in their understandings" (*φωτιζομένων τὴν διάνοιαν*)*

Those who are baptized according to Justin "are enlightened in their understanding" (φωτιζομένων τὴν διάνοιαν).[769] Διάνοια is understood here generally as the faculty of thinking, intelligence, understanding, or the mind.[770] For Justin and the Greek world in general, enlightenment had to do with knowledge.[771] In the New Testament, such as in the Gospel of John, knowledge of the Father and the Son is central to salvation and eternal life (Jn. 17:3).[772] By explaining to the emperor that the rite of baptism is an enlightenment Justin is not so much emphasizing the mystical aspects of enlightenment and knowledge of God, as he is an enlightenment of the understanding of the human intellect for the purpose of living a life in accordance with true Reason, i.e., Christ.[773] This knowledge is given to the catechumen before baptism through the teaching of the Church and therefore does not necessarily represent a "gnostic" type of knowledge given to the baptizand through an immediate illumination during the baptismal ceremony itself.[774]

---

[769] Rev. M. Dods and Rev. G. Reith translate διάνοια as "understanding" (ANF I, 183). Edward R. Hardy translates διάνοια as "within" (Richardson, *Fathers*, 283). André Wartelle translates διάνοια as "l'esprit" (Wartelle, *Apologies*, 185). I prefer Dods and Reith's translation as well as Wartelle's translation. They are more accurate translations of the lexical options given in LS and Bauer, fit Justin's description of enlightenment as knowledge gained through hearing and learning about God in this chapter and capture Justin's emphasis in his works on the rational capacities of the human being.

[770] LS, 405; Bauer, 187.

[771] George Eldon Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament*, rev. ed., ed. Donald A. Hagner (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1993; reprint,1996), 296-7.

[772] Ladd, *A Theology*, 295-9.

[773] Justin Martyr *I apologia* 5.4; Wartelle, *Apologies*, 104-5; Richardson, *Fathers*, 245; *I apologia* 46; Wartelle, *Apologies*, 160-1; Richardson, *Fathers*, 272; *II apologia* 8; Wartelle, *Apologies*, 208-9; ANF I, 191.

[774] Ladd, *A Theology*, 296. Ladd gives a description of the *Hermetica* and illumination in relation to the Greek view of knowledge in his chapter on "Eternal Life" in the Gospel of John (pp. 296-7). He described knowledge in Greek thought in this way: "Knowledge is used in two different ways in Greek background. In philosophical thought knowledge meant the contemplation of its object to ascertain its essential qualities. The mind by reason can grasp the permanent essence of that which it beholds. Knowledge is the apprehension of ultimate reality." Then commenting on the second type of knowledge

Yet it is baptism which Justin said was called enlightenment not the catechesis directly. It may be that in Justin's mind catechesis and baptism were linked together as one process of enlightenment that was completed at the washing with water. This phrase "φωτιζομένων τὴν διάνοιαν" points to the importance of Christian salvation as knowledge given through the sacrament of baptism which includes the catechesis and the knowledge gained in the teaching about God the Father, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit.

Earlier in Chapter 61 Justin described the difference between the natural birth of humans and the new birth of Christians.[775] He contrasts the two by saying that the natural birth produces children of necessity and ignorance who live lives of vice. Those who receive Christian baptism become children of choice and knowledge. It is in this context that Justin explains baptism is called enlightenment. Those who receive baptism have been enlightened by the things which they have learned about God in the catechesis and so have become children of choice and knowledge.

*iv) "he who is illuminated is washed" (*ὁ φωτιζόμενος λούεται*)*

This last phrase is a part of verse 13 which says, "And in the name of Jesus Christ, who was crucified under Pontius Pilate, and in the name of the Holy Ghost, who through the prophets foretold all things about Jesus, he who is *illuminated* (ὁ φωτιζόμενος) is washed."[776] Justin here describes the one being washed as "he who is illuminated" or "who is being illuminated." Justin's description of baptism as illumination comes in the middle of a larger thought which has to do with the baptism in

---

in Greek thought: "Knowledge in gnostic thought, as represented by the Hermetic writings, is not rational thought. It is rather direct apprehension of God by the mind (*nous*), not by hard thinking but by direct intuition and inner illumination. Bultmann emphasizes that such knowledge in the *Hermetica* is not a natural capacity but is divine illumination – a gift of God. This is true. God, who is *nous*, comes to those who are devout and gives to them the saving knowledge (*Corp. Herm.* 1.22)." In my view of Justin's *Apology* he is writing about the philosophical type of knowledge rather than the gnostic type of knowledge of God. I think this is made fairly clear by his comparison of Christianity to other religions such as in chapter 62. That is why he emphasizes "understanding" and "learning" which would imply a catechesis of Christian doctrine.

[775] Justin Martyr *I apologia* 61; Wartelle, *Apologies*, 182; PG 6, 421B; ANF I, 183.

[776] Justin Martyr *I apologia* 61; Wartelle, *Apologies*, 184; PG 6, 421B; ANF I, 183.

the three names. Those who are washed in the name of the Father, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit are the ones being illuminated. This larger context could give the impression that the illumination is more directly tied to the washing in the three names of the Trinity. But again Justin has explained to the emperor that this enlightenment comes as a result of rational understanding. It is a knowledge which gives a proper understanding of God and his Son Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. There is no mystery here to be shrouded in secrecy for Justin. Those who are illumined with the understanding of who God is – the Father, Jesus Christ and the Spirit – are those who are receiving baptism. The knowledge that is given is not mystical as much as it is rational which is of highest value to Justin, his understanding of the Christian life as well as for his defense of the faith.

Baptism and Enlightenment in I apologia *65.1.*

In chapter 65 Justin also speaks of the one who has been baptized as "the illuminated one" (τοῦ φωτισθέντος).[777] Justin includes in this description of a Christian convert that he or she has been "convinced" or "persuaded" (τὸν πεπεισμένον) and has "assented" or "agreed" (συγκατατελειμένον) to the teaching of the Church.[778] Christians are those who "have learned the truth." Learning and assenting to the truth constitute the enlightenment of the Christian for Justin.

The emphasis on learning in chapter 61.12 and 65.1 points to the strong rational aspect in conversion and the Christian faith as a whole in Justin's *I apologia* and other works.[779] This stems from his high regard for reason and the rational faculty of humans which comes from Reason itself, i.e., Jesus Christ. Justin wrote about this in chapter 28:

> In the beginning he made the race of men endowed with intelligence, able to choose the truth and do right, so that all men are without excuse

---

[777] Justin Martyr *I apologia* 65.1; Wartelle, *Apologies*, 188.

[778] Justin Martyr *I apologia* 65.1; Wartelle, *Apologies*, 188; Richardson, *Fathers*, 285.

[779] Justin several times speaks about intelligence as being able to lead one to a right understanding of the Gospel. Cf. Chapter 46; Wartelle, *Apologies*, 160-1; Richardson, *Fathers*, 272.

> before God, for they were made with the powers of reason and observation.[780]

The main part of his defense of Christianity is a demonstration from the prophets of the Old Testament that Jesus is the Messiah which is, for Justin, a proof of the truth of the Christian faith. According to Justin it is by proofs that one can be convinced and then rationally choose what is right, or as he says in one place ignorance is put to flight when the truth is placed next to it.[781]

Catechism – teaching about the fundamentals of Christian faith before baptism – also seems to be implied by Justin's description of the enlightened one here in chapter 65 as well as in chapter 61. Justin does not use the word for preaching often in *I apologia*, but his emphasis throughout the whole work is on the teaching of Christ and His Church. The baptized one is the illumined one who has assented to the things taught by the Church about Christ. From later Christian writers such as Hippolytus we know that the church at Rome at the turn of the third century required a catechumen to undergo three years of instruction before he or she was baptized.[782]

Justin says in chapter 65 that Christians who have learned the truth about God and Christ and have become a part of the Church seek to be good citizens by their works. Justin's argument is that those who have learned the truth are good citizens. Justin's defense of Christianity promotes the faith as the best way for an emperor to have a good empire. According to Justin people who know they will be judged for their deeds in this life and will be rewarded or punished for eternity will live better lives and this will make for a better empire.[783]

According to chapter 65, enlightenment is based not solely on learning the truth and assenting to baptism, but is linked to living out what one believes and so truly

---

[780] Justin Martyr *I apologia* 28.3; Wartelle, *Apologies*, 134-5; Richardson, *Fathers*, 259.
[781] Justin Martyr *I apologia* 12.11; Wartelle, *Apologies*, 112; Richardson, *Fathers*, 248.
[782] Hippolytus *Traditio apostolica* 17.1; Botte, *La Tradition Apostolique*, 74-5; Whitaker, *Baptismal Liturgy*, 3.
[783] Justin Martyr *I apologia* 12; Wartelle, *Apologies*, 110-3; Richardson, *Fathers*, 247-8.

proving that one is a Christian.[784] Therefore enlightenment is not a subjective experience alone, but it results in objective proof that one is a Christian. People who are enlightened live godly lives and obey the commands of God. The fact that a Christian is one who not only believes in the truth but lives according to the teachings of Jesus coincides with Justin's plea to the Roman emperor for justice on behalf of Christians. Christians ought to be tried on the basis of their actions, not on the basis of a prejudice against their faith. Some who call themselves Christians are, in fact, not. They do not live according to the teachings of Christ and are false. Justin draws a parallel example for the emperor – not all philosophers are genuine seekers of truth, but some are philosophers in name only.

Conclusion

Justin calls baptism "enlightenment." Justin's explanation of what that means is that the convert is illuminated in their understanding through the things they have learned. Primary in this category is the ineffability of God's name, a very important doctrine for Justin. Second is the proper understanding of the three persons of the Godhead and thirdly is the uniqueness of Christ. Those who are convinced of these things and believe assent to baptism and from then on are referred to as the enlightened ones. Enlightenment therefore has to do with knowledge of God, a right knowledge of God that comes from the Scripture and the teaching of the Church. This enlightenment which is knowledge of the truth results in people living godly lives as good citizens of the empire. Justin's appeal to the emperor is that Christians are the enlightened ones who have been convinced of the truth and have chosen to follow it, even die for it. They worship the true God, the Word who is the source of all reason, and are good citizens of the empire. Christianity is a faith that is built on the worship of true Reason, Jesus Christ.

---

[784] Cf. Justin Martyr *I apologia* 66; Wartelle, *Apologies*, 190-1; Richardson, *Fathers*, 286-7.

b. Cyril of Jerusalem: Enlightenment in the Catechumenate and Baptism

Cyril of Jerusalem was Archbishop of Jerusalem from 351-386. What record of his thought and theology we have is found in his nineteen *Catechetical Orations* to the catechumens, written in 348-50 right before or right after he became Archbishop of Jerusalem, and five *Catecheses Mystagogicae* given to the newly baptized in the Church. Unfortunately both the dating of the *Catecheses Mystagogicae* and the authorship are in question and the debate over these issues has not yet resulted in a clear verdict.[785] The *Procatechesis* is an introductory lecture to the catechumens and was given during Lent with the other eighteen *Catecheses ad illuminandos.* The five *Catecheses Mystagogicae* were given the week after Easter to those baptized. These twenty-four lectures cover a wide range of topics from preparation for baptism, the ten points of doctrine found in the baptismal creed and an explanation of the symbolic typology of the baptismal and Eucharistic liturgies. In these lectures φωτίζειν and φωτισμός occur approximately forty-nine times including the titles of the *Catecheses ad illuminandos.*[786] Φωταγωγέω and its forms occur seven times and φώτισμα appears once.[787] The following is an analysis of Cyril's contribution to the strand of teaching on enlightenment that pertains to the sacrament of baptism.

The Catechumenate

From the second century onward it is noted, especially by Justin, that the teaching of the Church was a source of enlightenment to the catechumens giving them understanding into the Trinitarian faith of the Christian Church. The relationship of enlightenment to the catechumenate is even more clearly demarcated in the fourth

---

[785] For a review of the debate see Frances Young, *From Nicaea to Chalcedon: A Guide to the Literature and its Background* (London: SCM Press, 1983), 128-30. For an argument for Cyrilline authorship of the *Catecheses Mystagogicae* see Edward Yarnold, S. J., "The Authorship of the Mystagogic Catecheses Attributed to Cyril of Jerusalem," *The Heythrop Journal* 19, no. 2 (April, 1978) : 143-161. See also Quasten, *Patrology*, vol. 3, 363-7.

[786] TLG data base search of "φωτισ" and "φωτιζ" in Cyril's works. All eighteen catechetical lectures have the phrase οἱ φωτιζόμενοι in the title. This title "was constantly used to distinguish the candidates preparing for immediate Baptism" (Edwin Hamilton Gifford, "Introduction," NPNF II, VII, xvii).

[787] TLG data base search of "φωταγωγ" and "φωτισμα" in Cyril's works.

century. For example, the title of the first catechetical lecture reads, "First Catechetical Lecture of Our Holy Father Cyril, Archbishop of Jerusalem, To those who are to be Enlightened, Delivered extempore at Jerusalem, as an Introductory Lecture to those who come forward for Baptism."[788] The phrase "To those who are to be enlightened" (φωτιζόμενοι) could easily be translated as "To those being Enlightened" putting the emphasis on the present tense with an eye to a "process of gradual illumination."[789] Thus Cyril addresses those entering into the phase of preparation for baptism as οἱ φωτιζόμενοι in the *Procatechesis.*[790] This title was given to a specific class of catechumens who were no longer hearers (ἀκροώμενοι), but had been accepted into the group of people preparing for baptism at Easter.[791] This period of being enlightened in the catechumenate involved various things including exorcisms, scrutinies, instruction, receiving of the baptismal creed and its explanation, receiving of the Lord's Prayer, penitence, confession of sins, and other preparations during Lent.[792]

In several places Cyril makes it clear that the process of catechizing enlightens the catechumens with the knowledge of God.[793] Both the teaching before and the teaching after baptism enlightens. There are also degrees of enlightenment that correspond to the catechumenate.[794] Those who are not Christian nor catechumens are not taught the Christian faith in Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Those who are catechumens are taught these central tenets of the faith but are not taught the meaning of the Christian mysteries. Those who are baptized believers are taught the meaning and

---

[788] Cyril of Jerusalem *Catechesis* 1.title; PG 33, 369, title; NPNF II, VII, 6.

[789] Edwin Hamilton Gifford, "Introduction," NPNF II, VII, xvii.

[790] F. L. Cross, ed. and trans., *St. Cyril of Jerusalem, Lectures on the Christian Sacraments* (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1995), 1.

[791] Edwin Hamilton Gifford, "Introduction", NPNF II, VII, xv. Cross, *Christian Sacraments*, xxi-xxii. Gifford in his Introduction outlines two different kinds of catechumens: 1) "the imperfect" (ἀτελέστεροι) or hearers (ἀκροώμενοι) and 2) "the more perfect" (τελειότεροι) or those being enlightened (φωτιζόμενοι). Gifford cites the Council of Nicea, Canon xiv which describes these two classes of catechumens (Gifford, "Introduction," NPNF II, VI, xv, note 5).

[792] Yarnold, *The Awe-Inspiring Rites*, 9-17.

[793] Cyril of Jerusalem *Catechesis* 6.29; PG 33, 589B; NPNF II, VII, 42; *Catechesis* 13.32; PG 33, 1053A-1056A; NPNF II, VII, 141-2.

[794] Cyril of Jerusalem *Catechesis* 6.29; PG 33, 589B; NPNF II, VII, 42.

significance of the mysteries and the liturgical rites of the Church. Cyril backs up this pedagogical method by drawing from Jesus' model of teaching in parables that hid things from the unbelievers, and revealed the secrets of the kingdom to those who had believed. This approach – the deliberate holding back of the secrets of the Church about its sacraments – is called by some the *disciplina arcani.*[795] It represents a particular stage of development of the Liturgy and the secrecy with which the sacraments were guarded by those initiated as believers in Christ and members of the Church.[796] In accordance with this discipline of secrecy Cyril in the *Procatechesis* warns his listeners not to share what they are going to be taught with those who are not baptized believers.[797]

Baptism

Although the teaching given to the catechumens was important to the process of enlightenment it was not complete until the time of baptism and the sealing with the Holy Spirit in chrismation. Below I will explain Cyril's main emphasis about baptism and enlightenment primarily drawing from his *Catecheses ad illuminandos*. Cyril's lectures teach the importance of and need for genuine faith and repentance without hypocrisy in order to receive enlightenment from the Spirit in baptism.

In baptism Cyril stresses genuine faith and repentance for salvation without the taint of hypocrisy. He is very clear that being baptized in water does not guarantee that a catechumen will *de facto* receive enlightenment. He warns the candidates for baptism by the example of Simon the Sorcerer:

> Why, there was a Simon the Sorcerer once who approached the baptismal waters: he was dipped in the font (ἐβαπτίσθη), but he was not enlightened (ἐφωτίσθη). While he plunged his body in the water, his heart was not enlightened by the Spirit (τὴν δὲ καρδίαν οὐκ ἐφώτισε

---

[795] Yarnold notes that this term is a modern invention to describe this phenomenon (Yarnold, *The Awe-Inspiring Rites*, 55, note 1.

[796] Yarnold traces this policy of secrecy about the sacraments back to its roots in the New Testament, its beginning stages in the middle of the second century and its flowering in the fourth century Church (Yarnold, *The Awe-Inspiring Rites*, 55-9)

[797] Cyril of Jerusalem *Procatechesis* 12; Cross, *Christian Sacraments*, 47-8; NPNF II, VII. 3-4.

> πνεύματι); physically he went down and came up, but his soul was not buried with Christ, nor did it share in His Resurrection. If I mention these examples of falls, it is to prevent your downfall.[798]

Later in *Catechesis* 3 he again reminds the catechumens of the danger of hypocrisy in baptism by recalling the example of Simon.[799] In another place Cyril again warns of hypocrisy and contrasts that with genuine faith:

> Yet He tries the soul. He casts not His pearls before swine ; if you play the hypocrite, though men baptize you now, the Holy Spirit will not baptize you. But if you approach with faith, though men minister in what is seen, the Holy Ghost bestows that which is unseen.[800]

The power of baptism according to Cyril comes through the work of the Holy Spirit. The believer who approaches the sacrament of baptism with genuine faith is promised the baptism of the Spirit and the gifts of God such as enlightenment.

In *Catechesis* 5, "On Faith," Cyril devotes a whole chapter to the subject of faith and gives it this definition based on his text from Hebrews 11:1, 2: "Faith is an eye that enlightens every conscience, and imparts understanding ; for the Prophet said, 'And if you believe not, you shall not understand (Is. 7:9 LXX)'".[801] Faith allows those who are baptized to receive spiritual sight; unbelief causes a person to miss the gift of the Spirit and His benefits, i.e., enlightenment.[802] Faith is the crucial inner disposition that is needed so that the baptizand may be enlightened by the Spirit in baptism. This faith is expressed in the confession of faith which the baptizand repeated before being immersed in the water. They turned to the East and confessed, "I believe in the Father, and in the Son, and in the Holy Ghost, and in one Baptism of repentance."[803] This stage

---

[798] Cyril of Jerusalem *Procatechesis* 2; Leo P. McCauley, S. J. and Anthony A. Stephenson, trans., *The Works of Saint Cyril of Jerusalem*, vol. 1, Fathers of the Church 61 (Washington, D. C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1969), 71. Cross, *Christian Sacraments*, 1. See Origen's use of Simon in his teaching on baptism in *Homilia III in Numeros* 1; *Homilia VI in Ezechielem* 5 in Henry Bettenson, ed. and trans., *The Early Christian Fathers: A selection from the writings of the Fathers from St. Clement of Rome to St. Athanasius* (London: Oxford University Press, 1956), 342-3.

[799] Cyril of Jerusalem *Catechesis* 3.7; PG 33, 437B; NPNF II, VII, 16.

[800] Cyril of Jerusalem *Catechesis* 17.36; PG 33, 1009B; NPNF II, VII, 132. Translation from NPNF altered.

[801] Cyril of Jerusalem *Catechesis* 5.4; PG 33, 509A; NPNF II, VII, 29-30. Translation from NPNF altered.

[802] Cyril of Jerusalem *Catechesis* 16.22; PG 33, 949A-B; NPNF II, VI, 121.

[803] Cyril of Jerusalem *Catechesis Mystagogica* 1.9; Cross, *Christian Sacraments*, 16.

of the baptismal liturgy, called by some the adhesion to Christ, is the crucial expression of the baptizand's faith during the rite.

This confession of faith reveals two important things: that faith was clearly placed in the Trinity and that baptism was primarily related to the act of repentance. Elsewhere Cyril confirms that repentance is central to baptism when he says:

> Listen then, O you children of righteousness, to John's exhortation when he says, "Make straight the way of the Lord." Take away all obstacles and stumbling blocks, that you may walk straight onward to eternal life. Make ready the vessels of the soul, cleansed by unfeigned faith, for reception of the Holy Ghost. Begin at once to wash your robes in repentance, that when called to the bride-chamber you may be found clean.[804]

To receive enlightenment then meant that these two requirements of repentance from sin and faith in the Trinity were genuinely met. The meaning of the confession of faith was the essence of the teaching in the catechumenate. The importance of the catechumenate then is seen more clearly at this point in a way that was not seen in the description of baptism by Justin. The teachings of the Church help one to confess the faith of the Church. Taking the above two components of the rite of initiation, the catechumenate and baptism, and combining it with the gift of the Spirit, one way to summarize Cyril's paradigm of Christian enlightenment is the following: it consists of *faith* in the Trinity which was informed and founded upon the teaching of the Church in the catechumenate, the *baptism* of repentance and the *sealing* of the Holy Spirit.

Conclusion

What is apparent from these two early Christian writers is that enlightenment was seen by the Church as the process of conversion-initiation. Enlightenment, φωτισμός, was the name given both to the sacrament of baptism, but also those who were preparing themselves for baptism were called φωτιζόμενοι. This sacramental doctrine of enlightenment was central to the Early Church and their concept both of the

---

[804] Cyril of Jerusalem *Catechesis* 3.2; PG 33, 425B-428A; NPNF II, VII, 14. Translation from NPNF altered.

sacrament as well as those receiving the sacrament. Whether or not the Church borrowed from the religious Hellenistic culture of the second century or not, the fact remains that the religious conscience of the people of this period of antiquity valued the concept of enlightenment. The Church felt no qualms in making it a central part of its sacramental life of worship and faith. What can also be seen is the extent to which the theology of the Johannine tradition effected the Early Church both in its theology of salvation as knowledge of God and in its practice of the sacrament of water and the Spirit. This may be the more important source and foundation for the tradition of the sacrament of conversion-initiation which came to be titled, "enlightenment."

3. Spiritual Features of the Doctrine of Enlightenment

Not until the writings of Pseudo-Macarius is there found an alternative Christian spirituality to that of the Origenist tradition which also touches upon the doctrine of enlightenment. Origen's thought dominates the third and fourth centuries of Eastern spirituality and central to his spirituality is knowledge and illumination.[805] In order to grasp the main thrust of Christian spirituality and the importance of enlightenment to this stream of thought and practice of the Church I will focus on Origen's seminal work and ideas which proved the foundation for things to come, including Basil's own writing on the topic of enlightenment in *De spiritu sancto.*

a. Human Reason

According to Origen, enlightenment is given by God and thus is a gift, a grace, not something innate in humanity.[806] On the other hand, in his conception of humanity Origen finds a point of contact between God and humanity because God created humans in His image (Gen. 1:26, 27). This point of contact for Origen is primarily the mind and

---

[805] Crouzel sees enlightenment as a spiritual theme and subset of Origen's doctrine of knowledge. Cf. *Origen*, 99-119, 126-7. Louth has suggested that Origen's spirituality is one of constant illumination because it is essentially a spirituality of light. Cf. Louth, *Origins*, 57, 74 and "The Cappadocians," in *The Study of Spirituality*, ed. Cheslyn Jones, Geoffrey Wainwright and Edward Yarnold, S. J. (London: SPCK, 1986; student edition, 2000), 166.

reasoning faculty of humans, but also includes the virtues.[807] Mind is conceived as a spiritual reality in God and in humans, not as the physical human brain with synapses and reflexes.[808] Since God is Spirit according to John 4:24; humans made in His likeness have a corresponding part – their soul or mind. Origen says:

> ...there is a certain affinity between mind and God, of whom the mind is an intellectual image, and that by reason of this fact the mind, especially if it is purified and separated from bodily matter, is able to have some perception of the divine nature.[809]

The capability of enlightenment is therefore latent in all rational beings who have a soul and a mind, but enlightenment of the knowledge of God is a gift from God.

Origen writes profusely about the enlightenment of human reason. He might refer to the faculty of reason which is enlightened as τὸ ἡγεμονικόν, ὁ λόγος, ὁ νοῦς, or less frequently ἡ ψυχή. Sometimes Origen refers to this faculty in more metaphorical terms such as when he says, "God is therefore termed light, so called by using corporeal light as a metaphor for an invisible and incorporeal light, on account of its power to *enlighten intelligible eyes* (διὰ τὴν ἐν τῷ φωτίζειν νοητοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς δύναμιν)" (emphasis mine).[810] It is the reasoning faculty of a human that can receive illumination. Origen's anthropology is plainly Platonic – the capacity of the soul to know arises from human reason that is like an eye that when it focuses, "on that which truth and being shine (καταλάμπει), the soul knows and understands it and

---

[806] Origen *Contra Celsum* 7.42; Koetschau, *Buch V-VIII Gegen Celsus*, 193, ll. 16-22; ANF IV, 628.

[807] Origen *Contra Celsum* 4.25; Koetschau, *Die Schrift vom Martyrium*, 294, ll. 20-2; ANF IV, 507. *De principiis* 3.6.1; Koetschau, *De Principiis*, 279, l. 20 - 280, l. 13; Butterworth, *Origen*, 245-6. *De principiis* 4.4.9-10; Koetschau, *De Principiis*, 361, l. 14 - 364, l. 16; Butterworth, *Origen*, 325-8.

[808] Origen *De principiis* 1.1.4-9; Koetschau, *De Principiis*, 19, l. 11 - 27, l. 17; Butterworth, *Origen*, 9-14 and n. 1 on p. 12.

[809] Origen *De principiis* 1.1.7; Koetschau, *De Principiis*, 24, ll. 18-21; Butterworth, *Origen*, 13. Plato wrote that the soul is like the eye which must be focused on the "truth" and "being" to receive understanding and be illumined with intelligence (Plato *Respublica* 6.508B-D; VII, 518C; Loeb, *Plato: The Republic*, vol. 6, LCL, 102-3, 134-5). Cf. Plato *Phaedo* 66D-E; Fowler, *Plato: Euthyphro, Apology, Crito, Phaedo, Phaedrus*, vol. 1, LCL, 230-1. See also Scott Buchanan, ed., *The Portable Plato* (London: Penguin Books, 1977), 252ff.

[810] Origen *Commentarium in Evangelium Johannis* 13.23, 139; Preuschen, *Der Johanneskommentar*, 247, ll. 7-9; Joseph W. Trigg, *Origen*, The Early Church Fathers, ed. Carol Harrison (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), 169.

appears to have reason (νοῦν)."[811] It is the Platonic anthropology which Origen uses that informs his view of knowledge and conversion as shall be examined below.

In Origen's anthropology, the division between body, soul and spirit (mind) corresponds to the sensible and intelligible worlds.[812] Illumination from the Logos is an intelligible and intellectual light that illumines the corresponding intelligible part of a person.[813] The body receives the light of the sun, but the light of the Logos illumines the mind, ruling principle, the soul or even the heart.[814] Origen's emphasis is on the inner person receiving the enlightenment, but primarily it is that part of the person which "governs" the soul – the reason. Though Origen sees the soul as an intermediary between the body and the spirit,[815] it is not clear in his discussion of enlightenment that the spirit and the soul are all that separate. There isn't any indication that it is the human spirit that is enlightened, but always "the mind," the image of God in humans. The mind or soul for Origen essentially has a spiritual quality corresponding to the intelligible realm as stated above.[816]

One aspect of the work of the Logos is that He brings a rational and reasoned approach to the human life. Origen says that those who are illumined in their minds (spirits) by the Logos become rational beings themselves and are no longer ruled by the

---

[811] Plato *Respublica* 6.508D; Shorey, *Republic*, vol. 6, 102-3; *Phaedo* 66D-E; Fowler, *Plato: Euthyphro, Apology, Crito, Phaedo, Phaedrus*, vol. 1, LCL, 230-1.

[812] This is also a Platonic concept. For Plato, the realm of becoming or the sensible world, is contrasted with the realm of being. Plato *Respublica* 6.508D; Shorey, *Republic*, vol. 6, 102-3.

[813] Origen *Commentarium in Evangelium Johannis* 1.24; Preuschen, *Der Johanneskommentar*, 30, l. 29 - 31, l. 8; ANF X, 311.

[814] For examples of the illumination of "the mind," *Commentarium in Evangelium Johannis* 13.23, 135-7; Preuschen, *Der Johanneskommentar*, 246, ll. 15-25; Trigg, *Origen*, 169; "the ruling principle," *Commentarium in Evangelium Johannis* 2.29; Preuschen, *Der Johanneskommentar*, 95, ll. 28-33; ANF X, 344; "the soul", *Commentarium in Evangelium Johannis* 6.33; Preuschen, *Der Johanneskommentar*, 161, ll. 12-8; ANF X, 376-7; and "the heart," *Commentarium in Evangelium Matthaei* 13.15; Benz and Klostermann, *Origenes Matthäuserklärung*, 216, ll. 32-3; ANF X, 483.

[815] Origen *De principiis* 3.4.2; Koetschau, *De Principiis*, 266, l. 27 - 267, l. 7; Butterworth, *Origen*, 233. For other sources of Origen's view of the soul as an intermediary between the spirit and the body, see Butterworth, 233 n. 1.

[816] Sometimes Origen uses the terms mind and soul interchangeably to mean the same thing - the faculty of reason that is invisible and spiritual. See *De principiis* 1.1.7; Koetschau, *De Principiis*, 23, l. 15 - 24, l. 21; Butterworth, *Origen*, 12-3.

irrational powers of darkness. All that they subsequently do is under the guidance of the Reason of God and they glorify God in the simple and higher things of life.[817]

b. The Knowledge of God

The purpose of enlightenment is primarily to bring the knowledge of God to a rational being. It brings the rational being out of darkness and ignorance and gives them knowledge of God and an intelligible light so that they may "discern the rest of the things of the mind."[818] The knowledge of God gives the "true knowledge of things."[819] For Origen this is a spiritual knowledge which has its highest point in the knowledge and contemplation of God.[820]

To be a Christian is to know God in a spiritual way, not a corporeal or sensible way, since God is spirit. This can be interpreted in Origen's system as the mind's contemplation of God.[821] To put it another way, Origen says, "He who has gained the light of men and shares its beams will do the work of light and know in the higher sense, being illuminated by the light of the higher knowledge."[822] There is the knowledge that comes from the word of God, but there is also a higher knowledge that is available to the Christian.[823]

Knowledge is tied to vision as was briefly noted above.[824] There is a strong metaphorical link in Origen's system and the ancient world in general between "seeing" and "knowing." This concept is present in the Johannine and Pauline writings of the

---

[817] Origen *Commentarium in Evangelium Johannis* 1.42; Preuschen, *Der Johanneskommentar*, 47, ll. 15-25; ANF X, 319-20.

[818] Origen *Commentarium in Evangelium Johannis* 1.24; ANF X, 311; Preuschen, *Der Johanneskommentar*, 31, ll. 19-20.

[819] Origen *Contra Celsum* 3.61; Koetschau, *Die Schrift vom Martyrium*, 255, l. 20; ANF IV, 488.

[820] Origen *De principiis* 4.2.7; Koetschau, *De Principiis*, 319, ll. 5-10; Butterworth, *Origen*, 282-4.

[821] Origen *Commentarium in Evangelium Johannis* 6.33; Preuschen, *Der Johanneskommentar*, 161, ll. 12-8; ANF X, 376-7.

[822] Origen *Commentarium in Evangelium Johannis* 2.20; Preuschen, *Der Johanneskommentar*, 81, l. 33 - 82, l. 2; ANF X, 337.

[823] Origen *Commentarium in Evangelium Johannis* 2.20; Preuschen, *Der Johanneskommentar*, 82, ll. 5-15; ANF X, 337-8.

[824] See above pp. 163, 183.

New Testament and to a greater extent in Plato's teaching of the vision of the "good" in the *Respublica*.[825] What one beholds with one's sight is likened to knowing and understanding that thing. This metaphor is used frequently by Origen such as when he teaches that the Logos of God sends out intellectual light so that people may "see" and "behold" Him with their inner eyes and, in this way, they may be united with Him whom they behold and know.[826] Origen writes that the Logos came to the prophets and illuminated them with "the light of knowledge, causing them to see things which had been before them, but which they had not understood till then."[827] In another place Origen explains that "God is therefore termed light, so called by using corporeal light as a metaphor for an invisible and incorporeal light, on account of its power to enlighten intelligible eyes."[828] The intelligible eyes of the Christian empowered to see by the light of the Logos cause them to know things they didn't know before (cf. Eph. 1:17, 18). This link between seeing and knowing is a part of the consummation of human existence when the human soul becomes more and more enlightened so that they may behold the majesty of God.[829]

Although Origen uses the metaphor of "seeing" for the spiritual knowledge of God as in the Platonic tradition, he makes a clear differentiation between the "seeing" and "knowing" when he describes the inner life of the Trinity in *De principiis*: "It is one thing to see, another to know. To see and to be seen is a property of bodies ; to know

---

[825] Johannine Writings: John 1:14; 9:25, 35-41; 14:8-10; 1 John 3:2; Pauline Writings: 1 Corinthians 13:12; Ephesians 1:17, 18; Plato *Respublica* 6.508C-D; Shorey, *Republic*, vol. 6, 128-31. Though seeing and knowing is important in Johannine writings, so is believing without seeing (Cf. John 20:29). In fact faith becomes a way of seeing whereas blindness is associated with sin and unbelief in John 9. Cf. 2 Corinthians 5:7, "For we walk by faith not by sight."

[826] Origen *Commentarium in Evangelium Johannis* 1.24; Preuschen, *Der Johanneskommentar*, 30, l. 29 - 31, l. 8; ANF X, 311. See Henri Crouzel's conclusion that in Origen knowledge of God always means being united with Him (Crouzel, *Origène et la "Connaisance Mystique"*, 518-523).

[827] Origen *Commentarium in Evangelium Johannis* 2.1; Preuschen, *Der Johanneskommentar*, 53, ll. 28-31; ANF X, 322.

[828] Origen *Commentarium in Evangelium Johannis* 13.23, 139; Preuschen, *Der Johanneskommentar*, 247, ll. 7-9; Trigg, *Origen*, 169.

[829] Origen *Homilia XXVII in Numeros* 5; W. A. Baehrens, ed., *Homilien zum Hexateuch in Rufins Übersetzung*, Part II, *Die Homilien zum Numeri, Josua und Judices*, vol. 7 of *Origenes Werke*, GCS (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1921), 262 l. 19 - 263 l. 18; Greer, *Origen*, 252.

and be known is an attribute of intellectual existence."[830] Origen reasons that it is said of the Son in Matthew 11:27 that he "knows" the Father, not that he "sees" the Father.[831] The way invisible and intellectual beings relate to one another is through knowing one another, not seeing one another. According to Origen this is an important distinction which influences how one interprets Scripture. Origen understands that when the Scripture speaks of intellectual beings "seeing," it means that they "know."[832]

This view of the way the Son knows the Father forms the basis of Origen's view of spiritual knowledge given to people. He argues that Matthew 5:8 "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God" is a reference to those who see God in the heart through knowing him.[833] He explains further: "For the names of the organs of sense are often applied to the soul, so that we speak of seeing with the eyes of the heart, that is, of drawing some intellectual conclusion by means of the faculty of intelligence."[834] This is based upon Origen's exegesis of Proverbs 2:5 "You will find a divine sense" which he takes to mean that there are two different kinds of senses – a divine sense and a mortal sense.[835] He concludes:

> By this divine sense, therefore, not of the eyes but of a pure heart, that is, the mind, God can be seen by those who are worthy. That heart is used for mind, that is for the intellectual faculty, you will certainly find over and over again in all the scriptures, both the New and the Old.[836]

What Origen does in this passage is lay out that the basis of knowing is not seeing though the metaphor for vision is used to speak of divine senses. The intelligible realm and its invisible nature are foundations for Origen's anthropology – humans have divine senses in their intelligence that help them to know God who is an invisible being. Thus the link between seeing and knowing is partly metaphorical and yet true if one posits

---

[830] Origen *De principiis* 1.1.8; Koetschau, *De Principiis*, 26, ll. 2-4; Butterworth, *Origen*, 13.
[831] Origen *De principiis* 1.1.8; Koetschau, *De Principiis*, 26, ll. 6-8; Butterworth, *Origen*, 13-4.
[832] Origen *De principiis* 1.1.9; Koetschau, *De Principiis*, 26, ll. 9-14; Butterworth, *Origen*, 14.
[833] Origen *De principiis* 1.1.9; Koetschau, *De Principiis*, 26, l. 15 - 27, l. 1; Butterworth, *Origen*, 14.
[834] Origen *De principiis* 1.1.9; Koetschau, *De Principiis*, 27, ll. 1-3; Butterworth, *Origen*, 14.
[835] Origen *De principiis* 1.1.9; Koetschau, *De Principiis*, 27, ll. 6-11; Butterworth, *Origen*, 14.

divine senses given to the intellect. This has ramifications for the concept of enlightenment – it is not a physical light but an intellectual light that gives knowledge. The light of the Logos is not a physical light perceived with the eyes in Origen's view, but, rather, it is an intelligible light which enlightens the intellect of rational beings.[837]

As was said above, the knowledge of God which comes from enlightenment is a gift from God. It is a gift of his grace. Yet there are things one can do to access this grace. Knowledge of God is given to those who live a pure life, in the pursuit of virtue, according to the Spirit and according to the eternal and intelligible realm of reality. There are levels of knowledge to which one can aspire. Nevertheless, the more perfect a Christian becomes in their knowledge of God, the more this is displayed by the perfection of the virtues.[838] Knowledge and the virtues cannot be separated in Origen's theological system. To know God is to be like Him in perfection as far as is possible in this life (Matt. 5:48; 1 Jn. 3:1-3).

Origen points out that there is a knowledge that is of the light and a knowledge that is from the darkness. The enlightenment of God brings a holy knowledge which is different than the knowledge that comes from the logos of the darkness, evil deeds and false doctrines.[839] According to Origen the demons are tormented when people convert from ignorance of God to knowledge of God. Devils seek to blind people and keep them in ignorance of God. Origen describes the battle between the knowledge of God and ignorance in this way:

> But worse than any other sorts of torments for them and worse than any other punishment is if they see someone giving his attention to the Word of God by seeking out the mysteries of the Scriptures with attentive exertions. This sets them all ablaze; and in that fire they are burned up,

---

[836] Origen *De principiis* 1.1.9; Koetschau, *De Principiis*, 27, ll. 11-14; Butterworth, *Origen*, 14.

[837] Origen *Commentarium in Evangelium Johannis* 1.24; Preuschen, *Der Johanneskommentar*, 30, l. 29 - 31, l. 8; ANF X, 311.

[838] Origen *Homilia XXVII in Numeros* 5; Baehrens, *Die Homilien zum Numeri*, 262, l. 19 - 263, l. 18; Greer, *Origen*, 252. *De oratione* 25.2; Koetschau, *Buch V-VIII Gegen Celsus*, 358, ll. 5-17; Greer, *Origen*, 133.

[839] Origen *Commentarium in Evangelium Johannis* 2.20; Preuschen, *Der Johanneskommentar*, 81, l. 29 - 82, l. 34; ANF X, 337.

> since they had darkened human minds with the darkness of ignorance and had gained their object that God might be unknown and the zealous pursuits of divine worship might be transferred to them. What a punishment do you think is given them? What a blazing fire of torments is brought upon them when they see the darkness opened by the light of the truth and the clouds of their deceit dispersed by knowledge of the divine Law? For they possess all who live in ignorance. They rush upon not only those still in ignorance but also those who have known God, and they try to make them work again the deeds of ignorance.[840]

Enlightenment, then, is a part of the conversion of the soul. For Origen, conversion means to come from ignorance of God to knowledge of God which involves turning from vice to practice of penitence and virtues.[841] Origen describes conversion succinctly in his *Homilia XXVII in Numeros*: "Now the first starting place was from Ramesse; and whether the soul starts out from this world and comes to the future age or is *converted from the errors of life to the way of virtue and knowledge*, it starts out from Ramesse" (emphasis mine).[842] Gaining knowledge of God is part of a sinner's conversion and part of a Christian's salvation. Christ came into the world in order to shine the light of life to those in the darkness. Origen wrote in his commentary on the Gospel of John:

> This light, which came into being in the Logos, and is also life, "shines in the darkness" of our souls, and it has come where the rulers of this darkness carry on their struggle with the race of men and strive to subdue to darkness those who do not stand firm with all their power; that they might be enlightened (πεφωτισμένους) the light has come so far, and that they might be called sons of light. And shining in darkness this light is pursued by the darkness, but not overtaken.[843]

The salvation of the soul is linked to the illuminating light of the Logos who shines in the darkness of the soul. The battle for human lives is played out in the ignorance or knowledge of God – on the one hand the devils seek to repress this knowledge and on the other hand the Logos came into the world to make this knowledge of God known. In Origen's thought there are cosmic dimensions to the knowledge of God and this

---

[840] Origen *Homilia XXVII in Numeros* 8; Baehrens, *Die Homilien zum Numeri*, 267, ll. 16-28; Greer, *Origen*, 257.

[841] Origen *Homilia XXVII in Numeros* 8; Baehrens, *Die Homilien zum Numeri*, 267, ll. 5-14; Greer, *Origen*, 256-7.

[842] Origen *Homilia XXVII in Numeros* 9; Baehrens, *Die Homilien zum Numeri*, 268, ll. 15-8; Greer, *Origen*, 257-8.

knowledge is linked directly to the conversion of people to Christ. Humans are to strain with all of their might to lay hold of the knowledge of God and to stand against the demonic darkness. The study of the Scriptures is one of the most powerful disciplines by which people may obtain the knowledge of God and thereby "torment" the demons that try to dominate them.

c. The Scriptures

As previously mentioned the Scriptures play an important part in enlightenment. Even so, for Origen, enlightenment is a spiritual gift that comes from God enabling one to discern the deeper things of God's word and to understand the mystery of Christ held within it.[844] Since the Scriptures were written down by men under the inspiration of the Spirit, one needs the illumination of the Spirit in order to understand the mysteries that are contained in the simple narratives. For according to Origen it is the Spirit which works with the Scriptures to unlock divine knowledge, wisdom and understanding into the mysteries of God for the Christian. Origen describes the nature of the writing of the Scriptures and their study in this way:

> They (the prophets and apostles) portrayed those mysteries, known and revealed to them by the Spirit, by narrating them as human deeds or by handing down in a type certain legal observances and rules. They did this so that not anyone who wanted would have these mysteries laid bare and ready, so to speak, to be trodden underfoot, *but so that the person who devoted himself to studies of this sort with all purity and continence and careful watching might be able in this way to inquire into the profoundly hidden meaning of God's Spirit that had been woven together with an ordinary narrative looking in another direction* (emphasis mine). And in this way they thought someone might become an ally of the Spirit's knowledge and a participant in the divine counsel. And this is because no soul can arrive at the perfection of knowledge in any other way than by becoming inspired by the truth of divine wisdom. Therefore, it is chiefly the doctrine of God, that is, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, that is described by those men filled with the divine Spirit. And then, as we have said, filled with the divine Spirit, they brought forth the mysteries

---

[843] Origen *Commentarium in Evangelium Johannis* 2.21; Preuschen, *Der Johanneskommentar*, 84, ll. 1-7; ANF X, 338.

[844] Origen *De principiis* 4.2.7; Koetschau, *De Principiis*, 319, ll. 1-10; Butterworth, *Origen*, 282-3.

> of the Son of God, how the Word was made flesh (Jn. 1:14) and for what purpose He went so far as to take the form of a servant (Phil. 2:7).[845]

According to Origen the Scriptures communicate the doctrines of the Trinity and the Incarnation. These are the mysteries of God which are contained even in the Old Testament and are revealed to those who seek diligently the wisdom of God through study of it.

In addition to the light that comes from the Word of God there is a "light of knowledge" that Origen distinguishes that the prophet Hosea refers to when he says, "Sow to yourselves for righteousness, reap to yourselves for the fruit of life, make light (φωτίσατε) for yourselves the light of knowledge (φῶς γνώσεως)" (Hos. 10:12, LXX).[846] This kind of exegesis testifies to Origen's pursuit of a greater knowledge of God which he believed was available through the Scriptures. The reading of Scriptures is such a powerful way to obtain the knowledge of God that Origen says it sets the demons on fire tormenting them when they "see someone giving his attention to the Word of God by seeking out the mysteries of the Scriptures with attentive exertions."[847]

d. The Spiritual Life and Divinization

In his *Homilia XXVII in Numeros*, Origen envisions the Christian life as a life of stages, a life of continual progress through trials and tests until one reaches perfection in virtue and the knowledge of God. This life of stages is a continual increase in enlightenment until one "grows accustomed to the true Light Himself, who lightens every man (Jn. 1:9), and can endure looking upon Him and bear the splendor of His marvelous majesty."[848] This statement is an example of Origen's view of the goal of the

---

[845] Origen *De principiis* 4.2.7; Koetschau, *De Principiis*, 318, l. 29 - 319, l. 19; Butterworth, *Origen*, 282-3; Greer, *Origen*, 186. This is a translation by Greer of Rufinus' Latin translation of Origen's work. Although it varies quite considerably from the Greek version (Butterworth, *Origen*, 282-3) it seems to me to capture well the "spirit" of what Origen was trying to communicate about the Scriptures.

[846] Origen *Commentarium in Evangelium Johannis* 2.20; Preuschen, *Der Johanneskommentar*, 82, ll. 5-15; ANF X, 337-8.

[847] Origen *Homilia XXVII in Numeros* 8; Baehrens, *Die Homilien zum Numeri*, 267, ll. 17-9; Greer, *Origen*, 257.

[848] Origen *Homilia XXVII in Numeros* 5; Baehrens, *Die Homilien zum Numeri*, 263, ll. 2-4; Greer, *Origen*, 252.

Christian life – the vision of the Logos, beholding his glory and majesty.[849] This is also in line with the view of baptismal enlightenment in Clement who was Origen's immediate predecessor in the catechetical school of Alexandria.[850]

For Origen as with Clement enlightenment is linked to knowledge of God. The perfection of a Christian is the attainment of the perfect knowledge of God. Origen says in one place that the only way for a soul to "arrive at the perfection of knowledge" is by "becoming inspired by the truth of divine wisdom."[851] In this passage Origen means the study of the Word of God which contains mysteries in its pages hidden by the Spirit. To study the Word of God is to strive to share in the knowledge of the Holy Spirit about the Father and the Son. This is the highest knowledge that is needed to lead one to perfection.

Taking this a step further Origen, commenting on the Lord's Prayer, writes that the highest point of Christian perfection results in the kingdom of God coming on earth and Christ being all in all.

> In just this way for each of us the perfect hallowing of God's name and the perfect establishment of His kingdom is not possible unless there also comes the perfection of knowledge, of wisdom, and, probably, of the other virtues. We are on the road to perfection, if straining forward to what lies ahead we forget what lies behind (cf. Phil. 3:14). As we make continual progress, the highest point of the kingdom of God will be established for us when the Apostle's word is fulfilled, when Christ with all His enemies made subject to Him will deliver "the kingdom to God the Father . . . that God may be all in all" (1 Cor. 15:24, 28). Therefore, let us pray "constantly" (1 Thess. 5:17) with a character being divinized by the Word, and let us say to our Father in heaven, "hallowed be your name, your kingdom come."[852]

As Origen states in this passage one of the keys of the coming of the kingdom of God is constant prayer with a character being "divinized by the Word." What Origen envisions

---

[849] Origen *Exhortatio ad martyrium* 47; Koetschau, *Die Schrift vom Martyrium*, 42, l. 29 - 43, l. 18; Greer, *Origen*, 76.

[850] Clement of Alexandria *Paedagogus* 1.6.28.1; Henri Irénée Marrou and Marguerite Harl, eds. and trans., *Clément d'Alexandrie, Le Pédagogue*, vol. 1, SC 70 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1960), 160-163.

[851] Origen *De principiis* 4.2.7; Koetschau, *De Principiis*, 319, ll. 20-2; Butterworth, *Origen*, 283.

[852] Origen *De oratione* 25.2; Koetschau, *Buch V-VIII Gegen Celsus*, 358, ll. 12-21; Greer, *Origen*, 133.

for the Christian life of perfection is a complete transformation of being through the growth of knowledge, wisdom, constant prayer, virtues and the divinization of one's character. In this he follows Clement who spoke often of the divinization of the Christian who ascends to perfect knowledge.[853] This divinization was envisioned by Clement and Origen as a union with God. Clement wrote that those who are *illuminated* and "admitted into holiness" have been given this benefit in order to achieve union with God, a state of constant contemplation and converse with God.[854] Origen puts it this way:

> Let our purpose be to enjoy with Christ Jesus the rest proper to blessedness, contemplating Him, the Word, wholly living. By Him we shall be nourished ; in Him we shall receive the manifold wisdom and be modeled by the Truth Himself. By the true and unceasing Light of knowledge our minds will be enlightened to gaze upon what is by nature to be seen in that Light with eyes illuminated by the Lord's commandment (cf. Ps 19:8; Eph. 1:18).[855]

e. Conclusion

Origen's special contributions to the discussion of enlightenment include his emphasis on the enlightenment which comes through the Logos. Origen's anthropology allows for the spiritual knowledge of God to be given to the human reason in a very direct way – the light of the Logos shining on human reason and giving it light. The one primary human activity that helps one to be enlightened with the knowledge of God is the study of Scripture. This puts Origen in line with the traditional ideas of enlightenment found in the Jewish origins of Christianity. Origen emphasizes the operation of the Holy Spirit to enlighten believers through the study of Scripture. Sacramental or catechetical concerns are secondary to his focus upon the life lived in

---

[853] Clement of Alexandria *Stromateis* 7.10.57.3-5; O. Stählin, L. Früchtel and U. Treu, eds., *Clemens Alexandrinus*, vol. 3, *Stromata Buch VII and VIII, Exerpta ex Theodoto, Eclogae propheticae, Quis dives salvetur, Fragmente*, GCS, 2d ed. (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1970), 42, ll. 3-15; Stevenson, *A New Eusebius*, 186-7.

[854] Clement of Alexandria *Stromateis* 7.3; Stählin, Früchtel and Treu, *Stromata Buch VII und VIII*, 10, ll. 30-1; ANF II, 526.

[855] Origen *Exhortatio ad martyrium* 47; Koetschau, *Die Schrift vom Martyrium*, 43, ll. 11-8; Greer, *Origen*, 76

the Spirit which brings a greater knowledge of God. According to Origen the life in the Spirit leads the Christian through stages of growth toward the vision of Christ's glory. This vision provides the restoration of what was lost, i.e., eternal life, and brings a perfecting union with Christ that encompasses all of creation. Enlightenment then from conversion to the final beatitude is an integral theme to Christian salvation in Origen.

4. Conclusions to the Doctrine of Enlightenment in the Greek Church

Now that the argument for an emerging doctrine of enlightenment has been laid out some tentative conclusions can be drawn. The main features of the doctrine of enlightenment are found in the theological, sacramental and spiritual uses of the terms φωτίζειν and φωτισμός. The theological stream of the doctrine of enlightenment is made up primarily of the work of Christ, the Logos of God, to enlighten creation and every person with the knowledge of God and the work of the Spirit in baptism for salvation. The sacramental aspects of the doctrine of enlightenment are revealed in the catechumenate, the confession of faith and baptism. The spiritual dimensions of the doctrine of enlightenment emphasize the knowledge of God through a life of virtue and searching the Scriptures. Contemplation of God through the enlightenment of the Logos transforms a believer into a light-giving source within the Church. The Gospel of John remained a central source for the theological reflection, sacramental practice and spirituality of the Early Church. These three aspects of the doctrine of enlightenment were taken up by Basil and used by him in his defense of the divinity of the Holy Spirit. It is to an examination of Basil's use and innovation of this doctrine of enlightenment that I turn to next.

C. Enlightenment in Basil's *De spiritu sancto*

Whereas in Parts I and II this thesis has explored the topic of conversion in the life and works of Basil the present section will examine Basil's use of φωτίζειν and φωτισμός in his work *De spiritu sancto*. Although φωτίζειν and φωτισμός occur approximately 58 times in his authentic works (approximately 118 times including dubious and spurious writings), this thesis will draw only from *De spiritu sancto*.[856] This work has been chosen because it demonstrates a synthesis of various aspects of the doctrine of enlightenment in the tradition of the Church.[857]

De spiritu sancto is a complex work written and completed by Basil in 375 A.D. In 19 of its 30 chapters Basil puts forward arguments in defense of the equal honor and unity of the Holy Spirit with the Father and the Son. Underneath his wider argument, which is a defense of the Spirit, is a discussion of spiritual knowledge and orthodox theological reflection on the nature of God drawn from Scripture and the liturgical tradition of the Church. The present discussion argues that Basil uses φωτίζειν and φωτισμός, to describe the source and nature of enlightenment in the Christian life and its relationship to divine knowledge, contemplation and worship. Basil's arguments for the nature of the divinity of the Spirit rely in part on the experiential knowledge which comes from the Holy Spirit and is described as enlightenment.

Although Basil uses other words at times to convey a similar meaning such as forms of λάμπω, φωτίζειν and φωτισμός are the words he uses most to convey the meaning of "enlighten" and "enlightenment," especially in relation to the knowledge of

---

[856] TLG data base search for "φωτισ" and "φωτιζ" in Basil's works.

[857] Some studies which touch upon Basil's use of enlightenment in *DSS* include: Ysabel de Andia, "*In Lumine Tuo, Videbimus Lumen*" *(PS. 35, 10)*: L'Illumination par l'esprit dans le "De Spiritu Sancto" de saint Basile," in *Mémorial: Dom Jean Gribomont (1920-1986)*, Studia Ephemeridis "Augustinianum" 27 (Roma: Institutum Patristicum "Augustinianum," 1988), 59-74; Pia Luislampe, *Spiritus Vivificans: Grundzüge einer Theologie des Heilegen Geistes nach Basilius von Caesarea*, Münsterische Beiträge zur Theologie 48 (Münster: Aschendorff, 1981), 135-45; Anthony Meredith, S. J., "Cappadocian Fathers," in *A Dictionary of Christian Spirituality*, ed. Gordan S. Wakefield (London: SCM Press, 1983), 69; *The Cappadocians* (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1995), 31-5; Benoît Pruche, ed. and trans., *Basile de Césarée: Traité du Saint Esprit*, SC 17 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf,

God. These specific words had developed a complex of meaning within the Church by the fourth century when Basil came to use them that was primarily focused on Christian conversion localized in the sacrament of baptism and the knowledge of God. By this time φωτίζειν and φωτισμός were commonly used technical terms for 1) baptism as φωτισμός, such as has been noted in Justin's *I apologia* and 2) a stage of the catechumenate, as seen in Cyril's *Catecheses ad illuminandos* which name the catechumens who are now enrolled for baptism as οἱ φωτιζόμενοι. Because of this accepted tradition which associated baptism with enlightenment, I suggest that Basil intentionally drew upon the words φωτίζειν and φωτισμός because of the importance of baptism and the knowledge of God in his attempt to establish the equal honor and glory of the Holy Spirit with the Father and the Son.[858] This work synthesizes the existing streams of thought about Christian enlightenment into a cohesive doctrine of enlightenment by the Holy Spirit. Three main categories of the doctrine of enlightenment come into focus through this examination: 1) the enlightenment given by the Son of God; 2) the enlightenment given in the rite of initiation and by the liturgical traditions of the Church and 3) the enlightenment given by the Holy Spirit. All three aspects of enlightenment discussed in Part III – theological, sacramental/liturgical and spiritual – are intertwined in Basil's argument of *De spiritu sancto* and therefore will not be laid out in terms of the same themes but will be divided more along the basis of the structure of the book.

1947), 64-77; J. Von Verhees, "Pneuma, Erfahrung und Erleuchtung in der Theologie des Basilius des Großen," *Ostkirchlicke Studien* XXV (1976) : 43-59.

[858] These two words are more significant for Basil's argument than some scholars have yet acknowledged, i.e. Pruche does not list these two words in the glossary of important terms in his first edition of *DSS*. Cf. Pruche, 283. In the later second edition Pruche lists four occurrences of φωτισμός in the index of Greek terms. Cf. Benoît Pruche, ed. and trans., *Basile de Césarée: Sur le Saint-Esprit*, SC 17bis (Paris: Éditions Du Cerf, 1947; 2d rev. ed., 2002), 550. No where in Luislampe's study of enlightenment in Basil does she specifically discuss the terms φωτίζειν and φωτισμός. Cf. Luislampe, *Spiritus Vivificans*, 135-45. Verhees in his article does make a point of Basil's use of φωτισμός. Cf. Verhees, "Pneuma, Erfahrung und Erleuchtung," 50-4.

1. The Son of God and Enlightenment

Basil's first use of φωτίζειν and φωτισμός occurs in chapter 8 with his discussion of the Son of God. This section is the last chapter in a defense of the equality of the Son with the Father. The argument in chapter 8 is based on Basil's discussion that the titles used of the Son indicate the economy of grace given by or through the Son to God's creation thus revealing the unity of the Father and the Son. One of these titles which exemplifies the Son's work among humanity is found in the Gospel of John where Jesus said, "I am the Way."[859] In explaining the unity of the Son with the will of the Father in all of the works the Son does Basil writes:

> For instance, whenever the Lord is called the Way, we are carried on to a higher meaning, and not to that which is derived from the vulgar sense of the word. We understand by Way that advance to perfection (ἐπι τὸ τέλειον) which is made stage by stage, and in regular order, through the works of righteousness (διὰ τῶν ἔργων τῆς δικαιοσύνης) and "the illumination of knowledge" (τοῦ φωτισμοῦ τῆς γνώσεως); ever longing after what is before, and reaching forth unto those things which remain, until we shall have reached the blessed end (τὸ μακὰριον τέλος), the knowledge of God (τὴν Θεοῦ κατανόησιν), which the Lord through Himself bestows on them that have trusted in Him. For our Lord is an essentially good Way, where erring and straying are unknown, to that which is essentially good, to the Father. For "no one," He says, "cometh to the Father but ["by," A.V.] through me." Such is our way up to God "through the Son."[860]

To restate Basil's thought here: he explains that "Christ is the Way" means that He is the road to perfection and knowledge of God the Father. Or stated a little bit differently the goal of the Christian life, according to Basil, is perfection which has as its end the knowledge of God. Basil suggests one can make progress toward perfection by advancing through good works and through the "illumination of knowledge" (τοῦ φωτισμοῦ τῆς γνώσεως). To make progress on this Way to the Father it is necessary to be more desirous of (ἐπορεγόμενοι) and to stretch (ἐπεκτείνοντες) forward to the final end. Basil draws upon Philippians 3:13 to give the word picture of a runner racing to the goal, straining for the final stage of the race in order to gain the prize. The end of

---

[859] Cf. John 14:6.

the road and the reward of desire is the knowledge of God (τὴν Θεοῦ κατανόησιν) which is the blessing of the Son for those who believe in Him. Christ as the Way also means that he is a good Way. There is no confusion, but rather a straight path to perfect knowledge of the Father.

Basil's explanation of John 14:6 pictures Christ as a mystical and yet very real pathway to perfection with the knowledge of God the Father as the end goal. The way is an ascent (ἄνοδος) through the Son to God the Father. This phrase, "a way up," resonates with Platonic philosophy and its conception of the soul's ascent to the "good." Even though Basil offers a Platonic model of the Christian life he may also have in mind the ascent of Moses up Mount Sinai to speak with God.[861] Illumination of knowledge in this life is part of the means of the ascent of the Christian through Christ to a full knowledge of God at the end. Christ is the way up to the Father, the road to perfection, the path to knowledge of God.

For Basil Christ's title, "the Way," is an example of the unity of the Son and the Father. No one can come to the Father except *through* the Son. Knowledge of God the Father is united to the Son. Perfection and knowledge are also connected in Basil's teaching. The road to perfection consists of good works, illumination of knowledge and faith in Christ leading to a knowledge of God the Father. The role of the word φωτισμός in this passage is to speak of one of the means by which one is raised up to a knowledge of God. There is a sense in this passage that knowledge is progressive. The Christian ascends from one level of knowledge to the next until the end of the ascent and attainment of perfect knowledge of God.

---

[860] Basil *DSS* 8.18; Pruche, 138-9; NPNF II, 8, 12

[861] Basil speaks of Moses later in *DSS* 21.52; Pruche, 208-210; NPNF II, 8, 33-4. Moses is a very important model of the Christian life for Basil, especially in exhibiting the values of the Cappadocian vision of the Christian life – a life of contemplation and knowledge of God. This most likely comes from the influence of Philo upon the Alexandrian tradition of allegorical interpretation of the Old Testament who himself gave the life of Moses a Platonic interpretation. See Basil's *Hexaemeron* 1.1; Way, *Exegetic Homilies*, 3-5. See also Gregory of Nyssa *De vita Moysis* 2; Herbert Musurillo, ed., *Gregorii Nysseni: De Vita Moysis*, vol. 7, pt. 1 of *Gregorii Nysseni Opera*, ed. W. Jaeger and H. Langerbeck (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1964), 140, ll. 2-4, 14; 141, l. 24.

In the next paragraph of chapter 8 Basil makes the process of illumination even more clear. Drawing from John 1:9 he writes: "Those that are confined in the darkness of ignorance (ἐν τῷ σκότῳ τῆς ἀγνοίας) He enlightens" (φωτίζει).[862] According to Basil, because the Son of God enlightens, "He is true Light" (φῶς τὸ ἀληθινόν).[863] Basil uses the verb φωτίζειν here to indicate the work of the Son. The Son *enlightens* those in the darkness of ignorance. By this darkness is meant an ignorance of God the Father. Therefore, according to Basil, enlightenment is a work particular to the Son of God in reference to God the Father.

Φωτίζειν here may be taken to mean "to teach." This meaning finds backing in Bauer's possible definition for φωτίζειν in John 1:9 which Basil is quoting.[864] Christ may be seen in this passage as the Light that comes to teach about God. That Basil contrasts Christ who is the true light to the darkness of *ignorance* also lends credence to the possible definition "to teach." According to this interpretation of Basil's use of φωτίζειν, Christ's teaching brings the knowledge of God the Father to those in the darkness of ignorance. Therefore enlightenment is not only a spiritual knowledge for Basil, but also a rational knowledge that comes from learning. This knowledge especially comes through study as he noted at the beginning of *De spiritu sancto*:

> ...for what is set before us is, so far as is possible with human nature, to be made like unto God. Now without knowledge there can be no making like; and knowledge is not got without lessons. The beginning of teaching is speech, and syllables and words are parts of speech. ...Truth is always a quarry hard to hunt, and therefore we must look everywhere for its tracks. The acquisition of true religion is just like that of crafts ; both grow bit by bit; apprentices must despise nothing.[865]

To receive enlightenment from the Son of God includes for Basil learning and searching for the truth. The project of the knowledge of God is in order "so far as is possible with

---

[862] Basil *DSS* 8.19; Pruche, 139; NPNF II, 8, 13. For another reference to this Scripture in Basil, see *Contra Eunomium* 2.16; Sesboüé, de Durand and Doutreleau, *Contre Eunome*, vol. 2, 62-3.

[863] Basil *DSS* 8.19; Pruche, 139; NPNF II, 8, 13.

[864] Bauer, 872-3.

[865] Basil *DSS* 1.2; Pruche, 107-8; NPNF II, 8, 2.

human nature, to be made like unto God" (ὁμοιωθῆναι Θεῷ, κατὰ τὸ δυνατὸν ἀνθρώπου φύσει).[866]

In chapter 8 Basil develops further the relationship between the Son and the Father by holding up Jesus Christ as the true Light who dispels human ignorance of God through the enlightenment of the truth. Enlightenment then comes through various ways: primarily through the person of Jesus Christ, secondly through studying and the pursuit of the truth. Practically this means that the work of the Son to bring enlightenment is carried out through the Church in the ministry of the bishops or "leaders of the word" who teach the people the knowledge of God.[867] Learning from the teaching of the Church is a way in which a Christian grows in the knowledge of God. Basil's view of enlightenment definitely includes an intellectual knowledge of God.[868]

Basil's stress on seeking knowledge through learning is displayed both in his *Asceticon* where he encourages the brothers to ask him questions[869] and in his sermons where he admonishes his congregation to listen carefully to the Word of God while he is preaching.[870] Basil sought to have his listeners actively engaged in learning which also involved carefully examining what was being taught rather than a passive acceptance of it. He called the brothers he taught in late night conversations, "pupils in the school of God's commandments" who through God's grace are able to care and nourish the divine life within them "with knowledge, and to bring it to perfection."[871] The discipleship through the teaching of the Church as well as in the brotherhoods of monks was a way

---

[866] Basil *DSS* 1.2; Pruche, 107; NPNF II, 8, 2.

[867] Basil stressed the importance of the role of preaching and teaching as the duty of the leader of the word and the bishop in his *Regulae morales* 70.1-37. Cf. Fedwick, *Church*, 77ff. For references to "leader of the word" see above p. 143 n. 534.

[868] This point is backed up by Pruche's conclusions of Basil's description of the Spirit as an "intellectual light." See Pruche, 68-9. This is further backed up by Basil's own value for knowledge of creation in a scientific manner which allowed for reflection and knowledge of the creator and is the theme of his series of sermons on the first six days of creation titled *Hexaemeron*.

[869] Basil *RB* Prooemium; Clarke, *Ascetic Works*, 229.

[870] Basil *Regulae morales* 72.1; Clarke, *Ascetic Works*, 124-5. Cf. Fedwick, *Church*, 166-8.

[871] Basil *RF* 2; PG 31, 908C; Clarke, *Ascetic Works*, 153.

in which the Christians in Basil's time received enlightenment, growth in knowledge, and were helped along the path of perfection.

Although "to teach" may be one of the possible meanings of enlightenment in this chapter, Basil's larger purpose in chapter 8 is to show the glory and wonder of the Son of God and his unity with God the Father. Basil argues that the Father gives blessings to His creatures through the Son which includes enlightenment. Because the Way to come to the Father is through the Son, as Basil wrote earlier, so the *knowledge* of God is dependent upon the *knowledge* of the Son. Thus there is a downward flow of the Father's grace through the Son to creation and a parallel ascending movement of human knowledge of the Father through the Son. Basil unites the being and action of the Father and the Son similarly to Athanasius' *Orationes tres contra Arianos.* According to Basil this unity in the works of the Father and the Son is the basis for the equal glory of the Son with the Father, hence the reason for his argument that they ought to be united in the doxology and praise of the Church. The doxology of the Church, in Basil's view, teaches the truth about God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Thus for Basil worship is also tied to enlightenment and the understanding of the truth of the Christian faith.

2. Sacramental/Liturgical Aspects of Enlightenment

Basil's argument about the unity of the Holy Spirit with the Father and the Son begins with his discussion of the confession of faith made when a person enters the Church to be baptized. Renouncing the devil, the person confesses faith in Father, Son and Holy Spirit.[872] With this confession in the Trinity one is baptized and with this confession one worships the Triune God.[873] The authority on which Basil bases his argument for the equal glory and honor due to the Holy Spirit is the liturgical practices of the Church – confession of faith, baptism and doxology – which derive from the

---

[872] Basil *DSS* 11.27; Pruche, 154-5; NPNF II, 8, 17.

baptismal command given by Christ in Matthew 28:19.[874] The confession of faith and baptism in the three divine names of Father, Son and Holy Spirit form part of the enlightenment of the knowledge of God given to the catechumen in baptism.

a. The Confession of Faith

Basil's argument about enlightenment is integrally tied together to baptism. But baptism consists in a complex of liturgical practices. One of the foundational aspects of the catechumenate is for the one converting to Christ to renounce the devil and to declare their faith in their Savior. Basil describes this process in chapter 10:

> And whoever does not always and everywhere keep to and hold fast as a sure protection the confession which we recorded at our first admission, when, being delivered "from the idols," we came "to the living God," constitutes himself a "stranger" from the "promises" of God, fighting against his own handwriting, which he put on record when he professed the faith. For if to me my baptism was the beginning of life, and that day of regeneration the first of days, it is plain that the utterance uttered in the grace of adoption was the most honourable of all. Can I then, perverted by these men's seductive words, abandon the tradition (παράδοσιν) which guided me to the light (φῶς), which bestowed on me the boon of the knowledge of God (γνῶσιν Θεοῦ) whereby I, so long a foe by reason of sin, was made a child of God?[875]

One observation from this quote is Basil's use of the imagery of light when he speaks about the confession of faith made at baptism. The light is not the tradition, that is, the confession of faith, but the tradition leads to the light, the knowledge of God. A second observation is the importance of the confession of faith in the liturgical ceremony of baptism. By "faith" Basil means the confession of faith in the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Basil writes that through faith and the grace of baptism, which includes the confession, one is saved.[876] Faith, that is, the confession of faith, and baptism cannot be

---

[873] Basil *DSS* 10.26; 27.67; Pruche, 151-3, 238; NPNF II, 8, 17 and 43.

[874] Basil *DSS* 10.24 - 12.28; Pruche, 149-157; NPNF II, 8, 17-8. Cf. Hermann Dörries, *De Spiritu Sancto: Der Beitrag des Basilius zum Abschluß des trinitarischen Dogmas*, Abhandlungen der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen, Philologisch-historische Klasse 3, ser. 39 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1956), 58, 132-4.

[875] Basil *DSS* 10.26; Pruche, 152; NPNF II, 8, 17.

[876] Basil *DSS* 10.26; Pruche, 151-3; NPNF II, 8, 17.

separated. Faith is completed by the seal of baptism.[877] Another aspect of this confession of faith passed down by the Church is its source in the command of Christ to His apostles in Matthew 28:19 – the command to baptize in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.[878] For Basil, therefore, Scripture is ultimately the source of this liturgical tradition and, more specifically, its source is in the very command of Christ.

The confession of faith at his baptism led Basil to the light and gave him the blessing of divine knowledge. Without using the words φωτίζειν or φωτισμός the force of Basil's statement, "Can I then, perverted by these men's seductive words, abandon the tradition (παράδοσιν) which guided me to the light (φῶς), which bestowed on me the boon of the knowledge of God (γνῶσιν Θεοῦ) whereby I, so long a foe by reason of sin, was made a child of God?", conveys the notion of enlightenment with divine knowledge.[879] The liturgical tradition of the Church in baptism leads one to the light of the knowledge of the Christian God who is the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

For Basil it is the confession of faith in the Trinity, the three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, which is the basis of salvation.[880] When they come into the church and are baptized converts declare their faith in the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit according to the command of Christ. Basil says that it is this tradition of the Church, the confession of faith in the Trinity during the sacrament of baptism, which first led him to the *light* and gave him a *knowledge of God.* Here Basil places his experience of enlightenment with the knowledge of God at his baptism as a source of authority for his larger argument – the equal honor and glory due to the Holy Spirit.

According to Basil the illumination of the knowledge of God involves the confession of faith in the Trinity. One must receive and confess the doctrine of the

---

[877] Basil *DSS* 12.28; Pruche, 157; NPNF II, 8, 18.
[878] Basil *DSS* 10.24; Pruche, 149-50; NPNF II, 8, 16.
[879] Basil *DSS* 10.26; Pruche, 152; NPNF II, 8, 17.
[880] Basil *DSS* 10.26; Pruche, 151-3; NPNF II, 8, 17.

Father and the Son and the Spirit to become a Christian. This comes from the command of Christ to baptize in the three names of the three persons of God in Matthew 28:19. To change this tradition is to destroy the teaching which saves the Christian. For to confess the Father, but deny the Son or to confess the Son, but deny the Spirit will not save anyone.[881] The three are united together in the confession and not one of them can be torn away from the other two without destroying the basis of the Christian faith.[882] Without the Son no one can know the Father (Jn 1:18), without the Spirit no one can confess that Jesus is Lord (1 Cor. 12:3).[883]

b. Baptism

One dimension of the grace of baptism for salvation is the gift of the Holy Spirit. In chapter 15 Basil establishes that it is in baptism that one receives regeneration and enlightenment through the Holy Spirit:

> This then is what it is to be born again of water and of the Spirit, the being made dead being effected in the water, while our life is wrought in us through the Spirit. In three immersions, then, and with three invocations, the great mystery of baptism is performed, to the end that the type of death may be fully figured and that by the tradition of the divine knowledge the baptized may have their souls enlightened (καὶ τῇ παραδόσει τῆς θεογνωσίας τὰς ψυχὰς φωτισθῶσιν οἱ βαπτιζόμενοι).[884]

Basil teaches that Christians are born again through the water of baptism and the gift of the Spirit. It is the Spirit which raises to new life. Nevertheless, the regeneration of those being baptized is linked to the invocation of the three persons of the Trinity in three immersions what Basil calls "the tradition of the divine knowledge." Basil says that baptism with three immersions and three invocations forms in the baptizand the death to the old life and enlightens them with divine knowledge. Previously Basil had said that it was the confession of faith along with baptism which saved a person. With all this in mind is enlightenment the Spirit's gift? Or is it the result of the confession of

---

[881] Basil *DSS* 11.27; Pruche, 154-5, NPNF II, 8, 17-8.
[882] Basil *DSS* 11.27; Pruche, 155; NPNF II, 8, 17-8.
[883] Basil *DSS* 11.27; Pruche, 155; NPNF II, 8, 18.

faith made at the baptism? Or is enlightenment the result of the three immersions with the invocation of the three persons of the Trinity?

It is difficult to pinpoint the exact source of enlightenment in baptism from Basil's writing in chapter 15. It seems best to hold all three in tension as components that may be the source of enlightenment rather than trying to isolate any one component as the single complete source of enlightenment in baptism. In chapter 14, Basil referred to baptism as "the great mystery of our salvation."[885] This seems to summarize best Basil's answer to our question about enlightenment and baptism. But the rest of Basil's argument about the person of the Holy Sprit rests on the fact that it is the Spirit who gives the knowledge of God to a Christian. Through further investigation of the topic of enlightenment, Basil's understanding of the importance of the Spirit's role will become clear.

According to *De spiritu sancto* 15 baptismal grace for regeneration comes from the Spirit. This is clear in Basil's work. Whether or not the gift of the Spirit is given to the baptizand in the baptismal immersions or through another aspect of the rite such as the anointing with oil has been debated among liturgical scholars. In his work *Greek Baptismal Terminology: Its Origins and Early Development*, Ysebaert, in his attempt to clearly show that the gift of the Spirit is associated with the anointing of chrism, is at pains to explain the practice of the Church in Asia Minor which tended toward no real differentiation between the gift of the Spirit as a separate rite from baptism in water.[886] This conflation of the gift of the Spirit with water baptism seems to fit the above picture of baptism where confession of faith, invocations, immersions in the three names of the Trinity and the presence of the Spirit form one great mystery of salvation.

---

[884] Basil *DSS* 15.35; Pruche,170-1; NPNF II, 8, 22.
[885] Basil *DSS* 14.33; Pruche, 166; NPNF II, 8, 21.
[886] Ysebaert, 70-74; 365.

3. The Holy Spirit, Spirituality and Enlightenment

a. Purity

Based on Basil's description in chapter 15 of *De spiritu sancto* one cannot conclusively determine that the Spirit is the sole source of enlightenment in baptism: nevertheless, Basil was very clear in other passages that the Spirit is a source of enlightenment. The one prerequisite for enlightenment through the Spirit is the need for humans to be cleansed from their sins and to have a pure heart. In chapter 26 Basil wrote about the Holy Spirit, "And as is the power of seeing in the healthy eye, so is the operation of the Spirit in the purified soul. Wherefore also Paul prays for the Ephesians that they may have their 'eyes enlightened' by 'the Spirit of wisdom.'" (πεφωτισμένους ὀφθαλμοὺς αὐτῶν εἶναι, ἐν τῷ Πνεύματι τῆς σοφίας).[887] Basil unequivocally stated that the Spirit brings enlightenment to the soul. The eyes of the Christian are enlightened by the Spirit of wisdom. But the one requirement is that the soul be purified. The Spirit works in a purified soul and gives that soul the ability to see. Therefore spiritual sight is a gift from God through the Spirit to one whose soul is purified.

Similarly, in chapter 9, Basil says that the Spirit comes to those who have withdrawn from evil passions.[888] A process of withdrawal, cleansing from shame, renewal and restoration of the image of God in a person is needed for anyone to approach the Holy Spirit.[889] It is the holiness of the Spirit of God which is the most important title belonging to the third Person of the Trinity.[890] Therefore in order to become a temple of the Holy Spirit it is necessary to be made clean, ready to receive the Spirit and His glory. When the Spirit comes He brings light and illumines those in whom He dwells and gives them spiritual sight to see the glory of God.[891] The Spirit

---

[887] Basil *DSS* 26.61; Pruche, 225-6; NPNF II, 8, 38. Cf. Ephesians 1:18; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11.
[888] Basil *DSS* 9.23; Pruche, 147; NPNF II, 8, 15.
[889] Basil *DSS* 9.23; Pruche, 147; NPNF II, 8, 15.
[890] Basil *DSS* 9.22; Pruche, 145; NPNF II, 8, 15.
[891] Basil *DSS* 9.23; Pruche, 147-8; NPNF II, 8, 15.

also brings gifts of the knowledge of things to come, insight into mysteries, and the apprehension of hidden things.[892]

In chapter 22 Basil argues that the knowledge of God is difficult because the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit are "unapproachable in thought."[893] The world cannot receive the knowledge of God the Father nor of the Son nor of the Spirit.[894] According to Basil they do not know God because they can not see Him. Here Basil draws his evidence from the Gospel of John who used the words γνωρίζειν "to know" with θεωρεῖν "to see" to link knowledge to sight. The "world" is defined by Basil as those who are bound up in the material and carnal life, who do not believe what they cannot see. They cannot see with the eyes of the heart because they reject the resurrection of Christ. According to Basil spiritual sight and knowledge came to the disciples of Jesus when they were first cleansed by Christ's teachings and then they were given the ability to see and contemplate the Spirit.[895] In this case the teachings of Jesus are not the enlightenment of knowledge *per se*, but the agent of cleansing. The cleansing they bring gives people the power to see and contemplate the Spirit of God.

The main points of Basil's argument are that the Spirit gives enlightenment, but the soul must be cleansed before the Spirit can come to the believer. The cleansing of one's soul is also directly related to spiritual vision. This vision arises from a cleansed heart. It is the condition of the heart that Basil says is important to knowing God and the primary impediment to one's soul knowing and seeing Christ is unbelief in the resurrection. Basil does not tell us how unbelief in the resurrection is overcome, but merely that it is the impediment that keeps the world from seeing and knowing God. Basil does offer the opposite example of the disciples who were cleansed by the teachings of Jesus and then they were made ready to see and contemplate the Spirit who

---

[892] Basil *DSS* 9.23; Pruche, 148; NPNF II, 8, 16.
[893] Basil *DSS* 22.53; Pruche, 211; NPNF II, 8, 34
[894] Basil *DSS* 22.53; Pruche, 211; NPNF II, 8, 34.
[895] Basil *DSS* 22.53; Pruche, 212; NPNF II, 8, 34.

can reveal to one wisdom, knowledge, mysteries, prophecies and things to come.[896] This section shows that the believer's enlightenment which comes by the Spirit in baptism is also dependent upon the believer's purity of heart. In *De spiritu sancto* there is an important *synergy* between the divine and human to bring about enlightenment and the knowledge of God. Basil teaches that the Christian must strive for the knowledge of God through cleansing and purification and the Holy Spirit will then give enlightenment to the believer.

b. Contemplation of the Holy Spirit and Theosis

In chapter 21 of *De spiritu sancto*, Basil writes that the Holy Spirit is the Lord according to the Scripture. One significant text for Basil's argument is 2 Corinthians 3. He uses this Scripture to discuss the glory of the Spirit:

> He, on the contrary, who has been empowered to look down into the depth of the meaning of the Law, and, after passing through the obscurity of the letter, as through a veil, to arrive within things unspeakable, is like Moses taking off the veil when he spoke with God. He, too, turns from the letter to the Spirit. So with the veil on the face of Moses corresponds the obscurity of the teaching of the Law, and spiritual contemplation (τὴν πνευματικὴν θεωρίαν) with the turning to the Lord. He, then, who in the reading of the Law takes away the letter and turns to the Lord, – and the Lord is now called the Spirit, – becomes moreover like Moses, who had his face glorified by the manifestation of God. For just as objects which lie near brilliant colours are themselves tinted by the brightness which is shed around, so is he who fixes his gaze firmly on the Spirit by the Spirit's glory somehow transfigured into greater splendour, having his heart lighted up, as it were by some light streaming from the truth of the Spirit (τῇ ἐκ τοῦ Πνεύματος ἀληθείᾳ τὴν καρδίαν καταλαμπόμενος). And this is "being changed from the glory" of the Spirit "into" His own "glory," not in niggard degree, nor dimly and distinctly, but as we might expect any one to be who is enlightened by the Spirit (τὸν ἀπο τοῦ Πνεύματος φωτιζόμενον).[897]

Basil's argument about the Lordship of the Spirit, besides being another indirect way of saying that the Spirit is God, gives the picture of the life of one who has been enlightened by the Spirit (τὸν ἀπο τοῦ Πνεύματος φωτιζόμενον). In speaking of the Lordship of the Holy Spirit Basil compares the one who contemplates the Spirit to

---

[896] Basil *DSS* 9.23; 16.38; 26.61; Pruche, 148, 179, 226-7; NPNF II, 8, 16, 24, 38.

Moses who spoke to God face to face. Basil says that the one who turns (ἐπιστρεφει) and fixes his or her gaze upon the Lord, the Spirit, is transfigured to greater brightness.[898] This is what is expected of someone who has been "enlightened" by the Spirit.

Basil teaches that those who contemplate the Spirit have a particular approach to Scripture. The one who contemplates the Spirit turns away from a literal interpretation of Scripture, especially the Old Testament. The one who turns away from the literal interpretation of the law and the prophets and turns to the contemplation of the Spirit is the one who receives the light of the Spirit to perceive "things unspeakable" in the Law.[899] "Enlightenment of the Spirit" is combined here with a spiritual or allegorical interpretation of Scripture.[900] Those who have been enlightened turn to the Spirit and contemplate the deeper meaning of the text of Scripture and are not blinded by the use of types and figures to convey the Christian message of salvation in Christ.[901]

According to Basil the enlightenment of the Spirit causes one to carry the glory of God because the Spirit is the Lord. The Spirit gives the glory of God to those who turn to Him and contemplate Him just as Moses received that glory when he spoke to God face to face. And just as Moses shone with the glory of God so too does the one who is engaged in Spiritual contemplation (τὴν πνευματικὴν θεωρίαν).[902] Therefore to contemplate the Spirit involves not only a pure life, but also a new relationship with the Spirit that leads one from the "obscurity of the letter" of the Law to the "things unspeakable" hidden within them.[903] The one reading the law of Moses turns from it to the Lord who is the Spirit and like Moses shares in the glory of God, manifesting in his

---

[897] Basil *DSS* 21.52; Pruche, 209-10; NPNF II, 8, 33-4.

[898] Basil *DSS* 21.52; Pruche, 209; NPNF II, 8, 33-4.

[899] Basil *DSS* 21.52; Pruche, 209; NPNF II, 8, 33.

[900] Basil *DSS* 8, 18; 14, 31-3; Pruche, 138, 162-7; NPNF II, 8, 12, 19-21.

[901] Cf. Basil *DSS* 14.31-3; Pruche, 162-7; NPNF II, 8, 19-21. Without the Spirit Basil's opponents are unable to interpret rightly the Word of God which was written by the Spirit and must be interpreted by the Spirit, not literally according to the letter of the Law.

[902] Basil *DSS* 21.52; Pruche, 209; NPNF II, 8, 33-4.

[903] Basil *DSS* 21.52; Pruche, 209; NPNF II, 8, 33.

or her own body the glory of God through the life of the Spirit. Those who are enlightened by the Spirit radiate the glory of God like Moses. They are able to perceive the deep things of God's word, having spiritual wisdom and knowledge.

This view of enlightenment is based on a perspective of the Christian life as a continual progression toward perfection, to be like God.[904] Striving forward for the things that are before them, they go from glory to glory until they become like God, transformed and sharing in His glory in heaven.[905] According to Basil the enlightenment of baptism leads to a greater glory for those who fix their gaze upon the Spirit. They are "somehow transfigured into greater splendour."[906] Basil is describing here the doctrine which was later called *theosis* or *divinization* by the Eastern Church.[907] In chapter 21 the interpretation of the phrase – "the one enlightened by the Holy Spirit" (τὸν ἀπο τοῦ Πνεύματος φωτιζόμενον) – may refer to an ongoing experience of the soul's enlightenment, that is, "who is enlightened by the Spirit."[908] Through the use of the term φωτίζειν here Basil emphasizes its source in the enlightenment given at baptism which he spoke about in chapter 15.[909] Thus Basil connects the grace of baptismal enlightenment to theosis.[910]

c. The Spirit Gives Knowledge of the Father and the Son

In chapter 18 Basil speaks about the transcendent nature of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit which prevents them from being known. But those who receive the

---

[904] Basil *DSS* 1.2; Pruche, 107-8; NPNF II, 8, 2.
[905] Basil *DSS* 8.18; 9.23; Pruche, 138-9, 148; NPNF II, 8, 12, 15-6.
[906] Basil *DSS* 21.52; Pruche, 210; NPNF II, 8, 34.
[907] For a thorough study of the history and development of the doctrine of theosis or divinization see J. Gross, *La Divinisation du Chrétien d'après les Pères Grecs: Contribution Historique a la Doctrine de la Grace* (Paris: J. Gabalda, 1938).
[908] Basil *DSS* 21.52; Pruche, 210; NPNF II, 8, 34.
[909] Basil *DSS* 15.35; Pruche, 171; NPNF II, 8, 22.
[910] Enlightenment is the action of the Spirit which helps bring about the divinization of the human soul. Unfortunately Gross does not discuss the importance of this aspect of the work of the Spirit in his examination of Basil's use of the doctrine of theosis. Cf. Gross, *La Divinisation*, 239-44. Meredith mentions the importance of purification and enlightenment to theosis in Basil's spirituality but does not clearly link baptismal enlightenment with theosis. Cf. Meredith, "Cappadocian Fathers," 69 and *The Cappadocians*, 33-4. For a complete discussion of the sanctification process from baptism to enlightenment to theosis in Basil see Luislampe, *Spiritus Vivificans*, 114-58. Cf. Verhees, "Pneuma, Erfahrung und Erleuchtung," 44-59.

enlightenment of the Spirit are then able to have a vision and understanding of the Son and the Father. Basil describes the illumination given by the Spirit to see the Son and the Father in *De spiritu sancto* 18.47:

> And when, by means of the power that enlightens (διὰ δυνάμεως φωτιστικῆς) us, we fix our eyes on the beauty of the divine image of the invisible God, and through the image are led up to the supreme beauty of the spectacle of the archetype, then, I think, is with us inseparably the Spirit of knowledge, in Himself bestowing on them that love the vision of the truth the power of beholding the Image, not making the exhibition from without, but in Himself leading on to the full knowledge. "No man knoweth the Father save the Son (Mt. 11:27)." And so "no man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost (1 Cor. 12:3)." For it is not said through the Spirit, but by the Spirit, and "God is a spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth (Jn. 4:24)," as it is written "in thy light shall we see light (Ps. 36:9)," namely by the illumination of the Spirit (ἐν τῷ φωτισμῷ τοῦ Πνεύματος), "the true light which lighteth (ὅ φωτίζει) every man that cometh into the world (Jn. 1:9)." It results that in Himself He shows the glory of the Only begotten, and on true worshippers He in Himself bestows the knowledge of God. Thus the way of the knowledge of God lies from One Spirit through the One Son to the One Father, and conversely the natural Goodness and inherent Holiness and the royal Dignity extend from the Father through the Only-begotten to the Spirit.[911]

According to Basil, then, the one who is able to see the Image of God, i.e., the Son, is the one who has been joined to the Spirit of knowledge and has received illumination by the Spirit's power. The Spirit gives the one who contemplates Him an understanding of the unknowable Godhead. He is the Spirit of knowledge who reveals to people the knowledge of God personally and through Himself. For it is in the light of the Spirit, according to Basil, that the Scripture says one sees and knows Christ.[912] From this vision of Christ one can be lifted up to the Source of the Image, the Father.

> For Basil the one who contemplates the Trinity sees by the light of the Spirit the unity of the Spirit to the Son and to the Father. They see the glory of Christ by the power of the enlightenment that the Spirit gives. Contemplation of the Trinity then can only be possible through the enlightenment of the Spirit. Spiritual knowledge of the Trinity is only available to those who are in the Spirit. Those who can receive Him, as

mentioned above, are those who have been purified, washed in baptism in the names of the three persons and live a holy life. There is an internal logic to Basil's argument that is based on the enlightenment of the Spirit given at baptism. Without that enlightenment there can be no true knowledge of God and the nature of the Trinity.

Basil again speaks of the power of the Spirit to make the Son and the Father known to Christians in chapter 26. Basil says:

> Wherefore even in our worship the Holy Spirit is inseparable from the Father and the Son. If you remain outside the Spirit you will not be able even to worship at all ; and on your becoming in Him you will in no wise be able to dissever Him from God; – any more than you will divorce light from visible objects. For it is impossible to behold the Image of the invisible God except by the enlightenment of the Spirit (μὴ ἐν τῷ φωτισμῷ τοῦ Πνεύματος), and impracticable for him to fix his gaze on the Image to dissever the light from the Image, because the cause of vision is of necessity seen at the same time as the visible objects. Thus fitly and consistently do we behold the "Brightness of the glory" of God by means of the illumination of the Spirit (διὰ μὲν τοῦ φωτισμοῦ τοῦ Πνεύματος), and by means of the "Express Image" we are led up to Him of whom He is the Express Image and Seal, graven to the like."[913]

As Basil explains spiritual contemplation of the Spirit leads one to the knowledge of Christ and from the Son one can contemplate the Father, the invisible God. Beginning to grasp the glory of the nature of the Trinity is accomplished through the contemplation of the Spirit who is received in Christian baptism and gives enlightenment to those who believe in the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

The Spirit shines like a light and gives the one purified in soul the ability or divine power to see the Image of God and then to contemplate the invisible One, the Father. Thus for Basil worship is only possible in the Spirit who has enlightened one's intelligence.[914] Without enlightenment one cannot worship God or know Him. The unity

---

[911] Basil *DSS* 18.47; Pruche, 197-8; NPNF II, 8, 29. Translation slightly altered.

[912] Basil *DSS* 18.47; Pruche, 197-8; NPNF II, 8, 29.

[913] Basil *DSS* 26.64; Pruche, 231; NPNF II, 8, 40.

[914] Basil *DSS* 26.64; Pruche, 230; NPNF II, 8, 40. The text in Pruche is:Ἡ τοίνυν ἐν τῷ Πνεύματι προσκύνησις, τὴν ὡς ἐν φωτὶ γινομένην τῆς διανοίας ἡμῶν ἐνέργειαν ὑποβάλλει. Blomfield translates this as "'The worship in the Spirit' suggests the idea of the operation of our intelligence being carried on in the light."

of the Godhead is apparent to those who worship by the enlightenment of the Spirit.[915] Those who do not worship in the Spirit cannot see the divinity of the Son, nor understand the glory of the Father.[916] The Son is the Way to the knowledge of God.[917]

Thus, according to Basil's argument for the work of enlightenment by the Son and the Spirit it can be said that there is a twofold enlightenment – that of the Spirit who shines on the believer giving them power to see the Image who is the Son and that of the Son who gives the believer the blessing of the knowledge of the Father and is the Way to the Father as Basil taught in chapter 8. There is, therefore, an inherent unity in the three persons that is known experientially or spiritually through the contemplation of the Spirit. This contemplation is also a part of worship. The one who worships in the Spirit worships Christ and does not separate the Son from the Spirit nor the Son from the Father.[918]

4. Conclusion

By tracing Basil's usage of φωτίζειν and φωτισμός some tentative conclusions can be made about his teaching. Basil believes that knowledge of God is the goal of a Christian's life. This knowledge is given by the Son of God in the economy of salvation. It is given through an illumination of knowledge in this life. The focal point of illumination is baptism through which the Spirit of God illumines the believer who has purified themselves from the passions of the flesh and has been cleansed in baptism. The one who is receiving baptism confesses faith in the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and then receives the cleansing bath of regeneration in three immersions corresponding to the three names of the Trinity. Those in turn who live a life worthy of the gospel gain purity of heart which brings purity of sight so that they can contemplate the Spirit. By

---

[915] Basil *DSS* 26.64; Pruche, 230-1; NPNF II, 8, 40.

[916] Basil *DSS* 26.64; Pruche, 230-1; NPNF II, 8, 40.

[917] Basil sees experiential knowledge of God the Father as coming through the Son. Putting the Son between the Father and the Spirit in experiential knowledge does not mean that Basil's view is a subordinationist approach to the Trinity. See Basil *Epistula* 52, 4; Deferrari, I, 334-7. The Spirit proceeds from the Father and thus is not dependent on the Son for His being.

contemplation of the Spirit further knowledge and understanding of the Scriptures is given which is not evident to all. The one who contemplates the Spirit is eventually transfigured and carries in their body the glory of God just as did Moses. The contemplation of the Spirit gives one the enlightenment of the glory of the Image of God, the Son. From the glory of the Only-begotten one can then contemplate or see the one God, the Father. This contemplation gives one the experiential knowledge of the glory of the Trinity and the ability to speak of them and glorify them worthily.

What is innovative about Basil's use of the words φωτίζειν and φωτισμός is his synthesis of the Greek tradition by incorporating all three streams of thought (theological, sacramental and spiritual) about enlightenment into one highly polemical defense of the person of the Holy Spirit. An aspect which stands out as a special contribution to this growing tradition in Greek theology is Basil's emphasis upon worship of the Trinity which is dependent upon the enlightenment of the Spirit. Worship acts as a point of synthesis for all three aspects of the tradition: the theological, the sacramental/liturgical and spiritual. It is in worship of the Trinity that the baptized believer comes to the highest points of knowledge of the three persons who are yet beyond understanding. It is the Spirit who makes worship of the Trinity possible and this gift of the Spirit comes from the liturgical rites of initiation into the Christian faith.

This emphasis upon Christian practice and the life of the Spirit elevates the importance of Christian experience as a tangible means of knowledge of the Triune God who remains transcendent and yet is made accessible through the gift of the Holy Spirit in baptism.[919] In this work Basil combines the ascetic theology of his *Asceticon* with a dogmatic defense of the joint honor and glory due to the Spirit in the worship of the Church. This is indicative of Basil's special characteristics as a monk and a bishop.[920] His theological reflections as a bishop on the nature of the Holy Spirit were undergirded

---

[918] Basil *DSS* 26.64; Pruche, 230-1; NPNF II, 8, 40.

with an experience of the Spirit that came from his own spiritual contemplation and periods of solitude in Pontus. Based on his experience of the life of the Spirit Basil was able to offer a brand new and in-depth discussion of the Spirit's glory which had not been done until this time. Basil does not make a perfect harmony of these two parts of the Church (the parish and the monastery) as is seen in a comparison of *De spiritu sancto* chapter 9 with chapters 10-15, but nevertheless he attempts to bring together Christian experience with dogmatic truth and intertwine them together through the use of φωτίζειν and φωτισμός to make a solid defense of that Nicene faith handed down to him by the Church.

[919] Verhees, "Pneuma, Erfahrung und Erleuchtung," 44-7.
[920] Verhees, "Pneuma, Erfahrung und Erleuchtung," 47-8.

D. Conclusion

Basil's work *De spiritu sancto* represents a synthesis of the three streams of the Greek Christian doctrine of enlightenment. The following conclusion will summarize some of the main features of this doctrine and Basil's contribution in light of the tradition which he inherited. I will first distill the theological use of enlightenment in the works of Origen, Athanasius and Basil. Then I will summarize the contributions of Justin, Cyril and Basil on the sacramental/liturgical stream of enlightenment. The third part will be a comparison of Origen's spirituality of enlightenment with Basil's thoughts on the topic. I will conclude this last section of Part III with some final thoughts about Basil's originality and overall contribution to the doctrine of enlightenment.

1. The Theological Features of Enlightenment

a. The Analogy of the Sun

The analogy of the sun as a metaphor for enlightenment has been shown to be very important from the Greek and Jewish background of φωτίζειν and its later use in early Christian writings. As seen in the work of Origen and Athanasius, the Greek Christian tradition applied this analogy to the Logos in order to describe the person of the Logos and His work in creation. Basil's unique application of this analogy was to the Holy Spirit, as opposed to the work of the Logos or the Son of God. The analogy of the sun was used by Basil in *De spiritu sancto* 9.22, 23 – a piece different from the rest of *De spiritu sancto* because of its non-polemical style and philosophical language. In this chapter Basil described the Spirit as the sun and sunbeams which illumines the world and Christians using forms of λάμπειν "to give light, shine" (its transitive meaning is "to cause to shine, illumine") rather than the technical terms φωτίζειν and φωτισμός which arise from Scripture that are generally used to speak of Christian enlightenment.[921] Although λάμπειν is generally used in a similar way to φωτίζειν,

---

[921] LS, 1028. Basil *DSS* 9.22, 23; Pruche, 147-8.

especially in relation to the light of the sun, moon and stars, it is does not carry the same theological weight of spiritual enlightenment as φωτίζειν and φωτισμός and so was not discussed above.

b. The Son of God

The dominant theological theme of enlightenment before Basil is the work of the Son of God or Logos. Origen in his commentary on John describes the work of the Logos to enlighten the minds of people. Athanasius likewise sees the special work of the Logos as the enlightening of creation and the imparting of the knowledge of God to humanity through His incarnation in the flesh. Basil's writing in *De spiritu sancto* includes this feature of theological reflection upon enlightenment given by the Son of God. Origen's *Commentarium in Evangelium Johannis* may have served as a model and inspiration for Basil's discussion of the titles of the Son of God in chapter 8. Basil writes in chapter 8 that the Son who is the true Light enlightens people with the knowledge of God the Father thus delivering them from the darkness of ignorance. John 1:9 is the Scriptural foundation of the work of enlightenment accomplished by the Son of God that was used by Origen, Athanasius, Basil and others to support the Christian doctrine of enlightenment.

c. The Holy Spirit

The Spirit's work to bring enlightenment to believers is touched upon by both Origen and Athanasius, but it is Basil who develops the Spirit's work of enlightenment in greater detail. Origen's focus is upon the enlightenment of the Spirit through the Scriptures. Basil picks up this point in chapter 21.52 of *De spiritu sancto*, but throughout this work elaborates further upon the Spirit's role in giving knowledge of God through baptism, contemplation and worship. Basil takes the tradition which was captured by Athanasius, Cyril of Jerusalem and others, namely that the Spirit enlightens in baptism, then goes beyond this to describe the Spirit's enlightening power in the

spiritual life of the believer. Through his use of φωτίζειν and φωτισμός Basil links the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit in baptism to the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit in spiritual contemplation and theosis connecting the work of the Spirit in the sacrament to spirituality.

2. The Sacramental/Liturgical Features of Enlightenment

a. The Catechumenate

In the sacramental/liturgical stream of enlightenment the tradition passed down by Justin, Cyril and others taught that baptism was enlightenment (φωτισμός) and that those being prepared for baptism were the illuminated, οἱ φωτιζόμενοι. Justin's emphasis was upon the enlightenment which came from the things the baptizands learned, that is, through the teaching of the church before their decision to be baptized. Cyril spoke of the catechumens as those who were being illuminated through the catechetical process leading up to and including the sacrament of baptism. Basil does not specifically speak about catechism in *De spiritu sancto*, but leaves his discussion of enlightenment to the confession of faith made in the baptismal ceremony.

b. The Confession of Faith

Justin does not distinctly refer to the confession of faith, but he did write about the importance of the new believers assenting and agreeing to the things which the Church taught them. This "assenting" could be referring to the step of affirming one's faith in Christ. By the time of Cyril of Jerusalem there was a clear confession of faith in the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The confession of faith was declared in the baptismal liturgy when the baptizand turned to the East, symbolic of the rising of the sun, the source of light. In his own work Basil bore witness to the importance of the confession of faith in the Trinity which brought him to the light of the knowledge of God. The confession of faith in the three persons of the Godhead is touched upon by all three of

the writers, Justin in a more primitive form, Cyril and Basil in a more developed triadic statement of faith.

c. Baptism

The focal point of much discussion on enlightenment in the Early Church was centered on the sacrament of baptism. Justin and others wrote that this sacrament gave enlightenment and was called enlightenment (φωτισμός).[922] According to Cyril and Basil the water did not give new life nor enlightenment, but it was the Spirit working in the midst of this sacrament that regenerates the human soul and gave enlightenment.[923] The work of the Holy Spirit in the sacrament of baptism is one thing which Justin did not write about. The enlightenment given by the Spirit enabled a person to see and know the things of God. For Cyril and Basil the beginning of this spiritual sight was faith, for without faith there could not be any spiritual sight. A topic picked up by all three, Justin, Cyril and Basil, was the importance of the three immersions and three invocations in the three names of the Trinity. This was an important feature of the ceremony that highlighted the Trinity and its place in the ceremony of new birth and enlightenment of a believer. This Trinitarian feature was based on the baptismal command given by Christ in Matthew 28:19 which served as the basis for Basil's argument for the divinity of the Spirit in *De spiritu sancto*. The baptismal command, baptismal formula and baptism were utilized by Basil as the key link between the dogmatic truth of the Spirit's divinity, the faith of Christians, the liturgical practices of the Church and its understanding of its worship of the Triune God.

---

[922] Clement of Alexandria is another early witness to the sacrament of baptism being called "enlightenment" because it gave spiritual enlightenment to those who received it. Cf. *Paedagogus* 1.6.26.1-3; Marrou and Harl, *Le Pédagogue*, 158-60; ANF II, 215-6.

[923] Cf. Basil *DSS* 15.35; Pruche, 171; NPNF II, 8, 22.

3. The Spiritual Features of Enlightenment

a. Purity

This emphasis upon purity for the life of the Spirit in Christian thought comes from the New Testament ethical codes adapted from the Jewish understandings of religious purity as well as Platonic and Neoplatonic philosophical ideas of the process of the human ascent and union with the divine. It was a given in late classical society and early Christian thought that one needed to be purified in order to know God. Generally both Origen and Basil taught that purity is essential to receiving the Holy Spirit, growing in the knowledge of God and spiritual union with God. The nature of enlightenment and the knowledge of God, according to Basil and Origen, is that it comes to those who are pure in heart. Purity, therefore, is necessary according to Basil because the Spirit who is holy and enlightens believers will only come to those who are pure. For Basil Christian purity is not simply the baptismal cleansing for sins although it could include this, but it also encompasses one's life after baptism.[924] To help ensure the purity of life needed to be a vessel the Spirit could fill and enlighten, both Origen and Basil emphasized the need for the practice of self-discipline and the Christian virtues. Purity therefore did not just mean abstinence, but actively doing good to one's neighbor.

b. Contemplation of the Spirit, Scripture and Theosis

Both Origen and Basil taught that the Christian who lives a pure life can contemplate God, receive further enlightenment from Him and ultimately become like God. Origen's work on enlightenment and spirituality focuses on the contemplation of the Scriptures. As one meditates upon the spiritual meaning of the sacred texts and lives a life of purity and virtue one would expect to receive the enlightenment of the Spirit giving the reader understanding into the mysteries of Christ. Basil's own appropriation

---

[924] For the ambiguity that Basil presents on the relation between baptism and purity in receiving enlightenment compare *DSS* 9.23 to 15.35.

of Origen's work is found in chapter 21 in his discussion that those who turn to the Lord who is the Spirit will discover the hidden truths in the Scriptures.

Both Origen and Basil develop the doctrine of enlightenment in terms of the process of theosis, becoming like God. The process of theosis in Origen's thought is mediated by the Son and the Spirit to the Christian who lives a life of virtue and seeks to understand the mysteries of the Scriptures. For Basil the process of theosis is a work of the Spirit who makes the cleansed person a light, bearing light to others.[925] Origen teaches the work of the Logos in making people a light to others. Basil explains in *De spiritu sancto* that the transformation of the person is through their contemplation of the Spirit. He gives Moses as a type of the transfiguration of the Christian that can be expected by those who have been enlightened by the Spirit and turn to contemplate Him.

c. Knowledge of the Triune God

The foundation of Origen's spirituality as mentioned above is the knowledge of God. This knowledge is given by the Logos to the rational faculty of the believer as well as the Holy Spirit through study of the Scriptures. Basil also saw the role of the Son to teach and bring people out of ignorance into a true knowledge of God. He also emphasized the importance of the role of the Spirit to reveal hidden truths in the Scriptures to the believer and the study and learning from the teaching of the Scriptures and the Church. Ultimately for Basil the Persons of the Spirit of God and the Son of God enlighten the Christian. Basil wrote that only the enlightening power of the Spirit can give one knowledge of the Son and this knowledge of the Son leads one to the knowledge of the Father since He is the Image of the Source. This knowledge of the Persons of the Trinity for Basil comes through a life of purity, contemplation of God and the work of the Spirit in a Christian's life. Since the Son and the Spirit are so

---

[925] Basil *DSS* 9.23; Pruche, 147-8; NPNF II, 8. 15-6.

essential to the knowledge of God Basil reasons that the Son and the Spirit must be of equal honor and glory with the Father and that They cannot be separated from Him in baptism, contemplation and worship.

d. Worship

Origen does not touch upon enlightenment in worship directly. Rather his concern was focused upon the study of the Word of God and the Spirit's enlightenment through this spiritual discipline. In Basil's discussion of enlightenment and spirituality, he connects it often to the experience of the believer and especially to worship. *De spiritu sancto* is a defense of the worship practices of the church at Caesarea where they worshiped the Spirit with equal honor and glory alongside the Father and the Son.[926] The enlightenment given by the Spirit enables the Christian to worship the Father and the Son. Basil argued his case against the Pneumatomachians on the foundation that worship and knowledge of the Trinity arises from the Christian experience of the Spirit in baptism and the Christian life and secondly on the written and unwritten traditions of the Church, primary of which is the Lord's command concerning baptism in Matthew 28:19.

4. Conclusion

The originality and contribution of Basil to the Greek Christian doctrine of enlightenment lies in three main areas: his synthesis of three streams of thought about enlightenment into his own work *De spiritu sancto*; his emphasis upon worship as an experience of God's enlightenment and the importance of enlightenment as spiritual experience put to use as an argument in dogmatic theology for the glory and divinity of the Spirit. It is especially Basil's contribution of connecting Christian spirituality to the liturgical practices of the Church that influenced other Eastern Church writers of later centuries.

---

[926] Basil *DSS* 1.3, 27.67, 68; NPNF II, 8, 3, 43.

CONCLUSION

There are five main conclusions that I draw from this thesis. The first is that Basil's conversion – and I would extrapolate this to speak of conversion more generally – is made up of at least three components: the *historical events* primary of which are his baptism and retirement from city life in Caesarea to Annesi; the *cultural characteristics* such as the philosophic language and disciplines which characterized his early response to the gospel; the *theological aspects* of his conversion such as repentance, faith, baptism, etc. Any conversion can and ought to be examined from these three points of view in order to be fully understood. In Basil's case he and other witnesses speak about a change of life that occurred at some point near the end of his time at Athens or soon after his return to Caesarea. This change came from an insight into the futility of his pursuits of wisdom and the surpassing worth of the truth of the gospel. Gregory of Nyssa described a change in Basil that took place after he returned from Athens which resulted in an inner and outer transformation. Whether or not Macrina, Basil's sister, was involved cannot be conclusively determined, but it is certain that there was a change in Basil's attitude such that he left his pursuit of a career as a rhetorician and pursued the philosophy according to Christ. Socrates, a later historian, records this choice that Basil made to reject the opportunity for a career in the world to take up the monastic calling of prayer and solitude. The importance of choices is attested to by Gregory of Nazianzus who had a similar choice to make after returning from Athens as to what course he would take in life. The final important historical aspect of Basil's conversion is his baptism which took place some time after his return from Athens traditionally held to be before he withdrew into Pontus to live a life of poverty and prayer. The sacrament, the internal and external changes are all important in marking the reality of Basil's conversion.

The *cultural characteristics* of Basil's conversion lie in the language of philosophy and the analogy of enlightenment which he used to describe his conversion and his way of living at the time of his conversion. The spiritual disciplines which he applied to his life such as *melete*, *mneme* and *prosoche*, were drawn from primarily the Platonic and Stoic sources which he received through his education in Caesarea, Constantinople and Athens. In *Epistula* 223 Basil described his conversion as an awakening from sleep to the light of the truth of the gospel, that is, an enlightenment. This event gave him new insights into his past life and catalyzed for him a whole new way of living. This metaphorical language of waking from sleep and seeing a light finds its point of reference in the general cultural milieu which spoke about dramatic experiences of the divine in terms of an enlightenment.

Third, *theological aspects* of Basil's conversion reveal to us a variety of particularly Christian details of the change which took place in him. Possibly the most significant among them was the experience of new insights that he described an awaking to the light of the gospel (possibly evidence of the work of the Spirit); secondly, the importance of the Word of God which Basil read after his new insight; thirdly, the steps of repentance and obedience which he took as a result of reading the gospel leading him into a life of service and fellowship in a community of brothers. The communal aspects of Basil's conversion are also present in his testimony of his baptism which he received from the bishop of Caesarea, Dianius.

The second conclusion I draw from this study of Basil's life and teaching is that Basil taught that conversion had characteristics which made it both a process and an event. His use of the words ἐπιστροφή and ἐπιστρέφω indicate that conversion was both an action that the bishop and the Christian community engaged in, that is, calling the repentant to conversion through the preaching of the word, admonition and correction. Basil's use of μετάνοια and μετανοέω indicate that repentance was a

process of stopping the life of vices and the intentional practice of virtues which would be appropriate to a life of faith and obedience to the Word of God. Christian conversion is especially rooted in the rite of conversion-initiation which finds its pinnacle of meaning in the sacrament of baptism. Baptism enables a person to enter into the life of Christ in the Church. The confession of faith in the Trinity stands out as a particularly important aspect of this event in Basil's own experience and his teaching. Baptism is significant ultimately because it is the sacramental depiction of a spiritual reality that the baptizand is entering into by faith. The three persons of the Trinity are invoked and the Spirit of God is present to recreate the human soul and give it the gift of knowledge of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This sacrament is in imitation of the death and resurrection of Christ bringing an end to the old life of sin and death and offering the opportunity for a new beginning.

The third conclusion is that conversion-initiation in Basil's life and teaching was made up of individual choices (repentance, faith), the welcoming participation of the community of faith (proclamation of the gospel and baptism) and the work of the Spirit. These three components which James D. G. Dunn articulates in his work on conversion-initiation in Acts are found in Basil's teaching as well. According to Basil the individual human steps of repentance and faith point to the freedom of the individual to choose God or not. The Church stands as the second partner in the conversion-initiation process inviting the hearer to come to Christ, be joined to Him and his followers in a covenant of faith and be cleansed for new life, eternal life. Baptism is given by the Church to those seeking salvation in Christ. The baptism of heretics was not accepted since it was not done according to the faith handed down to the Church by the Apostles. Schismatic baptism was acceptable if they were joined back into the Church. According to Basil the Holy Spirit in baptism is what makes the sacrament effectual not the water. It is the Spirit's presence at the baptismal waters which sanctifies and regenerates the human

soul for their salvation. The Spirit is given to the baptizand in this sacrament and the baptizand's stewardship of this gift will determine his or her position in the final judgment concerning everlasting damnation or eternal life.

The fourth conclusion I draw from this work is that enlightenment gradually became a rich doctrine in the Greek-speaking East. This doctrine of enlightenment arose from ancient Greek and Jewish sources and was given a Christian form by the writers of the New Testament. Particularly important was the Gospel of John which spoke of the second person of the Trinity as the true light who came with the mission to enlighten. The early Christian writers began to apply the Biblical concept of enlightenment using the words φωτίζειν and φωτισμός to form what I have identified as the three streams of the doctrine of enlightenment: theological stream, sacramental/liturgical stream and spiritual stream. These three streams of enlightenment are what established it as a doctrine of the Church. Their writings emphasized the work of the Son and the Spirit to enlighten creation and believers with the knowledge and glory of God. The sacrament of baptism was called "enlightenment" and those who were preparing for the sacrament were called the "illuminated." Baptism became for the Church a doorway into a new knowledge of God, an experience of his light and glory. This worked to both attract people to receive baptism, and also to describe what Christians believed was an experience of the holy. The spirituality of the Church was also defined by some as a growth in the knowledge of God through stages of enlightenment by the Holy Spirit and the Son of God. Origen emphasized the Scriptures as a source of enlightenment which the Spirit used to reveal the mysteries of the Incarnation of the Son of God and the doctrines of the Trinity. Basil's work *De Spiritu sancto* weaves these three streams of thought into a polemic defending the equal glory and honor due to the Holy Spirit. His work is a precursor of future writers who take up these three streams and give more shape and clarity to this doctrine which evolved to a greater extent in Byzantine

Christian writers such as Denys the Areopagite, Maximus the Confessor and Simeon the New Theologian.

The final conclusion is that this rich doctrine of enlightenment includes conversion. Conversion is the experience of enlightenment of a human soul with the knowledge of God, both rational and spiritual. Enlightenment in conversion, i.e., baptism, is the beginning of what may be a process of becoming like God as Basil attests in chapters 9 and 21 in *De Spiritu sancto*. Enlightenment is given in baptism through the gift of the Spirit who Basil defines as a light empowering people to discover the truth. The Spirit leads a person to knowledge of the Son then to a knowledge of the Father. The Spirit has His own identity articulated and described in greater detail by Basil's work *De spiritu sancto* than Athanasius' *Epistulae iv ad Serapionem*. The Spirit himself enlightens the baptizand, not the Son enlightening the baptizand through the Spirit as Athanasius declared. For Basil the Spirit is a third Person that must be taken seriously and is just as much to be honored as the Son and the Father. For both Athanasius and Basil, baptism is a sacrament where the Trinity is invoked and at work. Basil emphasized the Spirit's role in regeneration and enlightenment while Athanasius emphasized the unity of the Son and the Spirit in the work of sanctification and enlightenment. This study does not see Athanasius and Basil opposed in any way, but Basil definitely emphasized at times the different aspects of the Trinity in conversion-initiation and the life of the Spirit. Basil in his defense of the Spirit takes the importance of enlightenment beyond baptism into the spiritual growth of the Christian. In this way Basil's spirituality informs his dogmatic defense of the Spirit by giving him language to describe the Spirit's work of enlightenment to make worship, prayer and theosis possible.

Seen in the this light, conversion stands in Basil's thought and teaching as the beginning point of a process of becoming like God and therefore is not the whole

package of salvation. Conversion is dynamic involving the breaking in of the God of light into the human darkness, ignorance and deception. The Spirit of God enables a person to find the truth, to know God and to worship Him.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources

Apostolic Fathers

Holmes, Michael W., ed. and rev. *The Apostolic Fathers: Greek Texts and English Translations*. Updated edition. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 1999.

Apuleius

Hanson, J. Arthur, trans. *Apuleius: Metamorphoses*. 2 vols. The Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1989.

Aristotle

Rackham, H., trans. *Aristotle: The Nicomachean Ethics*. Vol. 19. The Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press; London: William Heinemann, 1975.

Tredennick, Hugh, trans. *Aristotle: The Metaphysics Books I-IX*. Vol. 1. The Loeb Classical Library. London: William Heinemann; New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1933.

Athanasius of Alexandria

Bartelink, G. J. M., ed. and trans. *Vie d'Antoine*. Sources chrétiennes 400. Paris: Éditions Du Cerf, 1994.

Kannengiesser, Charles, ed. and trans. *Athanase d'Alexandrie: Sur l'incarnation du verbe*. Sources chrétiennes 199. Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 2000.

Meyer, Robert T., trans. *Athanasius, Saint: The Life of Saint Antony*. Ancient Christian Writers 10. New York: Newman Press, 1950. Reprint, 1978.

Montfaucon, Bernard de, ed. *S.P.N. Athanasii archiepiscopi Alexandrini opera omnia quae exstant*. Vols. 25-28 of *Patrologiae cursus completus, series graeca*, ed. J. P. Migne. Paris, 1857.

Robertson, Archibald, trans. *St. Athanasius: Select Works and Letters*. Second series, vol. 4 of *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, ed Philip Schaff and Henry Wace. Reprint, Edinburgh: T&T Clark; Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1998.

Shapland, C. R. B., trans. *The Letters of Saint Athanasius Concerning the Holy Spirit*. London: The Epworth Press, 1951.

Thomson, Robert W., ed. and trans. *Athanasius: Contra Gentes and De Incarnatione*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971.

Augustine of Hippo

Pine-Coffin, R. S., trans. *Saint Augustine: Confessions.* London and New York: Penguin Books, 1961.

Verheijen, Lucas, ed. *Sancti Augustini, Confessionum Libri XIII.* Sancti Augustini Opera, Pars I, 1. Corpus Christianorum Series Latina, vol. XXVII. Turnholt: Brepols, 1981.

Basil of Caesarea

Amand de Mendieta, Emmanuel and Stig Y. Rudberg, eds. *Basilius von Caesarea: Homilien zum Hexaëmeron.* Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte, New Series, 2. Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1997.

Anderson, David, trans. *St. Basil the Great: On the Holy Spirit*. Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1980. Reprint, 1997.

Clarke, W. K. L., trans. *The Ascetic Works of Saint Basil.* London: S.P.C.K., 1925.

Courtonne, Yves, ed. and trans. *Saint Basile: Lettres.* 3 vols. Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1957, 1961, 1966.

Deferrari, Roy J., trans. *Saint Basil, The Letters.* 4 vols. The Loeb Classical Library 190, 215, 243, 270. London: William Heinemann; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1926-34. Reprint, London: William Heinemann; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1970, 1986, 2000, 2001.

Deferrari, Roy J. and Martin R. P. McGuire, trans. *Address to Young Men on Reading Greek Literature.* Volume 4 in *St. Basil, the Letters.* The Loeb Classical Library, 270. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press; London: William Heinemann, 1934. Reprint, 1970.

Ducatillon, Jeanne, ed. and trans. *Basile de Césarée, Sur le baptême.* Sources chrétiennes 357. Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1989.

Garnier, Julien and Prudent Maran, eds. and trans. *Sancti patris nostri Basilii Caesareae Cappadociae archiepiscopi opera omnia quae exstant.* Volumes 29-32 of *Patrologiae cursus completus, series graeca*, ed. J. P. Migne. Paris, 1857.

Jackson, Blomfield, trans. *St. Basil: Letters and Select Works.* Second series, vol. 8 of *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace. Reprint, Edinburgh: T&T Clark; Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1996.

Johnston, C. F. H., ed. *The Book of Saint Basil the Great, Bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia, on the Holy Spirit.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1892.

Lewis, George, trans. *The Philocalia of Origen: A Compilation of Selected Passages from Origen's Works made by St. Gregory of Nazianzus and St. Basil of Caesarea* Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1911.

Neri, Umberto, ed. and trans. *Basilio di Cesarea, Il battesimo*. Brescia: Paideia Editrice. 1976.

Patrucco, Marcella Forlin, ed. and trans. *Basilio di Cesarea, Le lettere*. Vol. 1. Corona Patrum 11. Torino: Società Editrice Internazionale, 1983.

Pruche, Benoît, ed. and trans. *Basile de Césarée: Traité du Saint-Esprit*. Sources chrétiennes 17. Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1947.

Pruche, Benoît, ed. and trans. *Basile de Césarée: Sur le Saint-Esprit*. Sources chrétiennes 17bis. Paris: Éditions Du Cerf, 1947; 2d rev. ed., 2002.

Robinson, J. Armitage, ed. *The Philocalia of Origen*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1893.

Rudberg, S. Y. *L'homelie de Basile de Césarée sur le mot "Observe-toi toi-même."* Édition critique du texte et étude sur la tradition manuscrite. Stockholm: Almquist & Wiksell, 1962.

Sesboüé, Bernard, Georges-Matthieu de Durand and Louis Doutreleau, eds. and trans. *Basile de Césarée, Contre Eunome, suivi de Eunome, Apologie*. 2 vols. Sources chrétiennes 299, 305. Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1982, 1983.

Sieben, Hermann Josef, ed. and trans. *De Spiritu Sancto, Über den Heiligen Geist*. Fontes Christiani 12. Freiburg: Herder, 1993.

Wagner, M. M., C. S. C., trans. *Saint Basil: Ascetical Works*. The Fathers of the Church 9. Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1950. Reprint, 1999.

Way, A. C., trans. *Saint Basil: Exegetic Homilies*. The Fathers of the Church 46. Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1963. Reprint, 1981.

Zelzer, Klaus, ed. *Basili regula a Rufino latine versa*. Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum Latinorum 86. Vienna: Hoelder-Pichter-Tempsky, 1986.

Clement of Alexandria

Marrou, Henri Irénée and Marguerite Harl, eds. and tr. *Clément d'Alexandrie, Le Pédagogue*. Vol. 1. Sources chrétiennes 70. Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1960.

Roberts, Alexander, James Donaldson, A. Cleveland Coxe, eds. *Ante-Nicene Fathers*. Vol. 2, *Fathers of the Second Century: Hermas, Tatian, Athenagoras, Theophilus, and Clement of Alexandria (Entire)*. Reprint, Edinburgh: T&T Clark; Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1994.

Stählin, O. *Clemens Alexandrinus*. Vol. 1, *Protrepticus und Paedagogus*. Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte, 12. Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1936.

Stählin, O. and Ludwig Früchtel, eds. *Clemens Alexandrinus*. Vol. 2, *Stromata Buch I-VI*. Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte. 52 [15]. Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1960.

Stählin, O., L. Früchtel and U. Treu, eds. *Clemens Alexandrinus*. Vol. 3, *Stromata Buch VII and VIII. Exerpta ex Theodoto, Eclogae propheticae, Quis dives salvetur, Fragmente*. Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte, 17. 2d ed. Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1970.

Stählin, O. and U. Treu, eds. *Clemens Alexandrinus*. Vol. 4, *Register*. Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte. Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1980.

Cyprian

Roberts, Alexander, James Donaldson and A. Cleveland Coxe, eds. *Ante-Nicene Fathers*. Vol. 5, *Fathers of the Third Century: Hippolytus, Cyprian, Caius, Novatian, Appendix*. Reprint, Edinburgh: T&T Clark; Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1995.

Cyril of Jerusalem

Cross, F. L., ed. and trans. *St. Cyril of Jerusalem, Lectures on the Christian Sacraments*. Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1995.

Gifford, Edward Hamilton, C. G. Browne and J. E. Swallow, trans. *S. Cyril of Jerusalem, S. Gregory Nazianzen*. Second series, vol. 7 of *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers,* ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace. Reprint, Edinburgh: T&T Clark; Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1996.

McCauley, Leo P., S. J. and Anthony A. Stephenson, trans. *The Works of Saint Cyril of Jerusalem*. 2 vols. Fathers of the Church 61 and 64. Washington, D. C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1969, 1970.

Piédagnel, Auguste, ed. and trans. *Cyrille de Jérusalem: Catéchèses Mystagogiques*. Sources chrétiennes 126. Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1966.

Diogenes Laertius

Hicks, R. D. *Diogenes Laertius: Lives of Eminent Philosophers*. Vol. 1. The Loeb Classical Library. London: William Heinemann; New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1925.

Ecumenical Councils

Percival, Henry R., trans. *The Seven Ecumenical Councils*. Second series, vol. 14 of *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers,* ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace. Reprint. Edinburgh: T&T Clark; Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1997.

Tanner, Norman P., S. J., ed. *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*. Vol. 1, *Nicea I to Lateran V*. London: Sheed & Ward; Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1990.

Eusebius of Caesarea

Cameron, Averil and Stuart G. Hall, trans. *Eusebius: Life of Constantine*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999.

Heikel, Ivar, ed. *Über das Leben Constantins, Constantins Rede an die heilige Versammlung, Tricennatsrede an Constantin*. Vol. 1 of *Eusebius Werke*. Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte 7. Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1902.

McGiffert, Arthur Cushman and Ernest Cushing Richardson, trans. *Eusebius: Church History, Life of Constantine the Great, and Oration in Praise of Constantine*. Second series, vol. 1 of *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace. Reprint, Edinburgh: T&T Clark; Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1997.

Williamson, G. A., trans. *Eusebius: The History of the Church From Christ to Constantine*. Rev. and ed. with a new introduction by Andrew Louth. London: Penguin Books, 1989.

Gregory of Nazianzus

Bernardi, Jean, ed. and trans. *Grégoire de Nazianze: Discours 42-43*. Sources chrétiennes 384. Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1992.

Gifford, Edward Hamilton, C. G. Browne and J. E. Swallow, trans. *S. Cyril of Jerusalem, S. Gregory Nazianzen*. Second series, vol. 7 of *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace. Reprint, Edinburgh: T&T Clark; Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1996.

Clémencet, Charles and D. A. B. Caillau, eds. and trans. *Sancti patris nostri Gregorii Theologi, vulgo Nazianzeni, archiepiscopi Constantinopolitani. Opera omnia quae extant*. Vols. 35-38 of *Patrologiae cursus completus, series graeca*, ed. J. P. Migne. Paris, 1857-58.

Gilbert, Peter, trans. *On God and Man: The Theological Poetry of St. Gregory of Nazianzus*. Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2001.

McCauley, Leo P., S. J., John J. Sullivan, C. S. Sp., Martin R. P. McGuire and Roy J. Deferrari, trans. *Funeral Orations by Saint Gregory Nazianzen and Saint Ambrose*. Fathers of the Church 22. New York: Fathers of the Church, Inc., 1953. Reprint, Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1988.

Moreschini, Claudio, ed. *Grégoire de Nazianze: Discours 38-41*. Translation by Paul Gallay. Sources chrétiennes 358. Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1990.

White, Carolinne, ed. and trans. *Gregory of Nazianzus: Autobiographical Poems*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

Gregory of Nyssa

Callahan, Virginia Woods, trans. *Saint Gregory of Nyssa, Ascetical Works*. Fathers of the Church 58. Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1967.

Corrigan, Kevin, trans. *The Life of Saint Macrina, By Gregory, Bishop of Nyssa*. Toronto: Peregrina Publishing, 1997.

Ducaeus, Fronto, ed. *S.P.N. Gregorii episcopi Nysseni opera quae reperiri potuerunt omnia*. Vols. 44-46 of *Patrologiae cursus completus, series graeca*, ed. J. P. Migne. Paris, 1863.

Ferguson, Everett and Abraham J. Malherbe, trans. *Gregory of Nyssa: The Life of Moses*. With a preface by John Meyendorff. The Classics of Western Spirituality. New York: Paulist Press, 1978.

Heil, Gunter et al., eds. *Sermones, Pars I*. Vol. 9 of *Gregorii Nysseni Opera*, ed. Werner Jaeger and Hermann Langerbeck. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1967.

Jaeger, Werner. *Two Rediscovered Works of Ancient Christian Literature: Gregory of Nyssa and Macarius*. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1954.

_____, ed. *Contra Eunomium Libri: Liber I et II (Vulgo I et XII B)*. Vol. 1 of *Gregorii Nysseni Opera*. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1960.

Jaeger, Werner, John P. Cavarnos and Virginia Woods Callahan, eds. *Gregorii Nysseni Opera Ascetica*. Vol. 8, pt. 1 of *Gregorii Nysseni Opera*, ed. Werner Jaeger. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1952.

Moore, William and H. A. Wilson, trans. *Gregory of Nyssa: Dogmatic Treatises, Etc*. Second series, vol. 5 of *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace. New York: The Christian Literature Co., 1893. Reprint, Edinburgh: T&T Clark; Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1994.

Mueller, Friedrich, ed. *Gregorii Nysseni Opera Dogmatica, Pars I*. Vol. 3, pt. 1 of *Gregorii Nysseni Opera,* ed. Werner Jaeger. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1958.

Mühlenberg, Ekkehardus, ed. *Gregorii Nysseni Oratio Catechetica: Opera Dogmatica Minora, Pars IV*. Vol. 3, pt. 4 of *Gregorii Nysseni Opera*, ed. Werner Jaeger, Hermann Langerbeck and Henri Dörrie. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996.

Musurillo, Herbert, S. J., ed. and trans. *From Glory to Glory: Texts from Gregory of Nyssa's Mystical Writings*. Selected and with an introduction by Jean Daniélou, S.J. Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1979.

_____, ed. *Gregorii Nysseni: De Vita Moysis*. Vol. 7, pt. 1 of *Gregorii Nysseni Opera*, ed. W. Jaeger and H. Langerbeck. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1964.

Pasquali, George, ed. *Gregorii Nysseni Epistulae*. Vol. 8, pt. 2 of *Gregorii Nysseni Opera*, ed. Werner Jaeger. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1959.

Rhein, Ernestus, Friedhelm Mann, Dörte Teske and Hilda Polack, eds. *Gregorii Nysseni Sermones, Pars III.* Vol. 10, pt. 2 of *Gregorii Nysseni Opera*, ed. Werner Jaeger, Hermann Langerbeck and Henri Dörrie. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996.

Gregory Thaumaturgus

Slusser, Michael, trans. *St. Gregory Thaumaturgus: Life and Works.* The Fathers of the Church 98. Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1998.

Hermetica

Nock, A. D. and A.-J. Festugière, ed. and trans. *Corpus Hermeticum: Works I-XII.* Vol. 1. Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1946. Reprint, 1980.

Nock, A. D. and A.-J. Festugière, ed. and trans. *Corpus Hermeticum: Works XIII-XVIII, Asclepius.* Vol. 2. Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1946. Reprint, 1973.

Scott, Walter, ed. and trans. *Hermetica: The Ancient Greek and Latin Writings Which Contain Religious or Philosophic Teachings Ascribed to Hermes Trismegistus.* Vol. I. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1924.

Hippolytus of Rome

Botte, Bernard, ed. and trans. *La Tradition Apostolique d'après les Anciennes Versions*, 2d ed. Sources chrétiennes 11. Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1968.

Dix, Gregory, ed. and trans. *The Treatise on the Apostolic Tradition of St. Hippolytus of Rome.* Revised with preface by Henry Chadwick. London: S.P.C.K., 1968.

Homeric Hymns

Richardson, N. J., ed. *The Homeric Hymn to Demeter.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974.

Josephus

Thackeray, H. St. J., trans. *Josephus: The Life, Against Apion.* Vol 1. The Loeb Classical Library. London: William Heinemann; New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1926.

John Chrysostom

Harkins, Paul W., ed. and trans. *Saint John Chrysostom: Baptismal Instructions.* Ancient Christian Writers 31. Westminster, Maryland: The Newman Press, 1963.

Piédagnel, Auguste, ed. and trans. *Jean Chrysostome: Trois Catéchèses Baptismales.* Sources chrétiennes 366. Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1990.

Wenger, Antoine, ed. and trans. *Jean Chrysostome: Huit Catéchèses Baptismales Inédites.* Sources chrétiennes 50. Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1957.

Justin Martyr

Maran, P., ed. and trans. *Justini philosophi et martyris Opera quae exstant omnia.* Volume 6 of *Patrologiae cursus completus, series graeca*, ed. J. P. Migne. Paris, 1857.

Richardson, Cyril C., ed. *Early Christian Fathers*. The Library of Christian Classics 1. New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Collier Books, 1970.

Roberts, Alexander, James Donaldson and A. Cleveland Coxe, eds. *Ante-Nicene Fathers*. Vol. 1, *Apostolic Fathers with Justin Martyr and Irenaeus*. Reprint, Edinburgh: T&T Clark; Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1996.

Wartelle, André, ed. and trans. *Saint Justin: Apologies*. Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1987.

Origen

Baehrens, W. A., ed. *Homilien zum Hexateuch in Rufins Übersetzung*. Part II, *Die Homilien zum Numeri, Josua und Judices*. Vol. 7 of *Origenes Werke*. Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte. Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1921.

Benz, Ernst and Erich Klostermann, eds. *Origenes Matthäuserklärung*. Vol. 1, *Die griechisch erhaltenen Tomoi*. Vol. 10 of *Origenes Werke*. Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte. Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1935.

Butterworth, G. W., ed. and trans. *Origen, On First Principles*. With an introduction by Henri de Lubac. London: SPCK, 1936. Torchbook edition, New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1966. Reprint, Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1973.

Greer, Rowan A., trans. *Origen: An Exhortation to Martyrdom, Prayer, First Principles: Book IV, Prologue to the Commentary on the Song of Songs, Homily XXVII on Numbers*. The Classics of Western Spirituality. New York: Paulist Press, 1979.

Koetschau, Paul, ed. *Die Schrift vom Martyrium, Buch I-IV Gegen Celsus*. Vol. 1 of *Origenes Werke*. Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte. Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1899.

_____, ed. *Buch V-VIII Gegen Celsus, Die Schrift vom Gebet*. Vol. 2 of *Origenes Werke*. Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte. Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1899.

_____, ed. *De Principiis (ΠΕΡΙ ΑΡΧΩΝ)*. Vol. 5 of *Origenes Werke*. Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte. Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1913.

Menzies, Allan, ed. *Ante-Nicene Fathers.* Vol. 10, *The Gospel of Peter, The Diatessaron of Tatian, The Apocalypse of Peter, The Visio Pauli, The Apocalypses of the Virgin and Sedrach, The Testament of Abraham, The Acts of Xanthippe and Polyxena, The Narrative of Zosimus, The Apology of Aristides, The Epistles of Clement (Complete Text), Origen's Commentary on John, Books I-X, and Commentary on Matthew, Books I, II , and X-XIV.* 5th ed. Reprint. Edinburgh: T&T Clark; Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1995.

Preuschen, Erwin, ed. *Der Johanneskommentar.* Vol. 4 of *Origenes Werke.* Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte. Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1903.

Roberts, Alexander, James Donaldson and A. Cleveland Coxe, eds. *Ante-Nicene Fathers.* Vol. 4, *Fathers of the Third Century: Tertullian, Part Fourth; Minucius Felix; Commodian; Origen, Parts First and Second.* Reprint, Edinburgh: T&T Clark; Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1994.

Pachomius and the Desert Fathers

Athanassakis, Apostolos N., trans. *The Life of Pachomius (Vita Prima Graeca).* N.p.: Scholars Press for the Society of Biblical Literature, 1975.

Ward, Benedicta, S. L. G., trans. *The Sayings of the Desert Fathers: The Alphabetical Collection.* With a Preface by Metropolitan Anthony. Kalamazoo, Michigan: Cistercian Publications, 1975; revised edition, 1984.

Philo

Colson, F. H. and G. H. Whitaker, trans. *Philo.* Vol. 1. The Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press; London: William Heinemann, 1929. Reprint, 1949.

Colson, F. H. and G. H. Whitaker, trans. *Philo.* Vol. 2. The Loeb Classical Library. London: William Heinemann; New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1929.

Colson, F. H. and G. H. Whitaker, trans. *Philo.* Vol. 3. The Loeb Classical Library. London: William Heinemann; New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1930.

Colson, F. H. and G. H. Whitaker, trans. *Philo.* Vol. 4. The Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press; London: William Heinemann, 1932. Rev. ed., 1939. Reprint, 1949.

Colson, F. H. and G. H. Whitaker, trans. *Philo.* Vol. 5. The Loeb Classical Library. London: William Heinemann; New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1934.

Colson, F. H., trans. *Philo.* Vol. 7. The Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press; London: William Heinemann, 1937. Reprint, 1984.

Colson, F. H., trans. *Philo.* Vol. 9. The Loeb Classical Library. London: William Heinemann; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1941.

Plato

Buchanan, Scott, ed. *The Portable Plato*. London: Penguin Books, 1977.

Bury, E. G., trans. *Plato: Timaeus, Critias, Cleitophon, Menexenus, Epistles*. Vol. 7. The Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge, Mass. and London: Harvard University Press, 1929. Reprint, 1989.

Fowler, Harold N., trans. *Plato: Euthyphro, Apology, Crito, Phaedo, Phaedrus*. Vol. 1. With introduction by W. R. M. Lamb. The Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge. Mass.: Harvard University Press; London: William Heinemann, 1914. Reprint. 1971.

Shorey, Paul, trans. *Plato: The Republic*. Vol. 5 and 6. The Loeb Classical Library. London: William Heinemann; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1935.

Plotinus

Armstrong, A. H., trans. *Plotinus, Porphyry on the Life of Plotinus and the Order of His Books, Enneads I.1-9*. Vol. 1. The Loeb Classical Library. London: William Heinemann; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1966.

_____., trans. *Plotinus, Enneads V. 1-9*. Vol. 5. The Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press; London: William Heinemann, 1984.

Brehier, E. ed. *Plotin, Ennéades*. Vol. 2. Budé Series. Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1924.

_____., ed. *Plotin, Ennéades*. Vol. 6, Part 2. Budé Series. Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1938.

MacKenna, Stephen, trans. *Plotinus: The Enneads*. Abridged by John Dillon. London: Penguin Books, 1991.

Pseudo-Macarius

Dörries, Hermann, Erich Klostermann and Matthias Kroeger, eds. *Die 50 Geistlichen Homilien des Makarios*. Patristische Texte und Studien 6. Berlin: De Gruyter, 1964.

Maloney, George A., S. J., ed. and trans. *Pseudo-Macarius: The Fifty Great Homilies and the Great Letter*. With a preface by Kallistos Ware. The Classics of Western Spirituality. New York: Paulist Press, 1992.

Socrates

Hartranft, Chester D. and A. C. Zenos, trans. *Socrates, Sozomenus: Church Histories*. Second series, vol. 2 of *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace. Reprint, Edinburgh: T&T Clark; Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1997.

Hussey, Robert, ed. *Socrates' Ecclesiastical History*. With an introduction by William Bright. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1878.

Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs

Kee, H. C., ed. and trans. "Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs." In *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*. Vol. 1, *Apocalyptic Literature and Testaments*, ed. James H. Charlesworth, 775-828. London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1983.

Theodore of Mopsuestia

Mingana, A., ed. and trans. *Commentary of Theodore of Mopsuestia on the Lord's Prayer and the Sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist*. Woodbrooke Studies. Vol. VI. Cambridge: W. Heffer and Sons, 1933.

Secondary Sources

Aghiorgoussis, Maximos. "Applications of the Theme 'Eikon Theou' (Image of God) according to Saint Basil the Great." *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 21 (1976) : 265-88.

_____. "Image as 'Sign' (semeion) of God: Knowledge of God through the Image according to Saint Basil." *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 21 (1976) : 19-54.

Alföldi, Andrew. *The Conversion of Constantine and Pagan Rome*. Translated by Harold Mattingly. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1948.

Amand de Mendieta, Emmanuel. *L'Ascèse monastique de saint Basile: Essai historique*. Maredsous: Éditions de Maredsous, 1949.

_____. "The Official Attitude of Basil of Caesarea as a Christian Bishop Towards Greek Philosophy and Science." In *The Orthodox Churches and the West*, ed. Derek Baker, 25-49. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1976.

_____. *The 'Unwritten' and 'Secret' Apostolic Traditions in the Theological Thought of St. Basil of Caesarea*. Scottish Journal of Theology, Occasional Papers, 13. Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1965.

Anastos, Milton V. "Basil's Κατὰ Εὐνομίου, A Critical Analysis." In *Basil of Caesarea: Christian, Humanist, Ascetic: A Sixteen-Hundredth Anniversary Symposium*, ed. Paul Jonathan Fedwick, vol. 1, 67-136. Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1981.

_____. "The Edict of Milan (313): A Defence of Its Traditional Authorship and Designation." In *Conversion, Catechumenate, and Baptism in the Early Church*, ed. Everett Ferguson, 215-43. New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1993.

Armstrong, A. H., ed. *The Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Medieval Philosophy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967.

Aune, David E. *Revelation 1-5*. Word Biblical Commentary. Vol. 52. Dallas, Texas: Word Books, 1997.

Azkoul, Michael. "Sacerdotium et Imperium: The Constantinian Renovatio According to the Greek Fathers." In *Conversion, Catechumenate, and Baptism in the Early Church*, ed. Everett Ferguson, 181-214. New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1993.

Badcock, F. J. *The History of the Creeds*. London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1930.

Bamberger, John Eudes. "ΜΝΗΜΗ - ΔΙΑΘΕΣΙΣ: The Psychic Dynamics in the Ascetical Theology of St. Basil." *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 34 (1968) : 233-51.

Bardy, Gustave. *La Conversion au christianisme durant les premiers siècles.* Paris: Aubier, 1949.

Barnes, Timothy D. *Athanasius and Constantius: Theology and Politics in the Constantinian Empire.* Cambridge, Mass. and London: Harvard University Press, 1993.

_____. "The Date of the Council of Gangra." *Journal of Theological Studies*, n.s., 40 (1989) : 121-4.

Barrett, C. K., ed. *The New Testament Background: Writings from Ancient Greece and the Roman Empire that Illuminate Christian Origins.* Revised edition. New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 1989

Barrois, Georges, ed. and trans. *The Fathers Speak: St. Basil the Great, St. Gregory of Nazianzus, St. Gregory of Nyssa.* With a foreword by John Meyendorff. Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1986.

Barth, Markus, ed. and trans. *Ephesians.* Vol. 1. The Anchor Bible Commentary. Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, 1974.

Bauer, Walter. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature.* Second edition. Edited by W. F. Arndt, F. W. Gingrich, F. W. Danker. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979.

Bernardi, Jean. *La Prédication des pères cappadociens: Le Prédicateur et son auditoire.* Publications de la Faculté des lettres et sciences humaines de l'Université de Montpellier 30. Marseille: Presses universitaires de France, 1968.

Bertram, Georg. "στρέφω." In *The Theological Dictionary of the New Testament.* Vol. 7. Edited by Gerhard Kittel. Translated and edited by Geoffrey W. Bromiley. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1971 : 714-29.

Bettenson, Henry, ed. and trans. *The Early Christian Fathers: A selection from the writings of the Fathers from St. Clement of Rome to St. Athanasius.* London: Oxford University Press, 1956.

_____, ed. and trans. *The Later Christian Fathers: A selection of the writings of the Fathers from St. Cyril of Jerusalem to St. Leo the Great.* London: Oxford University Press, 1970.

Bouyer, Louis. *The Christian Mystery: From Pagan Myth to Christian Mysticism.* Translated by Illtyd Trethowan. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1989. Paperback reprint, 1990.

_____. *The Spirituality of the New Testament and the Fathers.* Translated by Mary P. Ryan. London: Burns & Oates, 1963.

Bradshaw, Paul F. *The Search for the Origins of Christian Worship: Sources and Methods for the Study of Early Liturgy.* Second Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.

Brock, Sebastian P. "Studies in the Early History of the Syrian Orthodox Baptismal Liturgy." *Journal of Theological Studies*, n.s., 23 (1972) : 16-64.

Brown, Colin. *Christianity & Western Thought: A History of Philosophers, Ideas & Movements*. Volume 1, *From the Ancient World to the Age of Enlightenment*. Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1990.

Brown, Francis. *The New Brown – Driver – Briggs – Gesenius Hebrew and English Lexicon*. With the cooperation of S. R. Driver and Charles A. Briggs. Peabody, Mass.: Henrickson Publishers, 1979.

Brown, Peter. *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography*. London and Boston: Faber and Faber, 1967. Reprint, 1990.

_____.*The Body and Society: Men, Women and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity*. London and Boston: Faber and Faber, 1989.

_____. "Learning and Imagination." In *Society and the Holy in Late Antiquity*. London: Faber and Faber, 1982.

_____. *The World of Late Antiquity: From Marcus Aurelius to Muhammad*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1971.

Brown, Raymond E. *The Gospel and Epistles of John: A Concise Commentary*. Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1988.

_____, ed. and trans. *The Gospel According to John (i-xii)*. The Anchor Bible Commentary. Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, 1966.

Burn, A. E. *An Introduction to the Creeds and to the Te Deum*. London: Methuen and Co., 1899.

Burns, Stuart K. "Cappadocian Encratism and the Macarian Community." *Studia Patristica* 37 (2001) : 27-32.

Butterworth, G. W. "The deification of man in Clement of Alexandria." *Journal of Theological Studies* 17 (1915-1916) : 157-169.

Buttner, Michael Thomas. "Basil the Great and the Rites of Initiation." Licentiate in Sacred Theology, St. Mary's Seminary and University, 1988.

Callahan, John F. "Greek Philosophy and the Cappadocian Cosmology." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 12 (1958) : 31-57.

Campenhausen, Hans von. *The Fathers of the Greek Church*. Translation revised by L. A. Garrard. London: Adam & Clark Black, 1963.

Capelle, Dom B. "The Procession of the Holy Spirit according to the Greek Liturgy of St. Basil." *Eastern Churches Quarterly* 14 (1962) : 283-90.

Carpenter, H. J. "Creeds and Baptismal Rites in the First Four Centuries." *Journal of Theological Studies* 44 (1943) : 1-11.

_____. "*Symbolum* as a Title of the Creed." *Journal of Theological Studies* 43 (1942) : 1-11.

Chadwick, Henry. "The Ascetic Ideal In the History of the Church." In *Heresy and Orthodoxy in the Early Church*. London: Variorum, 1991.

_____. "Conversion in Constantine the Great." In *Heresy and Orthodoxy in the Early Church* . London: Variorum, 1991.

_____. *Early Christian Thought and the Classical Tradition*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966.

_____. *The Early Church*. London: Penguin Books, 1967.

_____. "Philo." In *The Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Medieval Philosophy*, ed. A. H. Armstrong, 137-57. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967.

_____. *The Sentences of Sextus: A Contribution to the History of Early Christian Ethics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959.

Clarke, William Kemp Lowther. *St. Basil the Great: A Study in Monasticism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1913.

Columba, Stewart, O. S. B. "New Perspectives on the Messalian Controversy." *Studia Patristica* XIX (1989) : 243-50.

_____. *"Working the Earth of the Heart": The Messalian Controversy in History, Texts, and Language to AD 431*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991.

Conzelmann, Hans. "φῶς." In *The Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. Vol. 9. Edited by Gerhard Kittel. Translated and edited by Geoffrey W. Bromiley. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1974 : 310-58.

Cross, F. L. and E. A. Livingstone, eds. *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*. 3rd edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997.

Crouzel, Henri, S. J. *Origen*. Translated by A. S. Worrall. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1989. Paperback edition, 1998.

_____. *Origène et la "Connaissance Mystique."* Museum Lessianum section théologique n° 56. Toulouse: Desclée De Brouwer, 1961.

Dahl, Nils Alstrup. "Trinitarian Baptismal Creeds and New Testament Christology." In *Jesus the Christ: The Historical Origins of Christological Doctrine*, ed. Donald H. Juel, 165-86. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991.

Daniélou, Jean, S. J. *Bible et Liturgie*. Lex Orandi 11. Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1951.

Davids, A. J. M. "On Ps.-Basil, *De baptismo, I.*" *Studia Patristica* XIV, Part III (1976) : 302-06.

de Andia, Ysabel. "*In Lumine Tuo, Videbimus Lumen*" *(PS. 35, 10)*: L'Illumination par l'esprit dans le "De Spiritu Sancto" de saint Basile." In *Mémorial: Dom Jean Gribomont (1920-1986)*, 59-74. Studia Ephemeridis "Augustinianum" 27. Roma: Institutum Patristicum "Augustinianum," 1988.

Dehnhard, Hans. *Das Problem der Abhängigkeit des Basilius von Plotin: Quellenuntersuchungen zu seinen Schriften "De Spiritu Sancto."* Patristische Texte und Studien 3. Berlin: De Gruyter, 1964.

Dix, Dom Gregory. *The Shape of the Liturgy.* Second edition. London: A & C Black, 1945. 12th reprint of second edition, 1993.

Dörries, Hermann. *De Spiritu Sancto: Der Beitrag des Basilius zum Abschluß des trinitarischen Dogmas.* Abhandlungen der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen, Philologisch-historische Klasse 3, ser. 39. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1956.

Dragas, George. *The Meaning of Theology: An Essay in Greek Patristics.* N.p.: Darlington Carmel, 1980.

Dudley, Martin and Geoffrey Rowell, eds. *The Oil of Gladness: Anointing in the Christian Tradition.* London: S.P.C.K., 1993.

Dunn, James D. G. *Baptism in the Holy Spirit: A Re-examination of the New Testament Teaching on the Gift of the Spirit in Relation to Pentecostalism Today.* Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1970.

_____. *Christology in the Making: A New Testament Inquiry into the Origin of the Doctrine of the Incarnation.* 2d ed. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1989.

Dunn, Marilyn. *The Emergence of Monasticism: From the Desert Fathers to the Early Middle Ages.* Oxford: Blackwell, 2000.

Elm, Susanna. "The Organization and Institutions of Female Asceticism in Fourth Century Cappadocia and Egypt." D. Phil. Thesis, University of Oxford, 1987.

_____. *'Virgins of God': The Making of Asceticism in Late Antiquity.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994.

Fedwick, Paul Jonathan. *Bibliotheca Basiliana Vniversalis: A Study of the Manuscript Tradition, Translations and Editions of the Works of Basil of Caesarea.* Vol. IV, Part 1, *Testimonia, liturgical and canonical compositions, florilegia, catenae, iconography.* Corpus Christianorum. Turnhout: Brepols, 1999.

_____. *Bibliotheca Basiliana Vniversalis: A Study of the Manuscript Tradition, Translations and Editions of the Works of Basil of Caesarea.* Vol. IV. Part 2. *Manuscripts, libraries.* Corpus Christianorum. Turnhout: Brepols, 1999.

_____. *Bibliotheca Basiliana Vniversalis: A Study of the Manuscript Tradition of the Works of Basil of Caesarea*. Vol. III, *The Ascetica, "Contra Eunomium 1-3," "Ad Amphilochium De Spiritu Sancto," Dubia et Spuria, with Supplements to Volumes I-II*. Corpus Christianorum. Turnhout: Brepols, 1997.

_____. *Bibliotheca Basiliana Vniversalis: A Study of the Manuscript Tradition of the Works of Basil of Caesarea*. Vol. I, *The Letters*. Corpus Christianorum. Turnhout: Brepols, 1993.

_____. *Bibliotheca Basiliana Vniversalis: A Study of the Manuscript Tradition and Editions of the Works of Basil of Caesarea*. Vol. II, Part 1, *The Homiliae Morales, "Hexaemeron," "De Litteris," with Additional Coverage of the Letters: Manuscripts*. Corpus Christianorum. Turnhout: Brepols, 1996.

_____. *Bibliotheca Basiliana Vniversalis: A Study of the Manuscript Tradition, Translations and Editions of the Works of Basil of Caesarea*. Vol. II, Part 2, *The Homiliae Morales, "Hexaemeron," "De Litteris," with Additional Coverage of the Letters: Editions, Translations*. Corpus Christianorum. Turnhout: Brepols, 1996.

_____. "A Brief Analysis of Basil's Two Prefaces to the Moralia." In *Mémorial Dom Jean Gribomont (1920-1986)*, 223-31. Studia Ephemeridis "Augustinianum" 27. Roma: Institutum Patristicum "Augustinianum," 1988.

_____. *The Church and the Charisma of Leadership in Basil of Caesarea*. Studies and Texts 45. Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1978.

_____. "A Chronology of the Life and Works of Basil of Caesarea." In *Basil of Caesarea: Christian, Humanist, Ascetic: A Sixteen-Hundredth Anniversary Symposium*, vol. 1, 3-19. Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1981.

_____, ed. *Basil of Caesarea: Christian, Humanist, Ascetic: A Sixteen-Hundredth Anniversary Symposium*. 2 vols. Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1981.

Ferguson, Everett. *Early Christians Speak: Faith and Life in the First Three Centuries*. Third edition. Abilene, Texas: ACU Press, 1999.

_____. "Exhortations to Baptism in the Cappadocians." *Studia Patristica* XXXII (1997) : 121-29.

_____, ed. *Conversion, Catechumenate, and Baptism in the Early Church*. Studies in Early Christianity 11. New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1993.

_____, ed. *Doctrinal Diversity: Varieties of Early Christianity*. Recent Studies in Early Christianity 4. New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1999.

_____, ed. *Forms of Devotion: Conversion, Worship, Spirituality, and Asceticism*. Recent Studies in Early Christianity 5. New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1999.

_____, ed. *Missions and Regional Characteristics of the Early Church.* Studies in Early Christianity 12. New York and London: Garland Publishing. 1993.

Finn, Thomas M. *Early Christian Baptism and the Catechumenate: Italy, North Africa and Egypt.* Message of the Fathers of the Church 6. Collegeville. Minn.: The Liturgical Press, A Michael Glazier Book, 1992.

_____. *Early Christian Baptism and the Catechumenate: West and East Syria.* Message of the Fathers of the Church 5. Collegeville, Minn.: The Liturgical Press, A Michael Glazier Book, 1992.

Fitzgerald, Allan. *Conversion through Penance in the Italian Church of the Fourth and Fifth Centuries: New Approaches to the Experience of Conversion from Sin.* Studies in the Bible and Early Christianity 15. Lewiston, Queenston and Lampeter: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1988.

Florovsky, Georges. "The Function of Tradition in the Ancient Church." In *Bible, Church, Tradition: An Eastern Orthodox View.* Belmont, Mass.: Nordland Publishing Co., 1972.

_____. *The Collected Works of Georges Florovsky.* Edited by Richard S. Haugh. Vol. 10, *The Byzantine Ascetic and Spiritual Fathers.* Translated by Raymond Miller. Vaduz: Buchervertriebasanstalt, 1987.

_____. *The Collected Works of Georges Florovsky.* Edited by Richard S. Haugh. Vol. 7, *The Eastern Fathers of the Fourth Century.* Translated by Catherine Edmunds. Vaduz: Buchervertriebsanstalt, 1987.

Ford, J. Massyngberde, ed. and trans. *Revelation.* The Anchor Bible Commentary. Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, 1975.

Frend, W. H. C. "The Missions of the Early Church 180-700 A.D." In *Missions and Regional Characteristics of the Early Church*, ed. Everett Ferguson, 1-21. New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1993.

_____. *The Rise of Christianity.* Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984.

Gain, Benoît. *L'Église de Cappadoce au IV^e^ siècle d'après la correspondance de Basile de Césarée.* Orientalia Christiana Analecta 225. Rome: Pontificium Institutum Orientale, 1985.

Gaventa, Beverly Roberts. *From Darkness to Light: Aspects of Conversion in the New Testament.* Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986.

Geerard, Mauritius, ed. *Clavis Patrum Graecorum.* 5 vols. Turnhout: Brepols, 1983-89.

Gallagher, Eugene V. "Conversion and Salvation in the Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles." In *Forms of Devotion: Conversion, Worship, Spirituality, and Asceticism*, ed. Everett Ferguson, 1-17. New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1999.

Giet, Stanislas. *Les Idées et l'action sociales de s. Basile.* Paris: Gabalda, 1941.

_____. "S. Basile et le concile de Constantinople de 360." *Journal of Theological Studies*, n.s., 6 (1955) : 94-99.

Gillman, Ian. "Constantine the Great in the Light of the Christus Victor Concept." In *Conversion, Catechumenate, and Baptism in the Early Church*, ed. Everett Ferguson, 171-80. New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1993.

Gobry, Ivan. *Les Moines en Occident.* Vol. 1, *De saint Antoine à saint Basile: Les origines orientales.* N.p.: Fayard, 1985.

Goehring, James E. "The Origins of Monasticism." In *Eusebius, Christianity, and Judaism*, ed. Harold W. Attridge and Gohei Hata, 235-55. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1992.

González, Justo L. *The Story of Christianity: The Early Church to the Present Day.* New York: HarperCollins, 1984, 1985. Reprint, Peabody, Mass.: Prince Press, 2004.

Gould, Graham. Review of *Basil of Caesarea*, by Philip Rousseau; *Die Entwicklung der Trinitätslehre des Basilius von Cäsarea*, by Volker Henning Drecoll and *Basil of Caesarea, Homilien zum Hexaemeron*, ed. by Emmanuel Amand De Mendieta and Stig Y. Rudberg. *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 49, no. 1 (1988) : 151-3.

_____. *The Desert Fathers on Monastic Community.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993.

Grant, Robert M. *Irenaeus of Lyons.* The Early Church Fathers, ed. Carol Harrison. London and New York: Routledge, 1997.

Green, Michael. *Evangelism in the Early Church.* Guildford, Surrey: Eagle, 1995.

Greer, Rowan A. *Theodore of Mopsuestia: Exegete and Theologian.* Westminster: The Faith Press, 1961.

Gregg, Robert C. *Consolation Philosophy: Greek and Christian Paideia in Basil and the Two Gregories.* Patristic Monograph Series 3. Cambridge, Mass.: Philadelphia Patristic Foundation, 1975.

Gribomont, Jean. "Basil, St." In *New Catholic Encyclopedia* 2 : 143-6.

_____. "Eustathe de Sébaste." In *Dictionnaire de spiritualité*, vol. 4, pt. 2 : 1708-12.

_____. "Eustathe le philosophe et les voyages de jeune Basile de Césarée." *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique* 54 (1959) : 115-24.

_____. *Histoire du texte des Ascétiques de s. Basile.* Bibliothèque du Muséon 32. Louvain: Publications universitaires/Institut orientaliste, 1953.

_____. "Le Monachisme au IV^{e} s. en Asie Mineure: de Gangres au Messalianisme." *Studia Patristica* II (TU, 64) (1957) : 400-15.

Grillmeier, Aloys, S. J. *Christ in Christian Tradition.* Vol. 1, *From the Apostolic Age to Chalcedon (451).* Translated by John Bowden. 2d rev. ed. Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1975.

Gross, Jules. *La Divinisation du Chrétien d'après les Pères Grecs: Contribution Historique a la Doctrine de la Grace.* Paris: J. Gabalda, 1938.

Hadot, Pierre. *Philosophy as a Way of Life: Spiritual Exercises from Socrates to Foucault.* Edited with an introduction by Arnold I. Davidson. Translated by Michael Chase. Oxford and Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell Publishing, 1995.

Halton, Thomas. "Baptism as Illumination." *Irish Theological Quarterly* 32 (1965) : 28-41.

Hamman, A. G., ed. and trans. *Le baptême d'après les pères de l'église.* Rev. ed. Paris: Migne, 1995.

Hanson, R. P. C. *Allegory and Event: A Study of the Sources and Significance of Origen's Interpretation of Scripture.* With and introduction by Joseph W. Trigg. Louisville and London: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002.

_____. *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God: The Arian Controversy 318-381.* Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1988.

_____. *Tradition in the Early Church.* London: SCM Press, 1962.

Hardy, Edward Rockie and Cyril C. Richardson, eds. *Christology of the Later Fathers.* The Library of Christian Classics: Ichthus Edition. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1954.

Harnack, Adolf von. *The Mission and Expansion of Christianity in the First Three Centuries.* Edited and trans. by James Moffatt. 2 vols. 2d rev. ed. London: Williams and Norgate, 1908.

Hauck, Fredrich. "καθαρός." In *The Theological Dictionary of the New Testament.* Vol. 3. Edited by Gerhard Kittel. Translated and edited by Geoffrey W. Bromiley. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1965 : 413-31.

Hawkins, Anne Hunsaker. *Archetypes of Conversion: The Autobiographies of Augustine, Bunyan, and Merton.* London: Associated University Presses, 1985.

Haykin, Michael A. G. " 'A Sense of Awe in the Presence of the Ineffable': 1 Cor. 2.11-12 in the Pneumatomachian Controversy of the Fourth Century." *Scottish Journal of Theology* 41, no. 3 (1988) : 341-57.

_____. "And Who is the Spirit? Basil of Caesarea's Letters to the Church at Tarsus." *Vigiliae Christianae* 41 (1987) : 377-385.

_____. *The Spirit of God: The Exegesis of 1 and 2 Corinthians in the Pneumatomachian Controversy of the Fourth Century.* Supplements to *Vigiliae Christianae* XXVII. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1994.

Holmes, Augustine, O. S. B. *A Life Pleasing to God: The Spirituality of the Rules of St. Basil*. London: Dartmon, Longman & Todd, 2000.

Hübner, Hans. "Unclean and Clean (NT)." In *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*. Vol. 6. Edited by David Noel Freedman. New York: Doubleday, 1992 : 741-5.

Jaeger, Werner. *Early Christianity and Greek Paideia*. Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1961.

James, William. *The Varieties of Religious Experience: A Study in Human Nature*. New York: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1902. Reprint, 1903.

Jeanes, Gordon. "Baptism Portrayed as Martyrdom in the Early Church." In *Forms of Devotion: Conversion, Worship, Spirituality, and Asceticism*, edited with an introduction by Everett Ferguson, 62-80. New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1999.

Johnson, Cedric B. and H. Newton Malony. *Christian Conversion: Biblical and Psychological Perspectives*. The Rosemead Psychology Series. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1982.

Jones, A. H. M. *Constantine and the Conversion of Europe*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1978.

Jones, Cheslyn, Geoffrey Wainwright, Edward Yarnold, S. J. and Paul Bradshaw, eds. *The Study of Liturgy*. Revised edition. London: SPCK, 1992.

Jones, Cheslyn, Geoffrey Wainwright and Edward Yarnold, S. J., eds. *The Study of Spirituality*. London: SPCK, 1986. Student edition, 2000.

Kelly, J. N. D. *Early Christian Creeds*. 3rd ed. London: Longman Group Limited, 1972. Paperback, 1981.

_____. *Early Christian Doctrines*. 4th rev. ed. London: Adam and Charles Black, 1968.

Kittel, Gerhard and Gerhard Friedrich, eds. *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. 10 volumes, including index volume. Translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1964-76.

Kopecek, Thomas A. "The Social Class of the Cappadocian Fathers." *Church History* 42 (1973) : 453-66.

Krailsheimer, A. J. *Conversion*. London: SCM Press, 1980.

Kreider, Alan. *The Change of Conversion and the Origin of Christendom*. Harrisburg, Penn.: Trinity Press International, 1999.

Kustas, George L. "Basil and the Rhetorical Tradition." In *Basil of Caesarea: Christian, Humanist, Ascetic: A Sixteen-Hundredth Anniversary Symposium*, ed. Paul J. Fedwick, vol. 1, 221-80. Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1981.

Ladd, George Eldon. *A Theology of the New Testament*. Rev. ed. Edited by Donald A. Hagner. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1993. Reprint, 1996.

Lampe, G. W. H. *The Seal of the Spirit: A Study in the Doctrine of Baptism and Confirmation in the New Testament and the Fathers*. London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1951.

_____, ed. *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961.

Lane Fox, Robin. *Pagans and Christians*. London: Viking, 1986.

Latourette, Kenneth Scott. "The Rise of Monasticism." In *A History of Christianity*. London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1957.

Leitzman, Hans. *The Era of the Church Fathers*. Translated by Bertram Lee Woolf. London: Lutterworth Press, 1951.

_____. *From Constantine to Julian*. Translated by Bertram Lee Woolf. London: Lutterworth Press, 1950.

Liddell, Henry G. and Robert Scott. *A Greek-English Lexicon*. 9th edition. Revised by H. S. Jones and R. McKenzie. With a revised supplement. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1940. New supplement added, 1996.

Lienhard, Joseph T. "Basil of Caesarea, Marcellus of Ancyra, and 'Sabellius'." *Church History* 58 (June 1989) : 157-67.

Lincoln, Andrew T. *Ephesians*. Word Bible Commentary. Vol. 42. Dallas, Texas: Word Books, 1990.

Loder, James E. *The Transforming Moment*. 2d ed. Colorado Springs, Co.: Helmers & Howard, 1989.

Loofs, F. *Eustathius von Sebaste und die Chronologie der Basilius-Briefe: Eine patristische Studie*. Halle: Niemeyer, 1898.

Lossky, Vladimir. *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church*. Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1976.

Louth, Andrew. "The Cappadocians." In *The Study of Spirituality*, ed. Cheslyn Jones, Geoffrey Wainwright and Edward Yarnold, S.J., 161-8. London: SPCK, 1986. Student edition, 2000.

_____. *Discerning the Mystery: An Essay on the Nature of Theology*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983. Paperback edition, 1989.

_____. *The Origins of the Christian Mystical Tradition: From Plato to Denys*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981. Paperback reprint, 1999.

_____. "St. Athanasius and the Greek *Life of Antony*." *Journal of Theological Studies*, n.s., 39, 2 (October, 1988) : 504-509.

Luislampe, Pia. *Spiritus Vivificans: Grundzüge einer Theologie des Heilegen Geistes nach Basilius von Caesarea.* Münsterische Beiträge zur Theologie 48. Münster: Aschendorff, 1981.

MacMullen, Ramsay. *Christianizing the Roman Empire (A. D. 100–400).* New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1984.

_____. "Constantine and the Miraculous." In *Conversion, Catechumenate, and Baptism in the Early Church*, ed. Everett Ferguson, 155-170. New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1993.

MacMullen, Ramsay and Eugene N. Lane, eds., *Paganism and Christianity 100-425 C.E.: A Sourcebook* . Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992.

Malingrey, Anne-Marie. *"Philosophia": Étude d'un groupe de mots dans la littérature grecque, des Présocratiques au IV^e^ siècle après J.-C.* Études et commentaires XL. Paris: C. Klincksieck, 1961.

Martin, Ralph P. *Worship in the Early Church.* Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1974. Reprint, 1998.

McDonnell, Kilian and George T. Montague. *Christian Initiation and Baptism in the Holy Spirit: Evidence from the First Eight Centuries.* 2d rev. ed. Collegeville, Minn.: The Liturgical Press, A Michael Glazier Book, 1994.

McGuckin, John. *St. Gregory of Nazianzus: An Intellectual Biography.* Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2001.

Meredith, Anthony, S. J. "Asceticism–Christian and Greek." *Journal of Theological Studies*, n.s., 27, no. 2 (October, 1976) : 313-32.

_____. "Cappadocian Fathers." In *A Dictionary of Christian Spirituality*, ed. Gordan S. Wakefield, 68-70. London: SCM Press, 1983.

_____. *The Cappadocians.* Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1995.

_____. "Gregory of Nazianzus and Gregory of Nyssa on Basil." *Studia Patristica* 32 (1997) : 163-9.

_____. *Gregory of Nyssa.* The Early Church Fathers, ed. Carol Harrison. London and New York: Routledge, 1999.

Meyendorff, John. "St. Basil, the Church, and Charismatic Leadership." In *The Byzantine Legacy in the Orthodox Church.* Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1982.

Mingana, A. "The Early Spread of Christianity in India." In *Missions and Regional Characteristics of the Early Church*, ed. Everett Ferguson, 289-364. New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1993.

Mitchell, Lionel L. *Baptismal Anointing*. Alcuin Club Collections 48. London: SPCK, 1966.

_____.*Worship: Initiation and the Churches*. Washington, D. C.: The Pastoral Press, 1991.

Morison, Ernest Frederick. *St. Basil and His Rule: A Study in Early Monasticism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1912.

Mylonas, George Emmanuel. *The Hymn to Demeter and Her Sanctuary at Eleusis*. Washington University Studies, New Series, Language and Literature, No. 13. St. Louis: March, 1942.

Nock, A. D. *Conversion: The Old and the New in Religion from Alexander the Great to Augustine of Hippo*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1933.

_____. *Early Gentile Christianity and its Hellenistic Background*. New York, Evanston and London: Harper & Row, 1964.

Norris, Frederick W. Review of *Basil of Caesarea*, by Philip Rousseau. *Church History* 65, no. 1 (1996) : 62-3.

O'Neill, J. C. "The origins of monasticism." In *The Making of Orthodoxy: Essays in Honour of Henry Chadwick*, ed. Rowan Williams, 270-87. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989.

Orbe, A. "Teologia bautismal de Clemente Alejandrino." *Gregorianum* 36 (1955) : 410-448.

Orphanos, Markos A. *Creation and Salvation According to St. Basil of Caesarea*. Athens: Gregorios Parisianos, 1975.

Osborn, Eric. *Ethical Patterns in Early Christian Thought*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976.

Otis, Brooks. "Cappadocian Thought as a Coherent System." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 12 (1958) : 97-124.

Peace, Richard V. *Conversion in the New Testament: Paul and the Twelve*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999.

Pelikan, Jaroslav Jan. *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine*. Vol. 1, *The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition (100-600)*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1971. Paperback, 1975.

_____. *Christianity and Classical Culture: The Metamorphosis of Natural Theology in the Christian Encounter with Hellenism*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1993.

_____. *Light of the World: A Basic Image in Early Christian Thought*. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1962.

_____. "The 'Spiritual Sense' of Scripture" in *Basil of Caesarea: Christian, Humanist, Ascetic: A Sixteen-Hundredth Anniversary Symposium*, ed. Paul J. Fedwick, vol. 1, 337-60. Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1981.

Porter, Stanley E. *Idioms of the Greek New Testament*, 2d ed. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994.

_____. *St. Basil the Great and Apollinaris of Laodicea*. Edited by Henry Chadwick. London: S.P.C.K., 1956.

Quasten, Johannes. *Patrology*. Vol. 3, *The Golden Age of Greek Patristic Literature from the Council of Nicea to the Council of Chalcedon*. Utrecht: Spectrum Publishers; Westminster, Maryland: The Newman Press, 1960.

Rahner, Hugo, S. J. *Greek Myths and Christian Mystery*. With a foreword by E. O. James. Trans. by Brian Battershaw. London: Burns & Oates, 1963.

Rambo, Lewis R. "Current Research on Religious Conversion." *Religious Studies Review* 8 (1982) : 145-59.

Ratcliff, E. C. "The Old Syrian Baptismal Tradition and Its Resettlement under the Influence of Jerusalem in the Fourth Century." In *Liturgical Studies*, ed. by A. H. Couratin and D. H. Tripp, 135-54. London: SPCK, 1976.

Riley, Hugh M. *Christian Initiation: A Comparative Study of the Interpretation of the Baptismal Liturgy in the Mystagogical Writings of Cyril of Jerusalem, John Chrysostom, Theodore of Mopsuestia, and Ambrose of Milan*. Studies in Christian Antiquity 17. Washington, D. C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1974.

Rist, John M. "Basil's Neoplatonism: Its Background and Nature." In *Basil of Caesarea: Christian, Humanist, Ascetic: A Sixteen-Hundredth Anniversary Symposium*, ed. Paul Jonathan Fedwick, vol. 1, 137-220. Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1981.

_____. *Stoic Philosophy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969.

Robertson, David G. "Stoic and Aristotelian Notions of Substance in Basil of Caesarea." *Vigiliae Christianae* 52, no. 4 (1988) : 393-417.

Rousseau, Philip. *Basil of Caesarea*. The Transformation of the Classical Heritage 20. Berkeley: University Of California Press, 1994.

_____. "Basil of Caesarea: Choosing a Past." In *Reading the Past in Late Antiquity*, ed. Graeme Clarke with Brian Coke, Alanna Emmett Nobbs and Raoul Mortley, 37-58. Rushcutters Bay, N.S.W.: Pergamon Press for Australian National University Press, 1990.

Ruether, Rosemary Radford. *Gregory of Nazianzus: Rhetor and Philosopher*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969.

Scazzoso, Piero. *Introduzione alla ecclesiologia di San Basilio*. Milano: Publicazzioni della Università cattolica del Sacro Cuore, 1975.

Schaff, Philip, ed. *The Creeds of Christendom*. 3 volumes. Sixth edition. Revised by David S. Schaff. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 1998.

Schememann, Alexander. *Of Water and the Spirit: A Liturgical Study of Baptism*. London: SPCK, 1976.

Schürer, Emil. *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B. C.–A. D. 135)*. Revised and edited by G. Vermes, F. Millar and M. Black. Vol. 2. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1979.

Siniscalco, P. "Conversion – Converts." In *Encyclopedia of the Early Church*. Edited by Angelo di Berardino. Translated by Adrian Walford with bibliographical amendments by W. H. C. Frend. Vol. 1. New York: Oxford University Press. 1992 : 199.

Spanneut, Michel. *Le Stoïcisme des Pères de l'Église: De Clément de Rome a Clément d'Alexandrie*. Preface by H. I. Marrou. Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1957.

Spidlik, Thomas, S. J. "L'idéal du monachisme basilien." In *Basil of Caesarea: Christian, Humanist, Ascetic: A Sixteen-Hundredth Anniversary Symposium*, ed. Paul Jonathan Fedwick, vol. 1, 361-74. Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1981.

_____. *La sophiologie de s. Basile*. Orientalia Christiana Analecta 162. Roma: Pont. Institutum Orientalium Studiorum, 1961.

_____. *The Spirituality of the Christian East: A Systematic Handbook*. Trans. by Anthony P. Gythiel. Kalamazoo, Michigan: Cistercian Publications, 1986.

Stead, Christopher. *Philosophy in Christian Antiquity*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1994. Paperback reprint, 1998.

Stevenson, J., ed. *A New Eusebius: Documents illustrating the history of the Church to AD 337*. New edition revised by W. H. C. Frend. London: SPCK, 1987. Reprint, 1999.

_____, ed. *Creeds, Councils and Controversies: Documents illustrating the history of the Church, AD 337–461*. New edition revised by W. H. C. Frend. London: SPCK., 1989. Reprint, 2000.

Storch, Rudolph H. "The 'Eusebian Constantine'." In *Conversion, Catechumenate, and Baptism in the Early Church*, ed. Everett Ferguson, 143-53. New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1993.

Stramara, Daniel F., Jr., " ᾽ΑΔΕΛΦΩΤΗΣ-Two Frequently Overlooked Meanings." *Vigiliae Christianae* 51 (1997) : 316-20.

Stromberg, Peter G. *Language and Self-Transformation: A Study of the Christian Conversion Narrative*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993.

Studer, B. "Illumination." In *Encyclopedia of the Early Church*. Edited by Angelo di Berardino. Translated by Adrian Walford with bibliographical amendments by W. H. C. Frend. Vol. 1. New York: Oxford University Press, 1992 : 405.

Swete, Henry Barclay. *The Holy Spirit in the Ancient Church: A Study of Christian Teaching in the Age of the Fathers*. London: Macmillan and Co., 1912.

Thesaurus Linguae Graecae [TLG]. Computer data bank. Professor Theodore F. Brunner, Director. Irvine, California: University of California. TLG Workplace 7.0. Silver Mountain Software, 1993, 1998.

Tollinton, R. B., trans. *Selections from the Commentaries and Homilies of Origen*. London: S.P.C.K., 1929.

Torrance, T. F. "Spiritus Creator: A Consideration of the Teaching of St. Athanasius and St. Basil." In *Theology in Reconstruction*. London: SCM Press, 1965.

_____. *The Trinitarian Faith*. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1995.

Trigg, Joseph W. *Origen*. The Early Church Fathers, ed. Carol Harrison. London and New York: Routledge, 1998.

Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. 6th ed. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996.

Underhill, Evelyn. *Mystics of the Church*. Cambridge, UK: James Clarke & Co., 1925. Reprint, 1975.

Vaggione, Richard Paul, OHC. *Eunomius of Cyzicus and the Nicene Revolution*. Oxford Early Christian Studies. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.

Verhees, Von J. "Pneuma, Erfahrung und Erleuchtung in der Theologie des Basilius des Großen." *Ostkirchlicke Studien* XXV (1976) : 43-59.

Vermes, G. "The Torah Is A Light." *Vetus Testamentum* VIII (1958) : 436.

Veuthey, Léon. "Illumination." In *Dictionnaire de spiritualité*, vol. 7, part 2. Eds. Marcel Viller et al. Paris: Beauchesne, 1971 : 1330-46.

Vivian, Tim. *Journeying into God: Seven Early Monastic Lives*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996.

Voytko, Victoria Nichole. Review of *Christianity and Classical Culture: The Metamorphosis of Natural Theology in the Christian Encounter with Hellenism* by Jaroslav Pelikan. *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 41 (June 1997) : 184-86.

Ward, Benedicta, S. L. G. *Harlots of the Desert: A Study of Repentance in Early Monastic Sources*. Kalamazoo, Michigan: Cistercian Publications. 1987.

_____. *The Venerable Bede*. London and New York: Continuum, 1990. Reissued with additions, 1998.

Watkins, Oscar D. *A History of Penance*. Vol. 1, *The Whole Church to A. D. 450*. London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1920.

Watson, Gordon. "The Filioque – Opportunity for Debate?" *Scottish Journal of Theology* 41, no. 3 (1988) : 313-30.

Whitaker, E. C. *Documents of the Baptismal Liturgy*. 2d ed. London: SPCK, 1970. Paperback, 1977.

Winkler, Gabriele. "The Original Meaning of the Prebaptismal Anointing and Its Implications." In *Studies in Early Christian Liturgy and Its Context*. Variorum Collected Study Series, 24-35. Brookfield, Vermont: Ashgate Publishing Co., 1997.

Winslow, Donald F. *The Dynamics of Salvation: A Study in Gregory of Nazianzus*. Patristic Monograph Series 7. Philadelphia: The Philadelphia Patristic Foundation, 1979.

Yarnold, Edward, S. J. "The Authorship of the Mystagogic Catecheses Attributed to Cyril of Jerusalem." *The Heythrop Journal* 19, no. 2 (April, 1978) : 143-161.

_____.*The Awe-Inspiring Rites of Initiation: The Origins of the R.C.I.A.* 2d ed. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1994.

_____. "Baptism and the Pagan Mysteries in the Fourth Century." *The Heythrop Journal* 13 (1972) : 247-67

Young, Frances M. *From Nicea to Chalcedon: A Guide to the Literature and its Background*. London: SCM Press, 1983.

Ysebaert, J. *Greek Baptismal Terminology: Its Origins and Early Development*. Nijmegen: Dekker & Van De Vegt N. V., 1962.