COURSE GUIDE

CRS422
CHRISTOLOGY

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CONTENTS **PAGE**

Introduction

Christology CRS422 is a two-credit undergraduate course. This course is offered in the first semester of the second year to students who are offering Christian Theology. There are no prerequisite courses for this course. Christology however is a course that should be taken as a branch of the doctrine of God or Trinity because the connection between the two courses helps you to appreciate the issues of divinity that are involved in Christology. Some of the things you would study in this course are things which you might undertake in your third or fourth year of study. This course consists of three Modules with units that have been developed using global and local events.

This Study Guide contains the required information about the entire course. It guides you through the course content and the number of required assignments that you would do. There is also an assignment file. This file prescribes the course requirements as well as the grading system. This Study Guide is intended to help you as a distance learner to aid you in your study of this course at National Open University of Nigeria. The aims and objectives of this course are stated in this Course Guide. This Course Guide will help you to know at the beginning of the course what you should expect from the study of the course, and what you are expected to learn from the course. The Study Guide is not the only resource for you. Its goal is to help you pass the course.

There are other resources that can also help you to pass your course such as text books, the course material itself and facilitation class sessions, which are optional. Another very important use of the Study Guide is the plan and use of time. It states on a weekly basis how you should proceed with your studies. If you pay attention to this plan guide, you will surely complete your study of the course successfully on time before the examination date. Take advantage of the time guide in this Study Guide. It is a sure way to passing your course in flying colours.

This Course Guide tells all that is obtainable in this course and the relevant materials that would help you expand the understanding of the course. This would provide you a guide on how to proceed with your study of the materials and the time frame for a successful completion of the course. This guide will also help to direct you in your tutor-marked assignments and materials for further readings.

It is important to go through this Study Guide very carefully before beginning your study of the course material. The temptation to jump to course materials without going through the Study Guide for the sake of saving time is high but also a wrong decision. Students who go straight and study course materials without first going through the Study Guide

usually end up not doing well at the end of the course. Going through the Study Guide is part of studying the course material. Complete the feedback form at the end and submit it with your first assignment to your tutorial facilitator.

You may ask the student counsellor at your Study Centre about your tutorial facilitator and where to find him/her. I believe this would be helpful if you heed to this useful advice.

Course Aims

The general aim of this course is to introduce you to major issues and developments in the history of Christology. This will also orientate you towards understanding other courses in Christian Theology such as Trinity, especially as found in the creeds of the churches. You will find these broadly in Systematic Theology and Church History courses.

The aims of this course would be achieved by:

Introducing the student to Christology as a discipline that shapes their thinking on past and current developments.
Ability to contribute to the Christological debate for the growth of the church.
Educating and also creating opportunities for students' participation in developing Christology from an African perspective that is biblically sound.
Helping students apply their faith to the gospel proclamation.

Course Objectives

When you have successfully finished the course, you should be able to:

- define Christology and its genesis;
- account for the historical development of Christology from the early church to the present time;
- identify the causes of Christological errors in the church;
- describe ways of engaging in more effectively in developing biblical Christology; and
- explain how biblical Christology can answer to ecumenical challenges such as pluralism.

Working through This Course

You are required to walk through the course content, unit by unit in order to complete the course. It is also a requirement for you to do all the self-assessment exercises for each section of the unit and tutor-

marked assignments at the end of each unit. The tutor-marked assignments will form 30% of your final grade while there is a final examination which you will take electronically. This constitutes 70% of your final grade.

Course Materials

The major components of the course are:

1. Course Guide
2. Study Units
3. Textbooks
4. Assignment File

Study Units

There are three modules in this course. Module 1 has five units while modules two and three have four and five units respectively. The modules are designed to cover three major aims of the course.

Module 1 Origin and Development of Christology

Unit 1 A History of Early Christological Development
Unit 2 Augustine's Christology Unit 3 Anselm's Christology Unit 4 Aquinas' Christology

Module 2 Reformation and Post Reformation Christology

Unit 1 Luther's Christology
Unit 2 Calvin's Christology
Unit 3 Christology of the High Orthodoxy (17^{th} Century)
Unit 4 Christology as a Division of Systematic Theology

Module 3 Modern and Contemporary Christology

Unit 1 The Center of Christology – Old Testament and New Testament
Unit 2 Person and Work of Christ: a Probe of Modern and Contemporary Christologies
Unit 3 Karl Barth's Christology

Unit 4 Rationalism and Christology
Unit 5 African Christology
Unit 6 Christology and Eschatology: Jesus Christ– The Second Adam

Textbooks and References

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Assignment File

The Directorate of Examinations and Assessments of the National Open University of Nigeria will mail an assignment file to you through your Study Centre Manager. This assignment file is part of the course. This file contains the assignments that you have to submit to your tutor. These assignments will be marked and recorded and they will count towards your final grade. The assignments must be submitted to your tutor at the stipulated time that he or she decides. The assignments account for 30% of the total course work. At the end of the course you are required to sit for a final semester examination of 2 hours which accounts for 70% of the total marks for the course.

Assessments

There are two kinds of assessment for this course. One is tutor-marked assignment and the other is a written examination. There are 14 units of tutor-marked assignments in all the three modules. You are expected to submit all assignments but only the best three will be counted. Each of these is worth 10% marks and together constitutes 30% of your total course marks. These assignments require application of the information, knowledge and experience acquired in the study.

Unit	**Title of the Study**	**Weeks Activity**	**Assignment**
	Course Guide	1	Course Guide
Module1 Early Christology			
1	A History of Early Christological	2	Assignment
2	Augustine's Christology	3	Assignment
3	Anselm's Christology	4	Assignment

4	Aquinas' Christology	5	Assignment
Module 2 Christology of The Reformation			
1	Luther's Christology	8	Assignment
2	Calvin's Christology	9	Assignment
3	Christology of The High Reformed Orthodoxy (17th	10	TMA to be submitted
4	Christology as a Division of Systematic Theology	11	Assignment
Module 3 Modern and Contemporary Christology			
1	Person and Work of Christ: A Probe of Modern and Contemporary	12	Assignment
2	Karl Barth's Christology	13	Assignment
3	Rationalism and Christology: A Reformed Covenantal Response	14	Assignment
4	Christology in African Theology	15	TMA to be submitted
5	Christology and Eschatology: Jesus Christ– The Second	15	TMA to be submitted
	Revision/Examination	16+1	
	Total	**17**	

Summary

This course is designed to help you gain some insights into a historical study of Christology. The course begins with a historical study of the genesis and development of Christology. This course surveys the Christological development from the early church to the contemporary global theological development within different cultural and philosophical contexts.

MAIN COURSE

CONTENTS **PAGE**

MODULE 1 ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF CHRISTOLOGY

UNIT 1 A HISTORY OF EARLY CHRISTOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT

CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This section will introduce you to the early Christological developments which began in the second century AD. It covers the definition, attempts and controversies that followed in understanding the person of Christ and how it affects the church. The problems associated with the Christological developments which were called heresies will also be discussed here. This early developments and the position of the church has been a helpful tool in assessing subsequent and modern Christological issues.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- appreciate the labours of the early church theologians who built a solid foundation for Christological development
- describe clearly what constitutes Christological errors in order to avoid its pitfalls
- distinguish the connection between contemporary and early church Christological debates.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Definition of Christology

By way of definition, Christology is the study of the person of Christ. This study involves an understanding of the relationship between the divine and human natures of Christ. According to the scripture, Christ was not a mere human being but he was the God-man. This means he was fully human and fully God at the same time. Several attempts have been made by theologians to understand what the scripture says about Christ whether he was only human or he was also divine. Some people in the early church thought he was merely a human being like anyone of us without any peculiar nature such as divine. Some believed that though he was human, he was also divine in nature, given the Scriptural testimony and the work that he performed. For those who believed that he had both human and divine natures, another problem was understanding how divine and the human natures related to each other in one person. All these dimensions of Christ led to Christological arguments. We shall take a brief survey of the Christological developments in the following section.

3.2 Early Christological Developments

Christological developments can be traced back to the time of the early church. We will consider only key developments in this period that had impact on subsequent developments. Irenaues argued against the Gnostic heresy that the Logos was God's emanation of aeons. He taught that the Logos is not a creature but a hypostatic word. God is all spirit, all intellect, all thought, all logos, so that both the Son and Father are true God. The generation of the Son did not occur in time; the Son had no beginning but existed eternally with the Father. For Tertullian, the Logos attained his full Sonship and independent personality only as a result of God speaking, generation and incarnation, so that there was a time when the son did not exist. There is distinction between the Father and Son without contradiction or division. His view however failed to bridge the Gnostic dualism between the visible God, namely the Son and the invisible God, namely the Father. He also failed to rid his Trinitarian theology of subordinationism.

Origen believed that the generation of the Son is an eternal process that is essential to the being of God. He gave an analogy of the Sun and its sunshine by which one cannot exist without the other. The Father cannot exist apart from the Son and vice versa. The Father is not the Father before the existence of the Son but He is the Father because of the existence of the Son. The Father and the Son have common divine

attributes. He emphasized the unity of the Father and the Son such that the Son has "the same wisdom, truth and reason as the Father." Origen's problem arises when he attempts to maintain the distinctions of the persons. He fell back into subordination by teaching that the Trinity derived from the person of the Father instead of the essence of God. He represents the Father as God with a definite article (o` qeo.j) in his writings while the Son as God is left anarthrous (qeo.j). His overall exegesis of Scripture leaves the Son as a creature and subordinate to God. The Father derives His being in Himself but the Son derives His from the being of the Father. The Father is the "fountain or root of divinity, the greatest God above all" "superior" to the Son while the Son is inferior to the Father.

Athanasius who devoted all his life to the explanation of the Trinity set out clearly his Christological views. His Christological views are best understood in connection with his Trinitarian theology. The unity of God and distinction of the persons within the Trinity are distinctive features in his theology in his own time. The Son of God cannot be a creature and was not begotten by the will of God but is generated out of the being of God. The same is true of the Holy Spirit. He maintained the real distinctions of the persons. The Trinity is not three parts of one God, and neither three names for one and the same persons. The Father alone is Father; the Son alone is Son; the Holy Spirit alone is Holy Spirit. He strongly maintained their unity: the three are the same in "essence," in "substance" and in "attributes". Note that for Athanasius hypostasis is synonymous with *ousia*. The Father is "the first principle" and the "fountain" of the Godhead. The three persons exist in and through each other, so that they are one in activity.

3.2.1 The Nicean Definition

What Nicea (325) really accomplished was the question of whether the Son or the Logos was truly God. This it answered in the affirmative. The major preoccupation of the Council of Nicea was the divinity of Christ which Arius challenged. The primitive Christian community had taken for granted that Christ was God and was indeed worshipped as such but there was no official declaration to that effect until Arius raised the dust. Arius who was a presbyter insisted that Christ was a creature with a beginning like every other creature, though the first of all creation. As such he was not equal to the father who alone is God. As a creature, Christ was subject to change. This view of Arius has serious implications for the claims of Christ. First, it then means, as Athanasius rightly pointed out, that the Son could not have accurate and full knowledge of the Father. This sharply contradicts Christ's claims in Matt 11:25-27 (cf. Luke 10:21-22): At that time Jesus said, 'I

praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure. All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

Nicea insisted in key terms that the Son is "of the essence of the Father" and he was "True God from true God" "begotten, not created" and of "one essence with the Father." The phrase "of one essence with the Father" continued to be debated because it has no biblical warrant and was also used in other theological contexts which made it suspicious. Yet it remained the only option of expression for the very truth and conviction that the church held over the years. John Leith (1973:29) argues that if the church had concluded that the Son was only like God, theologically, it would undermine "the Christian community's conviction about the finality of Jesus Christ. The claim that he was like God presupposed some standard to determine whether he was like God and the extent to which he was like God. It furthermore left the possibility that someone else more like God might appear. Christianity would be only one of many possible religions. If God himself is incarnate in Jesus Christ, then this is the final Word. There is nothing further to be said." The church maintained that the salvation that Christ accomplished was the work of God as Isaiah 63:9 attests that it is Yahweh himself rather than a creature that saved his people. The danger that the church also avoided was that if the Son was not fully God, then all who were baptised in his name as instructed in Scripture (Matt. 28: 19; cf. 2Cor. 13:14) were baptised and received grace in the name of a
creature.

3.2.2 Post Nicean Controversy

However well done of Nicea, one other important dimension of Christology was left unsettled which was the question of the person of Christ. The question is how he was both God and man. This led to the emergence of another council – the council of Chalcedon (451) which dealt specifically with this question. Prior to the council of Chalcedon, a number of theologians came up with various ways of trying to understand the person of Christ. Chalcedon drew its own clear line of definition which was a follow-up to the position of the early church fathers. It emphasized that Christ was "perfect (*teleion*) both in deity (*theoteti*) and also in humanness (*anthropoteti*)" with a "rational soul (*psyches logikes*) and a body. With respect to his deity he is the same reality with the Father (*homoousion to patri*), and with respect to his humanity he is the same reality as ourselves (*homoousion hemin*). There

was affirmation of the two natures (*duo physesin*) which were without confusion (*asunkutos*), without transmuting of one nature to another (*atrepatos*) without division (*adiairetos*), without contradiction (*achoristos*). The distinction of the two natures does not cancel the unity and neither the unity cancels the distinction but both are maintained at the same time. The properties of the two natures subsist in one person (*prosopon*) and one hypostasis.

The Trinitarian controversy led inevitably to the Christological controversy. The church struggled with the Christological problem of how to understand the two natures of Christ. There was a tendency to affirm Christ's divinity and deny his humanity which was described as Docetism. A number of theologians advanced their own understanding. For instance, Apollinarius denied that Christ had a rational human soul but only the divine life in him. Eutyches taught that Christ had only one nature. It was a heated controversy between Antiochene and Alexandrian theologians. Alexandrian theologians taught the communication of attributes (*communicatio idiomatum*) between the divine and the human nature, which means what is characteristic of the human nature, could also be attributed to the divine nature. While the Antiochene theologians taught a "Logos-man" Christology which means the divine possessed a full human person, the Alexandrine theologians taught a "Logos-flesh" which means the divine simply adopted a human nature. The implication for the Antiochene Christology is that there were two persons in Christ.

In the 5^{th} century around AD 428, Nestorius, and Antiochene theologian argued that Christ has two natures that were separate in such a way that their unity was no longer maintained. His concern was to move away from granting Mary, the *Theotokos*, a thing he considered to be blasphemous that a human being could be God's parent. He was not against *Theotokos* if Christ is considered on account of his humanity separately but was against it if taken on account of his divinity. The limitations of Christ's humanity could not be attributed to his divinity and neither his divine attributes could be predicated of his humanity. Though his intention might have been good, his conclusions were problematic because he made two persons out of Christ.

The councils of Ephesus (431), and Chalcedon (451) rejected Nestorius's teaching and defined the consensus to be taught and believed, articulating this faith in the Nicene Creed and the Chalcedonian Definition, which stated that Jesus is the only begotten Son of God, true man, and true God, one person in "two natures without confusion, without change, without division, without separation." Chalcedon maintained that Christ had a rational soul, *homoousios* with

the Father with respect to divinity, and *homoousios* with us with respect to his humanity. The Theotokos of Mary was with regards to Christ's humanity. The unity of the two natures was affirmed as concurring in one person (*prosopa* or *hypostasis*). Two groups deviated doctrinally from the consensus developed in the councils. The Nestorians taught that there are two distinct persons in the incarnate Christ and two natures conjoined as one; Monophysites taught that there is one single nature, primarily divine. Several churches refused to accept the doctrinal and disciplinary decisions of Ephesus and Chalcedon and formed their own communities. These churches, called pre-Chalcedonian or Oriental Orthodox, became great missionary churches and spread to Armenia, Egypt, Ethiopia, Syria, Persia, and the Malabar Coast of India in isolation from other churches.

4.0 CONCLUSION

The development of Christology was an attempt to understand the person of Christ. This attempt became controversial largely because of hermeneutical differences. Those who viewed certain Scriptural passages that relate to Christ in creaturely way without connection to his ontological distinction prior to his incarnation failed to see him as God on equal terms with the Father. Also attempts to understand the relationship between his two natures have been a great controversy. As we shall see later especially as we come to examine contemporary developments, the early Christological debates have set the ground for ongoing arguments.

5.0 SUMMARY

We have seen the Christological developments in the early church where Christological errors were refuted and the church took a unanimous stand. The more prominent error was that of Arius that is called Arianism which denied the deity of Christ. Tensions increased as the church began to define the relationship between God the Father and God the Son and later the relation between the divine and human elements in the nature and person of Jesus Christ. While the church taught that the Father is God and the Son is also God, Arius, a presbyter, rejected such teaching arguing that the Son was a creature. He taught that the Son could not be equal to the Father. The Father created the Son in time, so the Son has a beginning. In the Council of Nicaea (AD 325) the church unanimously condemned Arius and his teaching as heresy and affirmed the deity of the Son, being co-equal and co-eternal with the Father. We have also seen other Christological errors that tried to understand the nature of the two natures that existed in the one person of Christ. The council of Nicea took a final stand on Christology affirming the deity of Christ and condemning Arianism and also defining the relationship

between the two natures. Chalcedon also defined the question of the relationship of the two natures in one person and condemned the position of Nestorius.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. What was the error of Arianism?
2. What was the position of Nicea on the deity of Christ?
3. What was the Chalcedonian definition of the person of Christ?
4. How does this section help you in understanding the history of Christology better?

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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UNIT 2 AUGUSTINE'S CHRISTOLOGY

CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Augustine stands tall in the history of the Church. His ideas have greatly helped to shape further development of theology in the Church especially in the Medieval and Reformation church periods. Many great Reformers like Luther, Calvin and others sought their theological development upon the shoulders of Augustine. It is therefore, important for you to understand Augustine's Christology. Augustine tried to develop his thoughts from biblical revelation rather than on philosophical and speculative thoughts.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the importance of Augustine in Christological development
- describe the continuity and discontinuity between Augustine's
- Christology and later Christological developments.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 The Development of Augustine's Christology

Augustine took the same approach as Athanasius where he devoted his fifteen books *De Trinitate* (*On The Trinity*) to the profound defense of the Trinity in a way no one else has ever done. It is out of his Trinitarian theology that one can clearly see his Christology. He summarised what the earlier fathers had taught and also treated it independently

introducing important modifications. Augustine's starting point was not the person of the Father but "the one, simple, uncompounded essence of God," which stresses the "absolute unity of the three persons." Proceeding from the one essence necessarily makes the three persons to be of equal standing because "present in each person is the entire self-same divine being." This however does not produce three God or three Almighties but only one God since what makes God is the one essence. Without the essence there cannot be God. The distinction of the persons does not arise from distinction of attributes of each person but from the "interpersonal relations" of the Trinitarian persons.

3.2 The Absolute Unity of Three Persons

For Augustine the first person is called the Father because "he stands in a unique position to the Son and the Spirit". He rejected the Tertullian dualism between the Father and Son on the basis of invisible and unseen and the visible and seen God. The Son is no less hidden and invisible than the Father and is perfectly equal to the Father. Augustine banished all forms of subordination. His strength lies in his approach which is proceeding from the essence of God that is equally present in all the three persons. Though he still calls the Father the fountainhead or first principle of divinity whose meaning is different from the usage of his predecessors, it does not mean that "deity logically exists first in the Father and is then imparted through him to the Son and the Spirit." The Father is only Father because of his personality and not as God. By that understanding he also believed that the Old Testament theophanies were not only restricted to the Son but also to the Father and the Holy Spirit.

Augustine's Christology does not systematically explore the attributes, person, and life of Christ in the *Confessions*. The system of the *Confessions* is about the life history of Augustine. Though most of the narrative in the *Confessions* centers on Augustine's past life; it also places God at the center of Augustine's life through the Son. The humanity of Christ is more prominently highlighted in the book; Christ's humanity thus shapes Augustine's humanity. Augustine demonstrates a movement from his youthful life towards Christ as he grows older and as he propounds some Christological touchstones that surround his own conversion story with reference to terms like "Christ," "Son," "Word," "Word-made-flesh," "Lord Jesus," "Wisdom",and so on. As Augustine grows older his desire for increasing true knowledge also grows as his heart is set on understanding the true nature of Christ in relation to himself.

In Books 1 through 9, Augustine writes about his personal past. The first Christological reference is in the first chapter of Book 1, which comes in a prayer from his present life in Christ: "My faith, Lord, cries to

Thee, the faith that Thou hast given me that Thou has inbreathed in me,

through the humanity of Thy Son and by the ministry of Thy Preacher" (*The Confessions*, 1.1.3). Augustine displays, early in his *Confessions*, his present Christological knowledge, showing that perfect union of Christ's humanity and of His divinity, i.e., as second Person in the Trinity, "Thy Son," and Man's orientation to Christ, i.e., as prayerful and faithful recipient of His grace. In contrast, Augustine mentions Christ again with regards to his near-baptism as a boy; he has heard of "His Cross" and when he was ill, Monica wanted him to "receive the baptism of Your Christ… while I confessed You, Lord Jesus"; but his parents postponed his boyhood baptism when he became well for fear that a christian like Augustine falling into sin, would be worse than a pagan Augustine falling into sin (1.11.11-12). Augustine's assessment of this decision, "It would have been far better had I been made whole at once" (1.11.12), indicates his family's fragile faith in the efficacy of Christian strength in the face of worldly temptations, e.g., the temptations in Augustine's imminent puberty. But Augustine is not "made whole at once" – his soul remains "wounded" (1.11.12), and it is with a wounded soul – a soul mired in sin -- with which Augustine, in Book 2, steals the pears from the pear tree. One should note that Augustine does not refer to Christ or other Christological terms at all in Book 2. [2] This lack of Christological reference implies that the status of young Augustine's soul is far away from God; says Augustine, as he reflects on why he stole the pears, "I loved my own undoing, I loved the evil in me – not the thing for which I did the evil, simply the evil" (2.4.27). In keeping silent in Christology in Book 2, Augustine shows his younger self's deafness to God in the midst of his love for evil.

Augustine's Christology can be best understood in connection with his Trinitarian theology. The following notes are drawn from the Enchiridion. Here, I let Augustine speak for himself. He began by saying: "in the unity of the Godhead there be three persons, of one substance, power, and eternity; God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. The Father is of none, neither begotten nor proceeding; the Son is eternally begotten of the Father; the Holy Ghost eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son."

Some dogmatic historians seem to imply that he differed materially from the Nicene doctrine on the point of *subordination.* Hagenbach (Smith's Ed. 95) asserts that "Augustine completely purified the dogma of the Trinity from the older vestiges of subordination" and adds that "such vestiges are unquestionably to be found in the most orthodox Fathers, not only in the East but also in the West." Neander (II. 470, Note 2) says that Augustine "kept at a distance everything that bordered on

subordinationism." He maintained, over and over again, that Sonship as a relationship is second and subordinate to Fatherhood; that while a Divine Father and a Divine Son must necessarily be of the very same nature and grade of being, like a human father and a human son, yet the latter issues from the former, not the former from the latter.

He denominates the Father the "beginning" (principium) of the Son, and the Father and Son the "beginning" (principium) of the Holy Spirit. "The Father is the beginning of the whole divinity, or if it is better so expressed, deity." "In their mutual relation to one another in the Trinity itself, if the begetter is a beginning (principium) in relation to that which he begets, the Father is a beginning in relation to the Son, because he begets Him." Since the Holy Spirit proceeds from both Father and Son, "the Father and Son are a beginning (principium) of the Holy Spirit, not two beginnings."

Augustine employs this term "beginning" only in relation to the person, not to the essence. There is no "beginning," or source, when the essence itself is spoken of. Consequently, the "subordination" (implied in a "beginning" by generation and spiration) is not the Arian subordination, as to essence, but the trinitarian subordination, as to person and relation. Revelation unquestionably discloses a deity who is "blessed forever" whose blessedness is *independent* of the universe which He has made from nonentity, and who must therefore find all the conditions of blessedness within Himself alone. He is blessed from eternity, in his own self-contemplation and self-communion. He does not need the universe in order that he may have an object which he can know, which he can love, and over which he can rejoice. "The Father knoweth the Son," from all eternity (Matthew 11:27); and "loveth the Son," from all eternity (John in. 35); and "glorifieth the Son," from all eternity (John 17:5). Prior to creation, the Eternal Wisdom "was by Him as one brought up with Him, and was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him" (Proverbs 8:30); and the Eternal Word "was in the beginning with God" (John 1:2); and "the Only Begotten Son (or God Only Begotten, as the uncials read) was eternally in the bosom of the Father" (John 1:18).

Now of this Mediator it would occupy too much space to say anything at all worthy of Him; and, indeed, to say what is worthy of Him is not in the power of man. For who will explain in consistent words this single statement, that "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us," so that we may believe on the only Son of God the Father Almighty, born of the Holy Ghost and the Virgin Mary. The meaning of the Word being made flesh is not that the divine nature was changed into flesh, but that the divine nature assumed our flesh. And by "flesh" we are here to understand "man," the part being put for the whole, as when it is said: "By the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified," that is, no man. For

we must believe that no part was wanting in that human nature which He put on, save that it was a nature wholly free from every taint of sin, - not such a nature as is conceived between the two sexes through carnal lust, which is born in sin, and whose guilt is washed away in regeneration; but such as it behooved a virgin to bring forth, when the mother's faith, not her lust, was the condition of conception. And if her virginity had been marred even in bringing Him forth, He would not have been born of a virgin; and it would be false (which God forbid) that He was born of the Virgin Mary, as it is believed and declared by the whole Church, which, in imitation of His mother, daily brings forth members of His body, and yet remains a virgin. Read, if you please, my letter on the virginity of the holy Mary which I sent to that eminent man, whose name I mention with respect and affection, Volusianus.

3.3 The Word was God

In chapter 5, Augustine lays down a solid Christological teaching: Jesus Christ, being the only Son of God, is at the same time man. Wherefore Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is both God and man; God before the world; man in our world: God, because the Word of God (for "the Word was God"); and man, because in His one person the Word was joined with a body and a rational soul. Wherefore, so far as He is God, He and the Father are one; so far as He is man, the Father is greater than He. For when He was the only Son of God, not by grace, but by nature, that He might also be full of grace, He became the Son of man; and He Himself unites both natures in His own identity, and both natures constitute one Christ; because, "being in the form of God, He thought it not robbery to be," what He was by nature, "equal with God." But He made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Himself the form of a servant, not losing or lessening the form of God. And, accordingly, He was both made less and remained equal, being both in one, as has been said: but He was one of these as Word, and the other as man. As Word, He is equal with the Father; as man, less than the Father. One Son of God, and at the same time Son of man; one Son of man, and at the same time Son of God; not two Sons of God, God and man, but one Son of God: God without beginning; man with a beginning, our Lord Jesus Christ.

In chapter 6, Augustine demonstrates that Christ being in human form without dignity was raised to dignity as the Son of God by his resurrection. In the context of Christ's humanity, the resurrection of Christ was a demonstration of God's grace on his Son. He continues: Now, here the grace of God is displayed with the greatest power and clearness. For what merit had the human nature in the man refered to as Christ earned, that it should in this unparalleled way be taken up into the unity of the person of the only Son of God? What goodness of will, what goodness of desire and intention, what good works, had gone before,

which made this man worthy to become one person with God? Had He been a man previously to this, and had He earned this unprecedented reward that He should be thought worthy to become God? Assuredly though from the very moment that He began to be man, He was nothing else than the Son of God, the only Son of God, the Word who was made flesh, and therefore He was God so that just as each individual man unites in one person a body and a rational soul, so Christ in one person unites the Word with man.

Now wherefore was this unheard of glory conferred on human nature, - a glory which, as there was no antecedent merit, was of course wholly of grace, - except that here those who looked at the matter soberly and honestly might behold a clear manifestation of the power of God's free grace, and might understand that they are justified from their sins by the same grace which made the man Christ Jesus free from the possibility of sin? And so the angel, when he announced to Christ's mother the coming birth, saluted her thus: "Hail, thou that art full of grace;" and shortly afterwards, "Thou hast found grace with God." Now she was said to be full of grace, and to have found grace with God, because she was to be the mother of her Lord, nay, of the Lord of all flesh. But, speaking of Christ Himself, the evangelist John, after saying, "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us," adds, "and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." When he says, "The Word was made flesh," this is "full of grace;" when he says, "the glory of the only-begotten of the Father," this is "full of truth." For the Truth Himself, who was the only-begotten of the Father, not by grace, but by nature, by grace took our humanity upon Him, and so united it with His own person that He Himself became also the Son of man.

3.4 Begotten of the Father

Begotten and conceived, then, without any indulgence of carnal lust, and therefore bringing with Him no original sin, and by the grace of God joined and united in a wonderful and unspeakable way in one person with the Word, the Only-begotten of the Father, a son by nature, not by grace, and therefore having no sin of His own; nevertheless, on account of the likeness of sinful flesh in which He came, He was called sin, that He might be sacrificed to wash away sin. For, under the Old Covenant, sacrifices for sin were called sins. And He, of whom all these sacrifices were types and shadows, was Himself truly made sin. Hence the apostle, after saying, "We pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God," forthwith adds: "for He hath made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." He does not say, as some incorrect copies read, "He who knew no sin did sin for us," as if Christ had Himself sinned for our sakes; but he says, "Him

who knew no sin," that is, Christ, God, to whom we are to be reconciled, "hath made to be sin for us," that is, hath made Him a sacrifice for our sins, by which we might be reconciled to God. He, then, being made sin, just as we are made righteousness (our righteousness being not our own, but God's, not in ourselves, but in Him); He being made sin, not His own, but ours, not in Himself, but in us, showed, by the likeness of sinful flesh in which He was crucified, that though sin was not in Him, yet that in a certain sense He died to sin, by dying in the flesh which was the likeness of sin; and that although He Himself had never lived the old life of sin, yet by His resurrection He typified our new life springing up out of the old death in sin.

Since this is the case, I repeat, we believe also in JESUS CHRIST, THE SON OF GOD THE ONLY-BEGOTTEN OF THE FATHER, that is to say, HIS ONLY SON, OUR LORD. This Word however, we ought not to apprehend merely in the sense in which we think of our own words, which are given forth by the voice anti the mouth, and strike the air and pass on, and subsist no longer than their sound continues. For that Word remains unchangeably: for of this very Word was it spoken when of Wisdom it was said, "Remaining in herself, she maketh all things new." Moreover, the reason of His being named the Word of the Father is that the Father is made known by Him. Accordingly, just as it is our intention, when we speak truth, that by means of our words our mind should be made known to him who hears us, and that whatever we carry in secrecy in our heart may be set forth by means of signs of this sort for the intelligent understanding of another individual; so this Wisdom that God the Father begot is most appropriately named His Word, inasmuch as the most hidden Father is made known to worthy minds by the same.

Now there is a very great difference between our mind and those words of ours, by which we endeavor to set forth the said mind. We indeed do not beget intelligible words, but we form them; and in forming them the body is the underlying material. Between mind and body, however, there is the greatest difference. But God, when He begot the Word, begot that which He is Himself. Neither out of nothing, nor of any material already made and founded did He then beget; but He begot of Himself that which He is Himself. For we too aim at this when we speak, (as we shall see) if we carefully consider the inclination of our will; not when we lie, but when we speak the truth. For to what else do we direct our efforts then, but to bring our own very mind, if it can be done at all, in upon the mind of the hearer, with the view of its being apprehended and thoroughly discerned by him; so that we may indeed abide in our very selves, and make no retreat from ourselves, and yet at the same time put forth a sign of such a nature as that by it a knowledge of us may be effected in another individual; that thus, so far as the faculty is granted us, another mind may be, as it were, put forth by the mind, whereby

it may disclose itself? This we do, making the attempt both by words, and by the simple sound of the voice, and by the countenance, and by the gestures of the body, by so many contrivances, in sooth, desiring to make patent that which is within; inasmuch as we are not able to put forth aught of this nature [in itself completely]: and thus it is that the mind of the speaker cannot become perfectly known; thus also it results that a place is open for falsehoods.

God the Father, on the other hand, who possessed both the will and the power to declare Himself with the utmost truth to minds designed to obtain knowledge of Him, with the purpose of thus declaring Himself begot this [Word] which He Himself is who did beget; which [Person] is likewise called His Power and Wisdom, inasmuch as it is by Him that He has wrought all things, and in order disposed them; of whom these words are for this reason spoken: "She (Wisdom) reacheth from one end to another mightily, and sweetly doth she order all things."

Augustine further taught that the Son of God was neither made by the 'Father nor less than the Father.' Wherefore THE ONLY-BEGOTTEN SON OF GOD was neither made by the Father; for, according to the word of an evangelist, "all things were made by Him:" nor begotten instantaneously; since God, who is eternally wise, has with Himself His eternal Wisdom: nor unequal with the Father, that is to say, in anything less than He; for an apostle also speaks in this wise, "Who, although He was constituted in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God." By this catholic faith, therefore, those are excluded, on the one hand, who affirm that the Son is the same [Person] as the Father; for [it is clear that] this Word could not possibly be *with* God, were it not with God *the Father*, and [it is just as evident that] He who is *alone* is *equal* to no one; And, on the other hand, those are equally excluded who affirm that the Son is a creature, although not such an one as the rest of the creatures are. For however great they declare the creature to be, if it is a creature, it has been fashioned and made. For the terms *fashion* and *create* mean one and the same thing; although in the usage of the Latin tongue, the phrase *create* is employed at times instead of what would be the strictly accurate word *beget*. But the Greek language makes a distinction. For we call that *creatura* (creature) which they call *ktisma* or *ktisis*; and when we desire to speak without ambiguity, we use not the word *creare* (create), but the word *condere* (fashion, found).

Consequently, if the Son is a creature, however great that may be, He has been made. But we believe in Him by whom *all* things (*omnia*) were made, not in Him by whom the *rest* of things (*cetera*) were made. For here again we cannot take this term *all things* in any other sense than as meaning whatsoever things have been made. But as "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us," the same Wisdom which was begotten

of God condescended also to be created among men. There is a reference to this in the word, "The Lord created me in the beginning of His ways." For the beginning of His ways is the Head of the Church, which is Christ endued with human nature (*homine indutus*), by whom it was purposed that there should be given to us a pattern of living, that is, a sure way by which we might reach God. For by no other path was it possible for us to return but by humility, who fell by pride, according as it was said to our first creation, "Taste, and ye shall be as gods." Of this humility, therefore, that is to say, of the way by which it was needful for us to return, our Restorer Himself has deemed it meet to exhibit an example in His own person, "who thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant;" in order that He might be created Man in the beginning of His ways, the Word by whom all things were made. Wherefore, in so far as He is the Only-begotten, He has no brethren; but in so far as He is the First begotten, He has deemed it worthy of Him to give the name of brethren to all those who, subsequently to and by means of His pre-eminence, are born again into the grace of God through the adoption of sons, according to the truth commended to us by apostolic teaching." Thus, then, the Son according to nature (*naturalis filius*) was born of the very substance of the Father, the only one so born, subsisting as that which the Father is, God of God, Light of Light. We, on the other hand, are not the light by nature, but are enlightened by that Light, so that we may be able to shine in wisdom.

For, as one says, "that was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." Therefore we add to the faith of things eternal, likewise the temporal dispensation of our Lord, which He deemed it worthy of Him to bear for us and to minister on behalf of our salvation. For in so far as He is the only-begotten Son of God, it cannot be said of Him that *He was* and that *He shall be*, but only that *He is*; because, on the one hand, that which *was*, *now is* not; and, on the other, that which *shall be*, *as yet is* not. He, then, is unchangeable, independent of the condition of times and variation. And it is my opinion that this is the very consideration to which was due the circumstance that He introduced to the apprehension of His servant Moses the kind of name [which He then adopted]. For when he asked of Him by whom he should say that he was sent, in the event of the people to whom he was being sent despising him, he received his answer when He spake in this wise: "I AM THAT I AM." Thereafter, too, He added this: "Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, HE THAT IS (*Qui est*) has sent me unto you."

From this, I trust, it is now made patent to spiritual minds that there cannot possibly be any other being contrary to God that exist. For if He

is, and this is a word which can be spoken with propriety only about God (for that which truly is remains unchangeably; inasmuch as that which is changed has been something which now it is not, and shall be something which as yet it is not), - it follows that God has nothing contrary to Himself. For if the question were put to us, What is contrary to white? We would reply, black; if the question were, what is contrary to hot? We would reply, cold; if the question were, what is contrary to quick? We would reply, slow; and all similar interrogations we would answer in like manner. When, however, it is asked, what is contrary to *that which is?* The right reply to give is, *that which is not.*

But whereas, in a temporal dispensation, as I have said, with a view to our salvation and restoration, and with the goodness of God acting therein, our changeable nature has been assumed by that unchangeable Wisdom of God, we add the faith in temporal things which have been done with salutary effect on our behalf, believing in that Son of God WHO WAS BORN THROUGH THE HOLY GHOST BY THE VIRGIN MARY. For by the gift of God, that is, by the Holy Spirit, there was granted to us so great humility on the part of so great a God, that He deemed it worthy of Him to assume the entire nature of man (*totum hominem*) in the womb of the Virgin, inhabiting the material body so that it sustained no detriment (*integrum*), and leaving it without detriment. This temporal dispensation is in many ways craftily assailed by the heretics. But if any one shall have grasped the catholic faith, so as to believe that the entire nature of man was assumed by the Word of God, that is to say, body, soul, and spirit, he has sufficient defense against those parties.

For surely, since that assumption was effected on behalf of our salvation, one must be on his guard lest, as he believes that there is something belonging to our nature which sustains no relation to that assumption, that something may fail also to sustain any relation to the salvation. And seeing that, with the exception of the form of the members, which has been imparted to the varieties of living objects with differences adapted to their different kinds, man is in nothing separated from the cattle but in [the possession of] a rational spirit (*rationali spiritu*), which is also named mind (*mens*), how is that faith sound, according to which the belief is maintained, that the Wisdom of God assumed that part of us which we hold in common with the cattle, while He did not assume that which is brightly illumined by the light of wisdom, and which is man's peculiar gift?

Moreover, those parties' also are to be abhorred who deny that our Lord Jesus Christ had in Mary a mother upon earth; while that dispensation has honored both sexes, at once the male and the female, and has made it plain that not only that sex which He assumed pertains to God's care,

but also that sex by which He did assume this other, in that He bore [the nature of] the man (*virum gerendo*), [and] in that He was born of the woman. Neither is there anything to compel us to a denial of the mother of the Lord, in the circumstance that this word was spoken by Him: "Woman, what have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come." But He rather admonishes us to understand that, in respect of His being God, there was no mother for Him, the part of whose personal majesty (*cujus majestatis personam*) He was preparing to show forth in the turning of water into wine. But as regards His being crucified, He was crucified in respect of his being man; and that was the *hour* which had not come as yet, at the time when this word was spoken, "What have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come;" that is, the hour at which I shall recognize thee. For at that period, when He was crucified as man, He recognised His human mother (*hominem matrem*), and committed her most humanely (*humanissime*) to the care of the best beloved disciple. Nor, again, should we be moved by the fact that, when the presence of His mother and His brethren was announced to Him, He replied, "Who is my mother, or who my brethren?", etc. But rather let it teach us, that when parents hinder our ministry wherein we minister the word of God to our brethren, they ought not to be recognized by us. For if, on the ground of His having said, "who is my mother?" everyone should conclude that He had no mother on earth, then each should as matter of course be also compelled to deny that the apostles had fathers on earth; since He gave them an injunction in these terms: "Call no man your father upon the earth; for one is your Father, which is in heaven."

Neither should the thought of the woman's womb impair this faith in us, to the effect that there should appear to be any necessity for rejecting such a generation of our Lord for the mere reason that worthless men consider it unworthy (*sordidi sordidam putant*). For most true are these sayings of an apostle, both that "the foolishness of God is wiser than men," and that "to the pure all things are pure." Those, therefore, who entertain this opinion ought to ponder the fact that the rays of this sun, which indeed they do not praise as a creature of God, but adore as God, are diffused all the world over, through the noisome nesses of sewers and every kind of horrible thing, and that they operate in these according to their nature, and yet never become debased by any defilement thence contracted, albeit that the visible light is by nature in closer conjunction with visible pollutions. How much less, therefore, could the Word of God, who is neither corporeal nor visible, sustain defilement from the female body, wherein He assumed human flesh together with soul and spirit, through the incoming of which the majesty of the Word dwells in a less immediate conjunction with the frailty of a human body! Hence it is manifest that the Word of God could in no way have been defiled by a human body, by which even the human soul is not defiled. For not

when it rules the body and quickens it, but only when it lusts after the mortal good things thereof, is the soul defiled by the body. But if these persons were to desire to avoid the defilements of the soul, they would dread rather these falsehoods and profanities.

4.0 CONCLUSION

Augustine lays the solid foundation for further Christological development which later theologians would embark on. His emphasis on the humanity of Christ is not intended to diminish his interest in the divinity of Christ. His point is simply to convey the good news that God has shared in our humanity taking upon Himself our infirmities. This gives us hope of redemption by God showing us grace since he Himself was tempted like us, so he could understand with us to show us mercy. Augustine developed this from his exegesis of Scripture but also it served to grant him comfort for his life which he lived before becoming a believer.

5.0 SUMMARY

Augustine's Christology is drawn from his Trinitarian theology. Though he emphasizes the humanity of Christ, he does not give room for subordination of the Son to the Father in terms of ontic derivation. In his humanity the Son is subject to the Father but in his essential being as God he is equal to the Father. The three persons are equal in substance and no one is inferior to the other. But when Christ became human he was subject to the limitations of humanity which includes dependence on the Father in his redemptive work. Augustine's Christology shines forth from his exegesis of Scripture much more than philosophical and speculative thinking.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. What is the relationship between Augustine's Christology and his Trinitarian theology?
2. What is the importance of Christ's humanity in Augustine's understanding?
3. Is there the concept of subordination of the Son to the Father in Augustine's Christology?

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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UNIT 3 ANSELM'S CHRISTOLOGY

CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Anselm's Christology is understood from his work, *Cur Deus Homo*? This is to explain "Why God Became Man." In this work, Anselm gives a classic argument on the nature of incarnation and its significance in redemption. He argues on the necessity of the incarnation as resulting from the fall of mankind, and God's chosen means which became the necessary way that God deemed fit to save mankind.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

derive the importance of the incarnation in the medieval development
explain the nature of Anselm's argument and its important in Christological development
deduce critical thinking on Christology as Anselm intends to impact his readers.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

If anyone is seeking to be intellectually activated, then he might need to read Anselm's *Cur Deus Homo*. In this profound work of philosophical theology, I think Anselm's methodology attempted to ignite his reader, and then slowly reconstruct their mind with logic, reason, and ultimate faith.

3.1 The Necessity of the Incarnation

Of the many Christological topics *Cur Deus Homo* conveys, perhaps nothing is weightier than its emphasis on the *necessity* of Christ to redeem humanity. Again it is important to keep in mind that when Anselm uses the word *necessity* or *necessarily*, he is speaking in terms of logical language. The word, necessity, for Anselm, signifies a condition in which nothing else could be the case. For example, a necessary condition for fire is oxygen, whereas a sufficient condition could be a match. (Think about the difference between the two for a second). Anselm's own words demonstrate his conviction of the logical necessity of Christ when he says in the first book, "…it proves, by unavoidable logical steps, that, supposing Christ were left out of the case, as if there had never existed anything to do with him, it is impossible that, without him, any member of the human race could be saved." This postulation by Anselm is crucial for his argument that Christ's divinity regarding the redemption of mankind is necessary.

This brings us to the main point of Anselm's Christology in *Cur Deus Homo* 1.5. Because this chapter consists of only two scopes, made up of a question from *Boso* and an answer from Anselm, it would be advantageous to state them here:

5. "*That the redemption of mankind could not have been brought about by any other than a divine person*:"

Boso

If it were said that this liberation had been brought about by a non-divine person-either by an angel or by a human being, the human mind would accept this far more readily. For God could have created some man (somebody) without sin, not out of raw material that was sinful and not as the issue of another man, but in the same way in which he had created Adam. The work of liberation could, so it seems, have been accomplished through the agency of this man.

Anselm

Do you not understand that, supposing any other person was to rescue man from eternal death, man would rightly be judged by his bond-slave? If he were this, he would in no way have been restored to that dignity which he would have had in the future, if he had not sinned. For man, who had the prospect of being the bondsman of no one except God…would be the bond-slave of someone who was not God.

According to Anselm, the argument here is based on axiomatic logic.

Thus the distinction between necessity and contingency in the argument is apparent. A clear example of this contingency is found in *Boso*'s postulation that God's atonement *could* have been achieved by a non-divine person, specifically, an angel or a newly created human. Anselm's response to this speculation is to demonstrate that it is not logically possible for this to be the case. R.W. Southern states Anselm's logic very succinctly in the following categorical syllogisms:

Only Man *ought* to make the offering for sin (*but he cannot*); Only God *can* make the offering for sin (*but He ought not*);
Therefore only a God-Man both *can* and *ought* to make the offering for sin.

Or

Man has an obligation but cannot pay, God has no obligation but can pay, Therefore a God-Man is conceivable having both obligation and power to pay.

3.2 Christological Divinity & Redemption

Anselm's argument for the necessity of Christ's divinity in the argument above is multifaceted. The first axiom on which Anselm's argument rests is his conception of the redemption of mankind. His proposal of the atonement is not a "ransom theory" in which God liberates humanity from the clutches of the devil. Anselm rejects the popular idea of his day, namely, that the devil has rights over humanity, because he says it is not "necessary to pay a ransom to a usurper and a thief;" and thus the devil is out of the picture of the atonement. The question, then, is what will Anselm replace the former *ransom* theory of atonement with? The answer is found between the lines of *Cur Deus Home?* 1.5.

Anselm understands that the redemption of mankind lies within the requirement of Christ being necessarily divine. Since Christ voluntarily died for mankind, it is mankind who is indebted to him. If Christ is not divine, then mankind would be the bond-slave who could pay homage to someone else other than God. This, therefore, would be in direct confrontation to Anselm's definition of sin: "to sin is nothing other than not to give God what is owed to him." Thus, if Christ, the redeemer of humankind is not divine, then it would indeed be sinful to attribute redemption to him because God himself would not be glorified for this redemption. The logic of Anselm in this respect is clear. Christ must necessarily be divine.

In addition to humanity paying adoration to God alone, Anselm inserts another enthymeme into the text which is only implicitly alluded to, but developed later in *Cur Deus Homo*. The hidden argument is simple: only

God can save humanity. It is not a question, as Boso asks whether a person could effect the restoration of mankind, but the impossibility of such a being if that being is not divine. Anselm's argument is that "no one is capable of bringing about recompense except someone who is God and man." On the part of humanity, there has to be payment greater than anything that exists apart from God, and according to Anselm, there is nothing superior to all that exists which is not God-except God." Thus, the implied conclusion is that it is absolutely necessary that mankind pay recompense (e.g., *Cur Deus Homo*? 1.5), otherwise humanity is not accountable. But within this argument it is also a requirement that only divinity is capable of effecting salvation due to the exclusive servitude to God. Anselm states that "no one can make recompense unless he is truly God." This brings us back to the original necessary conclusion that Anselm speaks about in book 1.5. Humankind can only be redeemed through a divine person.

The logical extension of Anselm's *necessary* conclusions as flushed out above will inevitably lead to a more polished view of the atonement which is often referred to as the "satisfaction doctrine." The necessary conclusions will also lead Anselm to a full Chalcedonian treatment of the incarnation of Christ by the end of *Cur Deus Homo*. G. R.

Contrary to some critics who have demanded that he conforms to developments in theology and philosophy over the past millennia, Anselm's argumentation and thought must not be misrepresented nor underestimated. In the commendation of *Cur Deus Homo* to Pope Urban II, Anselm explains his reasons for writing the work. He is interested in communicating the truth, reasonableness, and logic of the Christian faith to the faithful of his era. In this mindset Anselm seems neither cavalier nor naïve about the complexities of truth. He, therefore, does not try to "prove" the Christian faith to unbelievers, but attempts to show why it is reasonable for believers. Thus, his apologetic is codified in his quotation of Isaiah 7:9, "Unless you have believed, you will not understand."

In the light of the argument put forth in *Cur Deus Homo* 1.5, Anselm's Christology consists of demonstrating that only Christ could be divine because humanity's redemption requires a divine person. Not only is Christ's divinity regarding the redemption of humankind is certain, but for Anselm it is necessarily certain to be the case.

3.3 Satisfaction or Commercial Theory in Anselm

The Satisfaction (or Commercial) theory of the atonement was formulated by Anselm of Canterbury in his book, *Cur Deus Homo* ('Why the God Man'). He has introduced the idea of *satisfaction* as the chief demand of the nature of God, of *punishment* as a possible

alternative of satisfaction and equally fulfilling the requirements of justice thus opening the way to the assertion of punishment as the true satisfaction of the law. In his view, God's offended honor and dignity could only be satisfied by the sacrifice of the God-man, Jesus Christ. Anselm undertook to explain the rational necessity of the Christian mystery of the atonement. His philosophy rests on three positions. First, that satisfaction is necessary on account of God's honour and justice; second, that such satisfaction can be given only by the peculiar personality of the God-man Jesus; and, third, that such satisfaction is really given by this God-man's voluntary death.

According to this view, sin incurs a debt to Divine justice, a debt that must be paid somehow. Thus, no sin, according to Anselm, can be forgiven without satisfaction. However, the incurred debt is something far greater than a human being is capable of paying. All the service that a person can offer to God is already obligated on other debts to God. By Anselm's time the suggestion has been made that some innocent person, or angel, might possibly pay the debt incurred by sinners. That, however, we would put the sinner under obligation to that deliverer and the sinner would become indebted to a "mere creature."

The only way in which the satisfaction could be made-that humans could be set free from their sins-was by the coming of a Redeemer who is both God and man. He himself would have to be sinless, thus having no debt that he owed. His death is something greater than all the sins of all humanity. His death makes a superabundant *satisfaction* to the Divine Justice. Anselm's theory persisted for eight centuries.

4.0 CONCLUSION

Anselm's formulation differs distinctly from Reformation views. For Anselm, Christ *obeyed* where we should have *obeyed*; for John Calvin, he was *punished* where we should have been *punished*. While Anselm's interpretation permitted man to offer Christ to God, the Protestant faith insists that it is God, not man, who reconciles fallen humanity by sacrificing His son.

Critics of Anselm assert that he put the whole conflict on merely a legal footing, giving it no ethical bearing, and neglects altogether the consciousness of the individual to be redeemed. In this respect, it contrasts with the later theory of Peter Abelard. By way of criticism, theologian George Foley writes that the traditional statement of Anselm's doctrine has undoubtedly inspired the development of much devout and consecrated life. However, its religious power has come from the fact that it is an *emotional* witness to the fundamental reality of incarnate love and sacrifice.

Anselm's doctrine likely influenced the fathers in the Church to think more of being dwelling of God and humanity than of the sufferings and death of Jesus Christ on behalf of humanity. The satisfaction theory of the Reformation, however, owed its existence to Anselm. It was made the test of orthodoxy and continued to be so until near the end of the 19th century. He also criticizes the fact that those tests of orthodoxy required one to subscribe to a rationalistic and metaphysical formula, in the place of the Scriptural doctrine from which it had been derived.

5.0 SUMMARY

Anselm does not advance the belief which is now referred to as the Immaculate Conception, though his thinking laid the groundwork for the doctrine's development in the West. In *De virginali conceptu et de peccato originali*, he gave two principles which became fundamental for thinking about the immaculate conception. The first is that it was proper that Mary should be so pure that no purer being could be imagined, aside from God.

The second innovation in Anselm's thinking which opened the way for the Immaculate Conception was his understanding of original sin. Anselm affirmed that original sin is simply human nature without original justice, and that it is transmitted because parents cannot give original justice if they do not have it themselves; original sin is the transmission of fallen human nature. In contrast, Anselm's contemporaries held that the transmission of original sin add to the lustful nature of the act of sexual intercourse. Anselm was the first thinker to separate original sin from the lust of intercourse. This enabled later thinkers to see that God might keep Mary free from original sin, even though she was conceived through normal procreation.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Briefly explain what you understand from Anselm's Christology.
2. What is the nature of the necessity that Anselm proposes for the incarnation?
3. What are some of the strengths and weaknesses in Anselm's Christology?

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UNIT 4 AQUINAS' CHRISTOLOGY

CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Aquinas was a great intellectual and theologian of the medieval ages. He profoundly influences the tradition of Roman Catholicism. His philosophy dominated his theological enterprise. He is important in theological development because of his astute arguments and he also tried to build on Augustine's theology.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

describe the importance of Aquinas in Christological development
distinguish between the continuity and discontinuity of Aquinas' Christology and
later Christological developments.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

The analysis of Aquinas' Christology here is drawn largely from the summary of *Fr. John A. Hardon; S.J.* Aquinas' Christology is understood also in terms of God's wisdom. Christ is the total sum of God's wisdom. God knows all things and his knowledge is compared to a treasure: wisdom is an infinite treasure to men. We can only look to Christ to attain that wisdom. This derives from his understanding of Paul: "I judged not myself to know anything but Christ Jesus." The center of Aquinas' Christology is the humanity of Christ in its possession of grace and wisdom, subject to weakness and suffering, and thereby atoning for the sins of fallen mankind.

3.1 The Necessity of the Incarnation

The question that he first addresses is the question of the necessity of the incarnation. The first kind of necessity does not enter into the incarnation; for God Almighty's power could have restored human nature in many other ways. The hope of humanity has been elevated by God's deep love for us, which is expressed in the Son of God taking on our humanity by his birth, suffering and death. Man can be seen but should not be followed. God should be followed but cannot be seen, and therefore God became man that he might both be seen and followed. Finally, with regard to our full sharing in the divinity, which is our true end and bliss bestowed on us through Christ's manhood, Augustine says that he became man that man might become God.

The nature of the hypostatic union of the two natures is also a great mystery. When a human nature can be so joined to God that there is but one person there, let no proud spirits vaunt themselves above men because they are unearthly and without flesh. God has now shown us the high place human nature holds in creation, for he entered into it by genuinely becoming man. In order to do away with our presumption, the grace of God is commended in Jesus Christ, through no preceding merits of ours. Man's pride, his greatest hindrance to clinging to God, is rebuked and cured by humility. A mere man cannot stand in for the whole of human race, how right, then, that our Saviour did just that proving that he is both God and man.

Leaning on Augustine's authority, Thomas holds that God became man only because man had become estranged from God. Therefore, if man had not sinned, the Son of Man would not have come. Some hold that even if man had not fallen, the Son of God would have become incarnate. There the motive for the incarnation is always put down to man's sin. God became man to remit every kind of deviation from them; divine law, inherited and personal. "Christ came to take away sin...all sin." To that extent, it may be said that Christ came principally to take away original sin. The cause of every good that comes to us is God and his love. It is His love which causes every perfection of nature and of grace: "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee."

The hypostatic union is not by division as Nestorius assumed. Nestorius' understanding disagrees with the Scriptures, which speak differently of Christ and of men in whom the word of God dwells by grace; of such prophets it is said that the word of God comes, but of Christ that "the Word was made flesh," that is, a man: the meaning is that the word of God transforms into a man. The difficulty about this interpretation is that Christ would not have been a true man, for human nature

isomposed of this union of body and soul. The first was that the Word took the place of soul, and so came to the flesh: one nature was formed from the Word and the flesh, as with us one nature is formed from soul and body.

This conclusion, which cannot be justified, is refuted by Augustine: it would mean that the Word assumed an animal nature, but not a human nature. A properly constituted nature cannot be incremented by another nature, and if another was added then the resulting nature would not be the same as before. The divine nature is quite complete, and cannot possibly be added to; for that matter, human nature is complete enough to disallow the entrance of another nature. In any case, the result would be a compound, neither divine nor human, and Christ would be neither man nor God, which is inadmissible.

As God is his existence and goodness, so is he essentially his unity. Why, for example, is the human nature not communicable to any other individual of the human family? The humanity of Christ had all that was required for the perfection of a human nature-body and soul, faculties and emotions completely. Christ is therefore a divine Person because His act of existence, which identifies personality, is not human but divine.

3.2 Grace and Wisdom in Christ

Also, on Christ’s possession of grace and wisdom in his humanity, Aquinas offers a great insight. It is difficult to describe the relationship of Christ's human nature to the divine because we have nothing like it in our experience. He argues for a three-fold Grace in Christ. Aquinas first considers Christ's fullness of grace. All the gifts freely given to men by God surpasses the claims of nature and are not acquired by merit-though supernatural rewards are not without the name and style of grace, for grace is the principle of merit, "the gift of God is eternal life," and they are given more abundantly than we deserve.

Union with God can be by affection or by substance. Jesus Christ alone has this unity; he is both God and man. This is the singular grace of being joined to God as one single person; a gift freely given, exceeding natural power, rewarding no merits, and making Christ most dear to God: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

The first is a habitual state of soul infused by God; the soul cleaves to God by an act of love, a perfect act coming from a habit. Nothing nearer to God than a human nature hypostatically united to Him could exist or be thought of. As a result Christ's soul is more full of grace than any other soul. The man Christ is the only begotten of the Father. From

Christ's fullness grace is outpoured on us. The Son of God was made man that men might be made God's and become the children of God: "When the fullness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."

Because of this overflow of grace and truth Christ is called the Head of the Church. To summarize with St. Thomas theological tradition ascribes to Christ a threefold grace. First, the grace of hypostatic union whereby a human nature is united in person to the Son of God. Second sanctifying grace the fullness of which distinguishes Christ above all others. He also taught a two-fold Wisdom in Christ. Consequently we profess two wisdoms in Christ, the uncreated wisdom of God and the created wisdom of man. As the Word of God, he is the conceived and begotten wisdom of the Father: Christ and the power of God, and the wisdom of God. From the beginning of his life he saw God; unlike the blessed, he did not arrive at the vision of God.

No one was so near to God. Christ's human soul is set above all other created intelligent substances. With perfect insight he beheld all God's works, past, present, and future. God's infinite being is the infinite truth, and no created mind, even though knowing the infinite, can know it infinitely, or by seeing God can comprehend him. Christ's soul is created, as all about his human nature was created, otherwise no other nature would exist in Christ apart from the divine nature which alone is uncreated. Appropriately then he sees in God everything that God does, and in this sense can be called omniscient.

The first is the empirical knowledge which other men, also enjoy, for it is proper for human nature that truth should be discovered through the senses. The second is divinely infused, and informs the mind about all truths which human knowledge searches or can reach, for it is right that the human nature assumed by the Word of God, which restores human nature, should itself lack no human perfection.

To sum up: Christ's soul was raised to the highest level of knowledge possible to any created mind, first, as regards seeing God's essence and all things in God, secondly, by knowing the mysteries of grace, and thirdly, all objects of human knowledge.

On His own testimony, Christ revealed both sides of His existence, the humble and human together with the sublime and divine. Why did the Son of God assume the infirmities of human nature when absolutely speaking He could have redeemed us without any suffering? More profoundly, however, Christ underwent the limitations of human nature as a means of meriting our salvation. Sin has two phases, the turning

totransient advantage, and the consequent turning away from God. That Christ should assume those consequences of sin which keep men away from God cannot be entertained.

Our bodily disabilities are punishments for sin. Christ put them on, and accordingly is said to have worn the likeness of sin: "God sent His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned in the flesh." Here St. Paul calls suffering sin. In the final analysis, only human beings can suffer. If the causes of pain in Christ were manifold, the rational experience of pain and its deliberate acceptance came only from one source, mankind will He possessed as a true Son of Man. It is worth reviewing with Aquinas the basis of Catholic teaching that Christ had two wills, a divine and *human*, and the various aberrations that called into question Christ's finite volition and power of created liberty.

For it is certain that the Son of God assumed a perfect human nature. Now the will is like the mind, a natural power which is part of the perfection of human nature; hence we must say that the Son of God assumed a human will together with human nature. By the assumption of a human nature the Son of God suffered no diminution of his divine nature, to which a will also is attributed. Therefore, we are bound to profess two wills in Christ, one human, the other divine.

3.3 Divine Human Activity

The term "God-human" activity (*energia Theandrike*) dates back to Dionysius the Areopagite (about 500 A.D.). As we approach Christ the God-man, His actions are also "God-manly," hence theandric (*Theos* = God, *andros* = man). Some things which Christ did and does are done by His divinity using the human nature only as instrument, and these are *theandric* in the strict sense. Another name would be "God-through-man" produced activities. They cover all the operations that God performed (performs) in the person of Christ in such a way that the divine nature produced the effect *through* the human nature as subordinate instrument agent. Theologians prefer to call these "mixed" actions, to distinguish them from those which only God or only man can perform.

In Christ, however, their operating source (*principium quod*) is the second person while their operating instrument (*principium quo* is the human nature, yet differently than in the preceding where the stress is on the God-man. Here the accent is on the Man-God.

We have already noted in Christ's human nature a twofold power of will, the sensitive appetite or derivative will, and the rational appetite, which acts both non-deliberately and deliberately. It was God's will that Christ

should undergo pain, suffering, and death, not for themselves, but for the sake of human salvation. If the Incarnation was determined by God because of man's sin, so the sufferings and death of Christ were chosen because they are so effective in redeeming us from sin. Absolutely speaking, God might have saved man without the Passion, but then we should have been deprived of innumerable benefits.

Christ's Passion is the cause of our salvation in various ways- efficient cause when to His Godhead (as God, He is the creator of divine grace); the meritorious cause when related to His human will (He freely chose to suffer death to His earthly body); the satisfying cause is that it liberates us from the debt of punishment (Christ viciously suffered that we might be relieved of pain that was due to our sins); the redemptive cause in that it frees us from the bondage of sin (guilt is remitted and the estrangement caused by sin is removed); and the sacrificial cause in that it reconciles us with God (from enemies of God, we become once more His friends).

Christ's role in our redemption was that of mediator between God and His people. To achieve our union with God is Christ's work: "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself." He alone is the perfect mediator between God and men, since the human race was brought into agreement with God through His death: "There is one mediator between God and men, the man Jesus Christ," says St. Paul, and then adds, "who gave Himself as a ransom for all."

Sin is an insult to God, and therefore infinite because of an offense to the Infinite. In the circumstances, though, Christ's satisfaction was more than adequate. Whereas the offense against God was perpetrated by a finite being, it was only morally infinite (directed against God). Satisfaction on Christ's part, however, was objectively and morally infinite; it was done by a Divine Person suffering in the humanity He assumed.

By suffering from charity, Christ offered to God more than what was demanded as recompensation for the sin of the entire human race. Secondly, from the preciousness of the life he laid down, the life of a man who was God. Christ's Passion was more than sufficient, it was superabundant.

4.0 CONCLUSION

The Christological understanding of Aquinas grew out of his development from Augustine. Aquinas employed a more philosophical argumentation in explicating the divinity and humanity of Christ. Aquinas represents a solid Christian voice on virtually all theological

disciplines in the medieval church history.

5.0 SUMMARY

Basically, Aquinas' Christology posits that though there are things that pertain distinctly to the two natures of Christ, there is one hypostasis in which all things pertaining to Christ are upheld. The nature of this hypostatic union of the two natures in the person of Christ makes it that by being essentially divine his redemptive work is anchored on that divine personality. By this fact Christ could be called a creature only relatively as a man but not properly because his form as divine is uncreated.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. What is Aquinas' understanding of the grace of God working in the humanity of Christ?
2. Explain whether Aquinas' understanding of the two natures of Christ agrees with the early church formulation.
3. What is the basic function of the incarnation for Aquinas?

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MODULE 2 REFORMATION AND POST REFORMATION CHRISTOLOGY

Unit 1 Luther's Christology
Unit 2 Calvin's Christology
Unit 3 Christology of the High Orthodoxy (17th Century) Unit 4 Christology as a Division of Systematic Theology

UNIT 1 LUTHER'S CHRISTOLOGY

CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The main Christological thrust in the Reformation period stood on the shoulders of Martin Luther and John Calvin. Both elder churchmen developed their Christological understanding in relation to what has been earlier established especially by the Chalcedonian definition. They however, had major differences especially with their attempt to understand the nature of the relationship between the attributes of the divine and the human in Christ. While Luther believed in the communication of attributes between the two natures, Calvin held to their communion rather than the communication. This further had consequences on the nature of the presence of Christ in the Eucharist. In this section we shall be dealing with Luther's Christology.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

explain the tread of continuity in the development of Christology in the Christian Church up to the Reformation time appreciate the vast

sources of Christology from the early church to the reformation so that they can also make meaning contribution to it
grasp an understanding of Luther's Christology and how it differs from one of the major Christian traditions, namely the Reformed.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Divergence between the Luther and Reformed Teaching

Reformation Christology as championed by Luther permitted the orthodox Christological statements of the church councils. Luther taught that when the Word became incarnate he did not suspend nor alter his normal function of upholding the universe. Lutheran Christology insists that the two natures in Christ are distinct though never separate. Yet in the unity of person in Christ, one nature is so closely involved in the activities and events which concern the other that the human nature can be spoken of partaking in divine attributes. Salvation is accomplished not only by the divine nature working through the human but is indeed the accomplishment of the human Jesus, who worked out a perfect obedience and sanctification for all men in his own person (the humanity being not only the instrument but the "material cause" of salvation).

Here, there is a divergence between the Lutheran and reformed teaching. The Lutherans laid the stress upon a union of two natures in a communion in which the human nature is assumed into the divine nature. The Reformed theologians refused to think of an assumption of the human nature into the divine, but rather of an assumption of the human nature into the divine person of the Son, in whom there was a direct union between the two natures. Thus, while keeping to the patristic conception of the *communicatio idiomatum*, they developed the concept of the *communicatio operationum* (i.e., that the properties of the two natures coincide in the one person) in order to speak of an active communion between the natures without teaching a doctrine of mutual interpenetration.

3.2 Communication Operationum

The importance of the *communicatio operationum* (which also came to be taken up by Lutherans) is that it corrects the rather static way of speaking of the hypostatic union in patristic theology, by seeing the person and the work of Christ in inseparable unity, and so asserts a dynamic communion between the divine and human natures of Christ in terms of his atoning and reconciling work. It stresses the union of two natures for his mediatorial operation in such a way that this work proceeds from one person of the God - man by the distinctive effectiveness of both natures. In this light, the hypostatic union is seen

as the ontological side of the dynamic action of reconciliation, and so incarnation and atonement are essentially complementary. We shall follow some details of Lutheran Christology.

The orthodox Lutheran theology of Jesus Christ was developed using the methodology of Luther's scholasticism. On the general basis of the Chalcedonian Christology, and following the indications of the Scriptures as the only rule of faith, Protestant, especially the Lutheran scholastics, at the close of the sixteenth and during the seventeenth century, built some additional features, and developed new aspects of Christ's person. The propelling cause was the Lutheran doctrine of the real presence or omnipresence of Christ's body in the Lord's supper, and the controversies growing out of it with the Zwinglians and Calvinists, and among the Lutherans themselves. These new features relate to the communion of the two natures, and to the states and the offices of Christ. The first was the production of the Lutheran Church that was never adopted but partly rejected by the reformed; the second and third were the joint doctrines of both, but with a very material difference in the understanding of the second.

3.3 **The Communicatio Idiomatum**

At the Reformation, Luther's Christology was based on Christ as true God and true man in inseparable unity. He spoke of the "wondrous exchange" by which, through the union of Christ with human nature, his righteousness becomes ours, and our sins become his.

He refused to tolerate any thinking that might lead to speculation about God - man divorced either from the historical person of Jesus himself or from the work he came to do and the office he came to fulfill in redeeming us. But Luther taught that the doctrine of the "communication of attributes" (*communicatio idiomatum*) meant that there was a mutual transference of qualities or attributes between the divine and human natures in Christ, and developed this to mean a mutual interpenetration of divine and human qualities or properties, verging on the very commingling of natures which Chalcedonian Christology had avoided.

In Lutheran orthodoxy, this led later to a controversy about the manhood of the Son of God shared in and exercised such attributes of divine majesty, how far it was capable of doing so, and how far Jesus used or renounced these attributes during his human life. The major problem with Lutheran Christology is that it seemed to ignore the difficulties that are inherent in making human attributes share in the divine and vice versa. Could the human limitations be shared by the divine nature? If so, would this not have serious implications for God and consequently even on the omnipresent character of God which Lutheran Christology seeks

to affirm?

The *Communicatio Idiomatum* means the communication of attributes or properties (Gk. *idiomata*, Lat. *proprietates*) of one nature to the other, or to the whole person. It is derived from the *unio personalis* and the *communio naturarum.* The Lutheran theologians distinguish three kinds or *genera*:

(1) *genus idiomaticum* (or *idiopoietikon*), whereby the properties of one nature are transferred and applied to the whole person, for which are quoted in such passages as Rom. :3 ; I Pet. 3:18; 4:1.

(2) The *genus apotelesmaticum (koinopoietikon)*, whereby the redemptory functions and actions which belong to the whole person (the *apotelesmata*) are predicated only of one or the other nature (1Tim. 2. 5-6; Heb. 1: 23).

(3) The *genus auchematicum*, or *majestaticum*, whereby the human nature is clothed with and magnified by the attributes of the divine nature (John 3:13; 5:27; Matt. 28:18, 20; Rom. 9:5 ; Phil. 2:10). Under this head the Lutheran Church claims a certain ubiquity or omnipresence for the body of Christ, on the ground of the personal union of the two natures; but as to the extent of this omnipresence, there were two distinct schools which are both represented in the formula of Concord (1577). Brenz and the Swabian Lutherans maintained an absolute ubiquity of Christ's humanity from his very infancy, thus making the incarnation not only an assumption of the human nature, but also making a deity out of it; although the divine attributes were admitted to have been concealed during the state of humiliation. Martin Chemnitz and the Saxon divines called this view a monstrosity, and taught only a relative ubiquity, depending on Christ's will (hence called *volipraesentia*, or *multivolipraesentia*), who may be present with his whole person wherever he pleases to be or has promised to be.

(4) Then there is the *genus kenoticum* (from kenosis), or *tapeinoticum* (from tapeinosis), Phil. 2:7, 8; i.e., a communication of the properties of the human nature to the divine nature. But this is decidedly rejected by the old Lutherans as inconsistent with the unchangeableness of the divine nature, and as a "horrible and blasphemous" doctrine (Formula of Concord, p. 612).

3.4 Theology of The Cross

Also central to Lutheran Christology is the emphasis of the theology of the Cross. Luther had reached a new understanding of the pivotal Christian notion of salvation, or reconciliation with God. Over the centuries, the church had conceived the means of salvation in a variety

of ways, but common to all of them was the idea that salvation is jointly affected by humans and by God also by humans through marshalling their will to do good works and thereby to please God, and by God through his offer of forgiving grace.

Luther broke dramatically with this tradition by asserting that humans can contribute nothing to their salvation: salvation is fully and completely, a divine work. His theology of the Cross centers on the person and work of Christ. It is the finished work of Christ that establishes the basis for our justification. But central in this theology of the Cross is the doctrine of justification. Christ has acquired righteousness for us which we could not attain by our best of works. God imputes to us the righteousness of Christ by which we are counted righteous before God.

4.0 CONCLUSION

Lutheran Christology is unique in the sense that it is cultured in the communication of attributes between the two natures. Luther was more concerned with maintaining all the divine attributes of Christ as God even in his humanity. Some scholars believe that this almost set Luther's Christology in the direction of Eutyches.

5.0 SUMMARY

Lutheran Christology posits that Christ's two natures shared in their attributes though it kind of gives more credence to the divine over the humanity. This makes it such that Christ's humanity does not necessarily restrict him to be in a particular location at a time. He is omnipresent in his humanity and that he can be physically present in the Holy Communion. Also important in Lutheran Christology are theology of the Cross where the concept of justification is fully expressed. Many scholars believe that justification is the central Lutheran theology.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Briefly describe the unique features of Lutheran Christology.
2. What do you think are some problems with Lutheran Christology?

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UNIT 2 CALVIN'S CHRISTOLOGY

CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Calvin's Christology is grounded upon the Chalcedonian foundation. Calvin moves away from Luther at important points. This study will orient you on the understanding of Calvinism's distinctiveness in Christology as it does other areas of theology. Calvin differs from Luther on the nature of the relationship of the attributes of the divine and human natures. He denies Luther's view of Christ's omnipresence in his humanity as well as Christ's real physical presence in the Eucharist but spiritual.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

explain Calvin's Christology
differentiate between Calvin's Christology and that of Luther describe Christologies of the past and that of the Reformers.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Calvin's Christology

In his argument for the divinity of Christ, Calvin finds the applicability of the name Yahweh both to God and Christ quite important. He consented to the Jewish tradition that the name Yahweh was not commonly applied to creatures, as was Elohim.[1] Yahweh was the exclusive and uniquely identifying name of God that no other creature could bear. But he also differs from them when the Jewish interpretation

Elohim was applied to other God's and to humans (Ps. 82:6; Jn. 10:34) as well as to God Almighty.undermines the divinity of Christ by refusing to identify Christ with Yahweh. The total sum of Calvin's argument is this: "For, since the Jews further teach that other names of God are nothing but titles, but that this one alone [Yahweh], which they speak of as overwhelming, is substantive to express his essence; we infer that the only Son is the eternal God who elsewhere declares that he will not give his glory to another [Isaiah 42:8]." Philip Melanchthon holds the same interpretation, that Christ spoke directly to the patriarchs; see *Melanchthon on Christian Doctrine: Loci Communes 1555* (ed. and trans. Clyde L. Manschreck; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker, 1982), 19, 21; *A Melanchthon Reader* (trans. Ralph Keen; New York: Peter Lang, 1988), 173. Muller also notes the general consensus on the understanding of the meaning of Yahweh as given in Exodus in the Post Reformation theology: "In signifying the One God, therefore, Yahweh is the name of the full Godhead, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and not the name of the Father alone" (Muller, *PRRD*, 3, 259); he adopts this from Zanchi, *De Natura Dei*, I.xiii (col. 30).

Hence it is reasonable to describe Calvin's Christology in one way as Yahweh Christology, since by demonstrating that Christ was Yahweh or *I am* he establishes that it was necessary for Christ to be divine in order to accomplish his redemptive work with all its benefits. Calvin's view here is not limited to the pre-incarnate Son but it takes the totality of the existence of the Son, whether as pre-incarnate or incarnate. The unique nature of this name in contrast to other names of God has to do with the "essence" by which the *autotheos* of the Son as well as of the Father is attested. That is, the name Jehovah points to what God essentially is that makes him different from his creatures. This differentiation is what demarcates God's glory from that of his creatures. Later on, we shall see that Christ refers to himself as *I am* which, is the equivalent of the Old Testament name of Yahweh.

Calvin followed the interpretations of some orthodox theologians against Servetus' interpretation: "But the orthodox doctors of the church have rightly and prudently interpreted that chief angel to be God's Word, who already at that time, as a sort of foretaste, began to fulfill the office of Mediator." Though McNeill rightly thinks that the "orthodox doctors" here refers to Justin and Tertullian (note 29); the scope of Calvin's tradition is broader than Justin and Tertullian. As seen from the patristic writings, Calvin is in keeping with their broad tradition on this basic understanding of Yahweh Christology, though he could be said to be more Augustinian. The humanity of Christ did not impose a limitation to his divinity. Calvin says, "Here is something marvelous: the Son of God descended from heaven in such a way that, without

leaving heaven, he willed to be borne in the virgin's womb, to go about the earth, and to hang upon the cross; yet he continuously filled the world even as he had done from the beginning!" It is marvelous because the humanity of Christ does not change him from being God. This immutable essential being of Christ is what is termed as the *extra Calvinisticum*. Parker argues that Calvin's Christology is a "strong assertion of the Chalcedonian position, particularly as drawn from the *Quicunque vult,* the so-called Athanasian Creed" (Parker, 1995: 67).

The role of the divinity of Christ in his redemptive work is what is unique in Calvin's Christology. In Calvin's time the humanity of Christ was not under attack as was his divinity, so nothing could have been unique in Calvin's defense of Christ's humanity. But the fact that the divinity of Christ was under attack, Calvin used all resources at his disposal to explain and defend Christ's divinity as it communed with the humanity. For Calvin, without the divinity of Christ, his humanity alone could not have accomplished his work to satisfy the eternal judicial sentence upon sin. The two natures were actively involved in the task that was required of the Mediator:

In short, since neither as God alone could he feel death, nor as man alone could he overcome it, he coupled human nature with divine that to atone for sin he might submit the weakness of the one to death; and that, wrestling with death by the power of the other nature, he might win victory for us. Those who despoil Christ of either his divinity or his humanity diminish his majesty and glory, or obscure his goodness (Calvin, *Institutes:* 2.12.3, 466*).*

As represented above, a common error among some scholars is to think of Christ as Mediator only in terms of his humanity and to conclude that Calvin emphasized Christ's humanity over his divinity. Calvin's view is clearly contrary to such a conclusion. Calvin's view does not stress the mediatorial work of Christ in his humanity over and against his ontological being as God. Rather, "Only he who was *true* God and *true* man could bridge the gulf between God and ourselves" (Calvin, 232). In Calvin's Christology the adjectival qualifications of the constitution of the Mediator obviously stress the necessary balance that he holds on the two natures of Christ in respect of their unique functions. One aspect cannot be more distinctive than the other, because both are equally distinctive. What Christ began in his pre-incarnate state is what he continues till completion, as Paul affirms (Phil 1:6).

3.2 Christ as Mediator

Mediation is a covenantal activity that both God and mankind perform. Moses, as essentially a creature was an entirely human mediator

between God and Israel, and his work had no infinite merit. But Christ is essentially God and condescended to become the Mediator in the flesh without losing his original identity. By virtue of his *anhypostatic* human nature, he was like Moses, but considered in his divine nature, he was greater than Moses and equal to the other triune persons. Mediation is the equivalent of reconciliation. Paul says that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ (2 Cor 5:18, 19; Col 1:20, 22). That God has reconciled us to himself does not make him less than himself, and this means that by mediating in his state of incarnation, Christ was not necessarily less than God. Therefore, the notion that Christ was Mediator only in his humanity is not supported by Scripture, and neither does Calvin teach such a view.

To be sure, "Calvin has no problem affirming that ontic deity is clothed upon with human nature in order to mediate for us as our theanthropic prophet, priest, and king (cf. his writings against Servetus especially and the Italian antitrinitarians)." Calvin argues that the deity of Christ is an essential necessity for his mediatorial work because the angels also come under his mediation since he holds primacy over them as well as the head of the church as the firstborn of every creature (Eph 1:22; Col 1:15; 2:10). Therefore, "It thus becomes clear that whoever denies that Christ is mediator, with regard to his divinity, takes the angels away from under his command, and detracts us from his supreme majesty, before which every knee should bend in heaven and on earth (Phil 2:10)" (Calvin, 232). This is an excerpt from Calvin's letter to the Polish Brethren to refute Stancaro's error that Christ was mediator only in the flesh.

4.0 CONCLUSION

Christology in the Reformation period was championed by Martin Luther and John Calvin. Both of them developed their Christology based on what the Church earlier adopted at the Council of Chalcedon. Luther's Christology was centered on the Bible as the only rule for faith and the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist which signifies the communication of attributes between the two natures. John Calvin on the other hand taught that even though Jesus became human, he did not suspend his divine function of upholding the universe. He also insisted that the two natures of Christ are distinct, but never separate. The work done by Jesus to save us clearly reveals that his two natures are closely related to each other. There is here a divergence between the Lutheran and Reformed teaching. The Lutherans laid the stress upon a union of two natures in a communion in which the human nature is assumed into the divine nature. The Reformed theologians refused to think of an assumption of the human nature becoming divine, but rather the divine person of the Son of God in whom there was a direct union between the

two natures.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, we have discussed the two different views about the person and work of Jesus Christ. These views are led by Martine Luther and John Calvin. Luther taught that the doctrine of the "communication of attributes" meant that there was a mutual transference of qualities or attributes between the divine and human natures in Christ, and developed this to mean a mutual interpenetration of divine and human qualities or properties. Calvin on the other hand taught that Jesus Christ in his divine nature also assumed the human nature and both natures were in direct union. So, he concluded that both the divine and human natures were important and actively involved in the task that was required of Jesus' mediatory assignment.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. What is Luther's view on the divine and human natures of Christ?
2. What is the difference between Luther and Calvin on the two natures of Christ?

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UNIT 3 CHRISTOLOGY OF THE HIGH REFORMED ORTHODOXY (17TH CENTURY)

CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Francis Turretin was a 17th century AD Reformed theologian whose theological works were of great influence. In fact, in some great Seminaries in America like Princeton, Turretin's works, the *Institutes of Elenctic Theology,* became theological texts for professors and students.

Christology in the 17th century orthodoxy was more in the direction of
polemics. This was a time when Turretin defended traditional Christology against heretics of his time, mainly the Socinians and Remonstrants. Sometimes, he also raided Catholicism. His concern was to maintain and balance the divinity and humanity of Christ in soteriology. He followed Calvin in his views but he also had some similar views to Aquinas especially on the nature of the satisfaction of Christ's meritorious work.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the connection between the 16th century Reformation
- Christology and the 17th orthodoxy
- draw particularly distinction from Francis Turretin whose theology was very faithful to biblical revelation.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Biblical Christology

Turretin does not develop another kind of Christology or introduce innovations into Calvin's teaching, but he defends Calvin's Christology against heretics who, though confessing Christ to be the Son of God, yet "do not rise beyond his human nature," and having "no reference to his consubstantiality (homoousian) with the Father which is the real hinge of the question" (Turretin, *Institutes*, 1.3.28, 282). He draws a sharp line of distinction between pure Christology and error, which is measured by whether Christ is "true and eternal God," having "the same numerical essence with the Father, not in time, but from eternity." This was the pinnacle of contention between the church fathers and Arius. Turretin's primary opponents were the Socinians, who drew mainly from the theological lineage of Arius, the Remonstrants, and the papists (Catholicism).

Like Calvin, Turretin refuses to indulge in a Christology that is premised outside the parameters of scriptural testimony. He first introduces scriptural testimony and then wrestles with those texts exegetically to prove their reasonableness in asserting the deity of Christ. This he does on four grounds:

(1) the names of God;
(2) the attributes of God; (3) the works of God;
(4) the worship due to God." This pattern is found in Calvin, who applies this fourfold analysis to God the Father in the Old Testament, as well as to God the Son in the New Testament, who though incarnate was testified to be God with the Father. Turretin sails through scripture, arguing the distinction of the Father and the Son: "God the Father is distinguished from God the Son, not essentially (*ousiodos*), but hypostatically (*hypostatikos*)."

Some of Turretin's key considerations for Christ's divinity are the applicability of the name Jehovah both to the Father and to the Son and the testimonies of the apostles. John calls Christ "the true God, and eternal life" (1 John 5:20); Paul calls him "God blessed forever" (Rom 9:5), and Thomas Calls him "My Lord and my God" (John 20:28). This warrants the understanding of his essence to be the same with that of the Father as one God. Discussing the attributes that define the ontological being, Turretin says, "The same deity is proved by the divine attributes, which being proper to God alone to the exclusion of creatures, he cannot but be God of whom they are predicated." These attributes include eternity, immensity, omnipotence, omniscience, and immutability, which are drawn from various passages in Scripture.

This also draws from the divine works of creation where Christ, the Son of God, was at the beginning and was the instrumental cause of all things, thus having dominion over all things and being worshiped as God. To be Mediator does not contradict his ontological being as God: "But although Christ must be adored as Mediator, it does not follow that his divinity cannot be satisfactorily inferred from his adoration. The Mediator in his very conception indicated a divine person whom the economical minority cannot destroy. He is not to be adored directly as man reduplicatively… but with respect to his divine nature."

Therefore, for Turretin as for Calvin, the mediatorial work of Christ as true man must be grounded primarily on the fact that he was true God. What Christ attained in his death and resurrection he did not obtain essentially but "in personal and economical dominion." This follows from the fact that "the Son is properly called autotheos … not with respect to his person but essence; not relative as Son (for thus he is from the Father), but absolutely as God in-as-much as he has the divine essence existing from itself and not divided or produced from another essence." Turretin makes it clear that he is defending none other than Calvin's Christology against Genebrardus and Valentine Gentilis, who "charged Calvin with heresy." Gentilis, a disciple of Servetus, denied divine essence to the Son and held that only the Father was *autotheos*. "The Father is the one and only true God, the *Essenciator*; the Son and the Holy Ghost are the *Essenciati*."

He did not call the Father a Person, because, according to his opinion, the essence was itself true God, and therefore he said, if we admit the Father to be a Person, we no longer have a Trinity, but a Quaternity." So he denied the three persons in the one essence of God. He taught three external Spirits in God, but two were inferior to the Father. He was condemned to death. It is my assertion, based on the evidence we have seen that Calvin and Turretin stressed the importance of ontological Christology in the mediatorial work of Christ and this is well connected to their Trinitarian postulations. At no point in their Christology-whether as regards the person of Christ or his work-has the ontological been relegated to the background. On the contrary, it is the ontological that provides the entire frame for understanding the mediatorial work of Christ within his offices of Prophet, Priest, and King.

The mediatorial work of Christ can only be properly understood when the two natures and the person in whom they subsist are held simultaneously. The logic that bears out the Trinity in which, the persons must not be severed from their divine essence, applies to Christology, so that it will jeopardize sound theology to develop Christology without considering his two natures. The divine nature is

absolute and definitive of his work. The close connectivity between the Trinitarian theology and Christology of Calvin and Turretin helps to safeguard against the heretical tendency to undermine the person and work of Christ. This research also helps to set forth the harmony that exists between Calvin and Turretin as the latter defends the former with all available tools at his disposal that are properly consistent with biblical revelation.

3.2 Christ's Merit in the Salvation Plan

Turretin's Christology is also clearly defined along the lines of Christ's merit in the salvation plan. The concept of merit in the era of Reformed orthodoxy served as grounds for explaining the sufficiency of Christ's redemptive work. The merit of Christ, because of his perfect obedience, provides grounds for our justification to which nothing needed to be added. The perfect obedience of Christ is the outworking of his meritorious qualification as Mediator properly construed in his divine and human natures. As mentioned above, Turretin's idea of the meritum Christi is not contrary to Calvin's view. Though Turretin certainly has gone deeper into the matter than Calvin as he employs rational argumentation against the Arminians and Lutherans, his argument is nevertheless as tightly connected to his Christology as Calvin's argument is to his Christology. He expounds merit of Christ in his discussion of the decrees of God.

First, Turretin affirms with Calvin that the good pleasure (eudokia) of God is the only cause of the decree to save. Christ is the content of this divine good pleasure since God took his most precious and only Son and gave for the propitiation of the sins of humanity. J. Mark Beach concurs, "Thus, in Turretin's theology, the covenant of grace is epitomized by Christ, who is God's supreme and benevolent gift to fallen sinners" (2007: 13). Turretin categorizes Thomas Aquinas, who among others rejected the merit of Christ as the cause of the decree to save, as subtly intending to teach "universal grace and destroy God's absolute election according to good pleasure." Turretin, like Augustine, Scotus, and Calvin, underscores that God's good pleasure has primacy over the merit of Christ, for God's "good pleasure excludes every cause out of God upon which election may depend."

He appeals to several passages of Scripture that teach this (Matt. 11:25, 26; Rom. 9:16; Luke 12:32). In Turretin's view, the incarnation was not absolutely necessary; God was not forced to make a decree that would usher in salvation by the incarnation of Christ. Rather, Christ as Mediator is the content of the decree as the expression of God's good pleasure to save those upon whom he has mercy. This is one way of saying precisely what Calvin has said, namely that "apart from God's

pleasure, Christ could not merit anything." Under this decree, Christ was destined to redeem the elect. Christ is the primary means by which election is effected.

Turretin understands the meritum Christi under the conceptual framework of the necessity of satisfaction to divine justice. In discussing the merit of Christ, one of the first questions Turretin addresses is whether satisfaction to God's justice was of absolute necessity. It should be observed that Turretin abhors theological speculation, especially concerning the incarnation and satisfaction. Concerning the necessity of incarnation he says, "However as this mystery is unascertainable by reason and is known only by the aid of revelation, various questions won't be agitated about it." This stance of depending on revelation instead of philosophical speculation provides the principle in Turretin's discourse on satisfaction as well. On the question of the necessity of satisfaction, he builds on Augustine, who teaches the "hypothetical necessity" of satisfaction, which occurs because "God so decreed it" and so satisfaction becomes "a necessity of fitness" to "divine justice," thus safeguarding against violation of the command of God.

Turretin also refers to "some of the Reformers" who wrote "before the time of Socinus." He does not mention Calvin, and it seems more reasonable to think he is on the same side with Calvin, which is why he does not mention him with Augustine, given the prominence that Calvin holds in his mind. As Socinus (1525-62) was a contemporary of Calvin (1509-64), it also seems that Calvin is not included in his reproof. But Bavinck gives a division of opinion that aligns Athanasius, Augustine, Aquinas, Calvin, Musculus, Zanchius, and Twisse on the one hand who hold the "necessity of fitness" and Irenaeus, Basil, Ambrose, Anselm, Beza, Piscator, Turretin, Owen, Moor, and others as holding to absolute necessity (Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics*, 3, 370).

Bavinck's division between Calvin and Turretin here is hardly justifiable. The question is what kind of necessity? Both Calvin and Turretin repudiate the idea that Christ would still have become incarnate (simple or absolute necessity) even if there had not been a fall (Calvin, 2.12.5, 469; Turretin, 2.13.3, 300). Yet they also uphold the absolute consequent necessity, for both argue that satisfaction was necessary on the basis of justice. God decreed that he would save man from the abyss into which the latter had descended, so it became necessary for Christ to offer himself as a sacrifice. Calvin appears to be in agreement with Turretin, as he says: "Hence, expiation *must* intervene in order that Christ as priest may obtain God's favour for us and appease his wrath. Thus Christ to perform this office *had* to come forward with a sacrifice," (2.15.6, 501 [emphasis mine]). Calvin also speaks of Christ's need to "satisfy God's judgment, and pay the penalties for sin" (2.12.3, 466).

Calvin gives logical priority to the justice of God, which necessarily, not as fitting but absolutely, requires satisfaction. Satisfaction was absolutely necessary given the immutable nature of God, though this satisfaction could have been provided by another means (fiat as per Calvin), yet God "willed to heal the misery of mankind" by the satisfaction of Christ (Calvin, 2.12.5, 469) and the purpose of Christ's coming was that "he might save his people from sin" or that "His office is occupied only with sinners" (Turretin, 2. 13. 3, 300). While Turretin disagrees with Augustine on the nature of the necessity of satisfaction, he agrees with Augustine on the nature of the necessity of incarnation, as he cites his supportive view: "If Adam had not sinned, there would have been no need for our Redeemer to take on him our flesh" (Ibid.).

Turretin therefore speaks of the "opinion of the orthodox" "who maintain both its [satisfaction] absolute and hypothetical necessity, so that God not only has not willed to remit our sins without a satisfaction, but could not do so on account of his justice." Turretin's method of clarifying the precision of the issue in view is quite compelling. First, he excludes all misunderstanding and confusion of the matter: It does not concern a simple and absolute necessity on the part of God for God could (if he had wished) leave man no less than the Devil in his destruction. Rather the question concerns a hypothetical-whether the will to save men being posited, the incarnation was necessary. Again, the question does not concern the necessity of the decree for no one denies that…. Rather the question concerns the necessity of nature-whether… it was necessary for the Son of God to become incarnate in order to redeem us"; it does not also "concern the necessity of fitness because all confess this was in the highest degree fitting to the divine majesty. Rather the question concerns the necessity of justice-that in no other way could the justice of God have been satisfied and our deliverance brought about (which we assert). In a way he moves from the effect to the cause. The effect which is our sin against God necessitated our penalty because the justice of God could not condone sin, so that the justice of God as integral to the perfect nature of God has primacy of necessity.

3.3 Divine Attributes

The divine attributes factor strongly in Turretin's view of discussing the merit of Christ particularly the infinity and perfection of God as manifest in the life and work of Christ. Benjamin Inman echoes Turretin's relation of these divine attributes to Christ's redemptive work in history saying: Without divine efficacy on the part of the redeemer, redemptive history seems to be more about changes within the created order than about changes in God's covenantal activity with humanity.

The integrity of divine promise and divine fulfillment can obscure the significance of Jesus as divine mediator-not by leaving out his divine identity but by leaving out any integral role for his divine exertion."

So the entirety of the work of Christ should be primarily considered as "divine action that accomplishes redemption" and that "provides the power that can carry the eschatological structure forward not simply from fall to restoration but from fall to consummation." This thought fits in with the infinity and perfection of the divine-human person. Divine action in redemptive history has never been suspended at any point, so the role of the deity of Christ in his work must be viewed in light of the fact that God sovereignly places divine preeminence over and above human work. While human work is required, divine action determines its course and end.

Accordingly, the "covenantal communion of human beings with God both essentially and hypostatically" is determined and perfected by "God's infinite and perfect actions." Christ's actions are directly God's actions. Inman incorporates Richard Lints's argument that Christ's deity is assumed in all his actions as mediator, so that his divine efficacy is the controlling factor of the redemptive history, because "Redemption is attached to the same Lord yesterday, today and tomorrow." The Socinians denied penal substitution because their own reason also stems from their denial of divine justice. According to Jensen, Faustus Socinus denies penal substitution on a number of grounds: First, justice and mercy are not divine properties. Second, while pecuniary debt is transferable, personal punishment is not, even as corporate punishment cannot be exhausted on one individual. Third, the brevity of the duration of Christ's suffering could not be infinite. Fourth, it is unjust to impute the sin of the unjust onto a just person.

Turretin, like Calvin, takes God's will and justice distinctly yet simultaneously in his view of Christ rendering satisfaction to God; there is no logical priority or order, but they inhere simultaneously in the divine plan of salvation. Turretin's argument sets forth four grounds upon which the nature of the satisfaction is founded. These are "sin, for which a satisfaction is required; or to the satisfaction itself which is to be made; or to God, to whom it is to be rendered; or to Christ, by whom satisfaction is made." Each of these presents an infinite dimension of its own. The nature of sin is understood against the background of the person against whom it is directed, namely God who is the absolute "supreme Ruler and Judge."

Sin thus brings God's absolute eschatological and eternal judicial sanction against humanity. Because of the severity of sin, "God himself looks upon us with hatred and indignation."[2] He considers sinners

in

2 See Calvin's corroboration on this, who says sinners "by nature are sons of wrath [Ephesians 2:3, cf. Vg.] and estranged from him by sin, have, by Christ's sacrifice, acquired free justification in order to appease God" (*Institutes*, 2.17.2, 530); "But God's righteous curse bars our access to him, and God in his capacity as judge is angry three ways: as debtors (Matt 6:12), as enemies (Col 1:21), and as those guilty before God." In this light, three things are required: "payment of the debt contracted by sin, the appeasing of divine hatred and wrath and the expiation of guilt." The nature of sin heightens the nature of the punishment and consequently the nature of the one bearing it. Sin is by nature "a moral evil differing intrinsically and essentially from holiness." The solution of the problem of sin requires that "the very thing is paid" by either the "debtor himself" or by "surety in his name." The concept of payment of debt is deeply structured in Turretin's explication of satisfaction to divine justice.

Turretin distinguishes between pecuniary debt and penal debt: the former necessarily requires not persons but the very thing owed, whereas the latter requires both the thing owed and the person involved. This argument means that the payment for sin necessarily requires either the sinner or someone standing in place of the culprit to receive punishment. Turretin emphasizes that because of the criminality of the sin the worth of the person who pays for the offender is also taken into account. But in such an arrangement the Judge or ruler holds the final verdict in deciding whether or not a surety would be allowed to stand in for the offender, in which case God as the final Judge permits and selects the surety, Christ, so that "in the enduring of punishment suffered by Christ, there is satisfaction, but in the admission and acceptance of a substitute, remission." Turretin justifies penal substitution because it is a decidedly the prescriptive vindicatory justice of God in dealing with sin and effecting redemption for the sinner.

He like Calvin argues that mercy and justice are at harmony with respect to the sinner. While justice is directed at sin itself, mercy is directed at the sinner in Christ, and this is how justice and mercy meet with respect to the sinner. Therefore, God cannot be accused of being vindictive against the sinner, because it is not the sinner who suffers any more but his own very Son, who voluntarily lays down his life for his own people (John 10: 18). Here then we have "a surety who can pay the debt for us; a Mediator and peacemaker (eirenepoiou), to take away enmity and reconcile us to God; and a Priest and victim, to substitute himself in our place for a penal satisfaction." Bavinck agrees with Turretin: "In the entirety of Christ's person and work, this Christ is a revelation of God's love," so that satisfaction is not merely a manifestation of a wrathful

God, as those who deny this view assume, but it holds out the justice of God in love. The love of God without his revealed justice against sin is deistic and contrary to his revealed attributes.

toward us" (2.15.6, 501); and Augustine: "The human race was bound in a just doom and all men were children of wrath" for which reason a "Mediator was required" to offer a "unique sacrifice" (*Enchiridion*, trans. & ed. Albert C. Outler [Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1955], X. 33, 359).

The logic of the situation is that it is the human nature in which sin occurred, so the human nature must bear the penalty. But given that mere humans cannot offer a sacrifice that is "of an infinite value and worth to take away the infinite demerit of sin," the "two natures were necessary in Christ for the making of a satisfaction-a human, to suffer; and a divine nature, to give an infinite price and value to his sufferings." While Turretin does not undermine the human nature of Christ, which is established by the decree of salvation, he clearly gives the divine nature or ontic status of Christ priority over his humanity as the fountainhead of his qualification to deal with sin, given the nature of sin and the justice to be satisfied.

By so arguing, Turretin is close to Calvin without contradiction by embracing both the absolute and the hypothetical necessity of the merit of Christ that derives chiefly from the nature of God (his justice) and his decree or will: "But we (with many) retain both and hold that the satisfaction of Christ was necessary as much on the part of justice as of the will of God." Yet he maintains the necessity of the freedom of God. This agreement with Calvin is seen in what Calvin says: "God's righteous curse bars our access to him, and God in his capacity as judge is angry toward us" so that "our prayers have no access to God unless Christ, as our High Priest, having washed away our sins, sanctifies us and obtains for us that grace from which the uncleanness of our transgressions and vices debars us." And the necessity of Christ's satisfaction is by reason that "no other satisfaction adequate for our sins, and no man worthy to offer to God the only-begotten Son, could be found."

Turretin argues the truth of penal satisfaction against the Socinians on the grounds of the "redemption of Christ," that "Christ died for us" and "bore our sins" by his sacrifice for "our reconciliation with God," given the "nature of Christ's death" in keeping with "the attributes of God," whose justice is "impeachable." His exegetical skills in articulating these arguments are superb, especially when he demonstrates the concept of satisfaction in such terms as *apolytrosis*, *antilytron*, *hilasmos*, *katara*, *thysia* and *prosphora*. Socinus employs the Roman term of

acceptilatio as used in pecuniary debt, which does not necessarily require transfer of debt to another. He departs from both the Anselmian-Calvinistic direction on the merit of Christ and the Scotistic, for Scotus chose *acceptatio*, rather than *acceptilatio* in regards to God's acceptance of Christ's work for our redemption. The Anselmian-Calvinistic view considers justice an expression of the immutable nature of God rather than on the will of God.

4.0 CONCLUSION

In conclusion we can see that the 17th century which forms an important bridge between the Reformation period and the entire post Reformation period to our time produced a great theologian whose legacy can be appreciated in our own time. Francis Turretin's theological works were used as reference works in some of the most influential Seminaries in America in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

5.0 SUMMARY

Turretin maintained a strong connection in his Christological development with Augustine, Anselm and Calvin. He argued that it was very essential to balance importance of the functions of the divinity and humanity of Christ in soteriology. He ensured that his arguments were rooted in Scripture rather speculative theology. He disputed the Socinians, the Remonstrants and Catholicism of his time.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Describe in a paragraph your understanding of Turretin's Christology.
2. Who were the theological opponents that Turretin disputed against?
3. Who are the theologians that Turretin's Christology was more closely related to?

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Muller, R. A. (2003). *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics*, 4 vols. Grand Rapids: Baker.

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UNIT 4 CHRISTOLOGY AS A DIVISION OF SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Christology is surely a branch of Systematic Theology as other core theological prolegomena like Trinity and Scripture. Christology stands crucial only next to Trinitarian theology. In this section, we would investigate this point as it is well represented in Scripture especially concerning the Christological question that Christ himself introduced. It is the foundational question that governs all biblical Christology.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

state the place of Christology in Christian Theology explain the biblical basis of Christology
apply the lessons learned from Christology in their local context.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Christology as a Division of Systematic Theology

Christology is surely a branch of Systematic Theology as other core theological prolegomena like Trinity and Scripture. Christology stands crucial only next to Trinitarian theology.

3.2 Intensive Importance

The questions of Matt. 22:42; 16:13

According to Matthew's Gospel, on one occasion, Jesus put this question to the Pharisees; "What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is he?" "The son of David," they replied. Despite the third person's reference, he is definitely asking, "What do you think about *me*? Earlier, he asked the disciples, in Mt. 16:13-15. When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?" (Mt 16:14). They replied, "Some say, John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets." Mt 16:15: "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?"

Indeed, he personalizes this - "Who do *you* say I am?" It has become something of a convention for treatments of Christology to begin by citing these questions. These are surely rhetorical questions -- asked to make a point. They serve to reveal the fundamental importance of our concern, the endeavor that we have here in our work together.

It is a two-fold question: "Who do *people* say that the Christ is?" There is no question that is more crucial, more decisive than this question. No question that confronts people - as a society, a civilization, etc - more basic more essential than this question. The consensus answer that forms in answer to this question, in the dominant and representative answers that are given to this question, we inevitably have a gauge on the basic outlook, we have a grasp on the basic aspirations and concerns of a culture or civilization. In that respect, there is no question more basic than the Jesus question.

But Jesus also asks, "Who do *you say* that I am?" So the third person question is also a second person question. The question to the world is also a question to the Church. Jesus question that addresses the world is also a question that addresses the Church. It is to others and also to us. The exegetical importance of the question, in fact, is that it is put in the second person plural - you plural - but it certainly is a question that concerns each one of that plurality, each one individually. What is true collectively is true individually. In the Church, corporate and individual can never be confused, but never pulled apart either. So in Matt. 16:17 following Peter's response and confession, the Lord responds in the second person singular - "you (singular) are blessed." So the issue, even in the Church, is not only what others think but also what I think. The answer to the Jesus question is an intensely personal one, a decisive one, a life-critical question. The answer that I give to that question is always a telling answer. Not only what I say but what I do, disclosing what I really am, what is true of me at my core. Heb. 4:12 speaks of the

penetrating power of the Word and says it is a judge of the thoughts and intensions of the heart. More than any other, the Jesus question does just this.

Unsearchable Riches

When we consider the Jesus question -- all that is brought into view by that question -- here if anywhere it ought to come home to us what is true for theology as a whole (not just Christology). Theology is not to be detached or unengaged analysis. Certainly it must be characterized by academic rigor. But it is never a matter of unengaged analysis. In its systematic character it is always a systematic confession of *faith*. The Jesus question particularly ought always to elicit a confession of faith - at whatever level. So at this point we can appreciate what the best tradition of the Church - running from Augustine at least and down into our own time - has always recognized: theological knowledge is always a function of faith. A faith that is not productive in itself, but that realizes its faith as it holds fast to the Word of God. Particularly in Christology we encounter what Paul calls, "The great mystery of godliness" (1 Tim. 3:16). Great is the mystery of godliness -- and the term Paul uses is not piety in some narrow exercise. It is virtually equated with *religion*, what the Bible elsewhere calls the *fear of the Lord*. So it is not just personal piety. Paul is reminding his readers that here in Christ is revealed this mystery; in Christ there comes to a focus what are the ultimately impenetrable depths of our entire religion. As in Eph. 3:8, what we are confronted with at no matter how sophisticated or methodologically rigorous forms of theology are the "unsearchable riches of Christ." It is those unsearchable riches of Christ that Paul primarily has in view when he finishes his long discussion at the end of Rom. 11. "Oh the depths of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God!" "His judgments are unsearchable, His ways are inscrutable." This is because of who God is and what He has done in Christ.

In Eph. 3:18, 19, Paul's prayer is "to *know* the love of Christ that passes all knowledge." What is true of the entire theological enterprise becomes most pointedly the case when we are concerned with the Doctrine of Christ. We are involved in a cognitive enterprise, a knowing of what surpasses all knowing. So here particularly, we ought to rediscover how much worship and understanding belong together; how much faith and understanding belong together. How little these two are in tension – worship and understanding, and how little they are divorced from each other. Understanding is to be in the service of worship. The classroom ought to drive us to the church. But even beyond that we ought to appreciate how understanding is itself a mode of worship.

3.3 Extensive Importance: Scripture as Christocentric (Heb. 1:1-2; 2 Cor. 1:20)

There is a difficulty that confronts us in our work. It is not difficult to see just what that difficulty is. It is a rich and challenging difficulty. Nonetheless it is the difficulty that confronts us in our assignment in this course. Our task formally stated is *what does the Bible as a whole teach us about Christ?* This is the systematic theological question posed in its most simple elements. But when we put the question that way before we are bound to conclude - leaving us perhaps perplexed - everything in Scripture is relevant to our task. Before long it should dawn on us that nothing lays outside the scope of our concern.

1) In the New Testament

The four Gospels obviously are about Christ, from beginning to end. At the beginning of the book of Mark we have the heading, "The beginning of the Gospel *about Jesus Christ.*" That heading functions equally well for the other 3 Gospels. The Book of Acts is obviously written to further the revelation of all that Jesus *began* to do and to teach. What transpires in apostolic history is what the exalted Jesus *continues* to do and to teach. Jesus is the central actor. The epistles, those of Paul and the others, are fairly seen as amplifying this continuing activity of Jesus within the Church, which Paul particularly accents, has as its fundamental identity that it is the body of Christ. The Church is the Body of Christ. Finally, the book of Revelation as a whole, we are told right in the opening words - vss. 1, 2 - it is "the revelation of Jesus Christ." Further the author says that as the Word of God, it is the "witness of Jesus Christ."

2) *In the Old Testament*

The Old Testament taken by itself might seem to represent, at least by comparison with the New, a less clear state of affairs, a mixed bag concerning Christ. It is sort of a more diffuse situation. It might appear that Christ is not nearly so dominant in the Old Testament as in the New. There is a Messianic strand in the Old Testament, but it is there alongside others.

But particularly if we read the Old Testament in light of the New Testament, which we are bound to do; it is not at all the case that Christ is not dominant or pervasive. For instance, if we follow the lead of the writer of Hebrews, we will capture several facets: Heb 1:1-2 "In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made

the universe. " Looking at it this way, we must recognize that God's Old Testament speech and the writer is looking at it in its entirety (the reference to the prophets is synecdochic) that speech in its entirety and diversity represents an on-going process that flows towards and reaches its consummation point in Christ. He is said to be God's final eschatological speech or revelation.

Or if we look at Heb. 3:5, regarding Moses and Christ: Heb 3:5-6 "Moses was faithful as a servant in all God's house, testifying to what would be said in the future. But Christ is faithful as a son over God's house. And we are his house, if we hold on to our courage and the hope of which we boast." Here the writer brings into view the revelation through Moses, with its prominent orientation on the Law, and bound up with the constitution and aspirations of Israel as a nation, it might seem that that revelation is less concerned or even unrelated to Christ as it is focused on the destiny of this particular nation. But the writer of Hebrews says, "No, that's wrong." He tells us that Moses, as he is the prime representative of the Old Testament (here, Moses is synecdochic) is a faithful servant in God's *one covenant house*, in God's one house-building activity. And he says that particularly what Moses was all about, as law-giver and leader of Israel, is a witness to Christ.

In 2 Cor. 1:20, Paul says: "For no matter how many promises God has made, they are "Yes" in Christ. And so through him the "Amen" is spoken by us to the glory of God." As we look at the context here, there are no indications that there is anything that would limit the scope of those promises. Bringing into view the entire reality of the New Covenant, as he does in 2 Cor. 3:6ff, as he is looking at the New Covenant "Yes" in Christ, he does so in light of whatever Old Testament promises you might choose. A most sweeping, first order categorization -- the entire Old Testament has an essentially promissory character, seen as promise, that entire outlook has its validation and fulfillment in Christ. So the unity of the Bible may be seen from a variety of angles. But that unity is preeminently a Christological unity. The Bible is a Christocentric or Christ-centered book.

4.0 CONCLUSION

So, as we put it earlier, we can see the difficulty that we spoke of, the difficult methodological question that we spoke of -- how do we delimit the focus of Christology as a particular topic of Systematic Theology? Is there anything at all that we can properly exclude? As the Bible as a whole is seen as being Christological, what are the more central topics, the more basic issues that ought to constitute and control Christology as a particular locus, distinguishing it from other areas of Systematic Theology?

Along with that, we can make this observation, as we try to answer that question: At the same time we must not lose sight of the over-arching profile that the Bible itself brings out, so that *in all our theology Christ is the center of gravity*. So however we may delimit and develop Christology as a particular area, *we are at the heart of the matter*. With Christ, not with man, not with ourselves, nor alternatively with God - apart from any Trinitarian distinction - neither of those is at the center of theology. Christ is the center of theology.

5.0 SUMMARY

We have seen that Christology is a central theological division of Systematic Theology. The history of Christian theology has followed the biblical emphasis of the person and work of Christ. The foundational question of who Christ is forms the pinnacle of Christological discussion. The centrality of Christ is the standard by which all Christian theology can be measured.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. How is Jesus Christ the centre of the Bible?
2. What is the importance of the Christological question as found in Matthew16:15?

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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MODULE 3 MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY CHRISTOLOGY

UNIT 1 THE "CENTER" OF CHRISTOLOGY IN BIBLICAL THEOLOGY

CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this unit you will be introduced to what is most central about Jesus Christ in biblical revelation. This is about the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ as it is written in the four gospels, Pauline epistles and the rest of the New Testament and Christological typologies in the Old Testament.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- state what the four gospels said about the person and work of
- Jesus Christ
- explain the Christological position of Pauline epistles
- describe the typologies of Jesus Christ found in the Old

Testament.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 The Christocentrism of Biblical Revelation

The procedure we will follow in answering the above questions, we will proceed to identify what is most central in the biblical revelation concerning Christ. What is most central in Christocentral biblical revelation? What lies at the *center of the center*? The biblical writers, here the New Testament writers, themselves give us a clear indication of the center we are to be concerned with: the death and resurrection of Christ. As it could be put more broadly in terms of New Testament language, the suffering and glory of Christ that follows. Or, in Systematic Theology categories, what constitutes the center is the humiliation and exaltation of Christ. That is the center of the center.

To highlight that point negatively, because that focus can become dislocated -- the focus on the one hand is not the *person* of Christ. Not, more particularly, the deity of Christ, particularly as that might be considered apart from His work. As that has become increasingly important for tactical apologetic purposes, Christ as the 2d Person of the Trinity, God the Son from all eternity -- in a particular context that is most essential -- but that deity so considered, apart from His work, is not the center.

Nor, looking in another direction is the center a particular *benefit* that flows from the death and resurrection. The *forgiveness* of my sins and the *experience* of being forgiven, all derive from the death and resurrection of Christ. Now, that is absolutely crucial to the reality and significance of the Gospel, which we must maintain against all forms of denial. But the benefit flowing from the death and resurrection is central. Neither the true deity of Christ nor the true experience of the benefit constitutes the center of our concern, but the death and the resurrection.

i. The Four Gospels

Without difficulty, we see that in all the four Gospels the death and resurrection are the heart of the message -- the culmination of the Gospel narrative, the target of the narrative flow as a whole, where the whole Jesus story is headed. Death and resurrection. The Gospels, it has been said, are "*passion narratives with lengthy introductions.*"[3] We say that without depreciating what comes beforehand in the Gospels.

Yet it contains a very helpful insight -- the whole earthly ministry of Jesus is constantly focused on that passion climax. The genealogical and

nativity narratives to the commencement and development of Christ's

Julius Wellhausen was supposed to be the first to say that.
ministry were all geared towards a specific direction. That Jesus was born of virgin birth alone would not be the end and goal of that story and even his miracles since prophets of old also performed miracles. But more significant is the aspect of the story that Christ's death was not in vain. His death was not of his own crime and for himself; it was not violent death in the midst of political struggle. The Gospels affirm unanimously that he suffered and died for the sake of sinners, having paid ransom to the divine justice consequent upon sin against the glory and honour of God. More profoundly, Christ died and rose again from the dead to clear the way of resurrection for those who believe in him and are in union with him.

i. Paul

1Co 15:1-4 is most quickly constructive: "Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain. For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures." This is the most explicit summary Paul provides of his gospel preaching as a whole. While not taking this in a temporal sense, but in a qualitative force as the NIV captures it, here is what is most important: the death and resurrection of Jesus which is also the fulfillment of the Old Testament. Also we see in 1 Cor. 1:18-3:23, which is highlighted in 2:2 "For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified."

We see this again in Gal. 3:1, where he says that what he exhibited publicly before them is Jesus crucified. "You foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? Before your very eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed as crucified." Again in Gal. 6:14, he says that he has no boast to make except in the Cross of Christ. Also, 2 Tim. 2:8: "Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead." With regard to the verses that have a single referent – the cross or resurrection. We need to remember that in the New Testament a reference to the death alone or the resurrection is always synecdochic. A reference to the one always implies the other.

ii. Rest of the New Testament

Here we can say that while there may not be expressions that are explicit

or programmatically clear, yet unmistakable indications are there. Hebrews is concerned with God's last days' speech God's eschatological speech in His Son. But as the writer goes on to develop in the light of this opening statement, it is clear that this last-days' speech centers in the High Priestly ministry of Christ. It is particularly as Christ is the great High Priest, He is God's speech in these last days. That High Priestly ministry of Christ, he makes clear, has two facets -- sacrifice on earth in the past and present heavenly intercession. Christ as High Priest is to be seen in His suffering and glory. This is how we should understand Heb. 13:8; this is not to be taken as a proof text for an affirmation of the eternity of Christ in terms of His true deity, though that is true but as an affirmation of His fidelity as High Priest. As High Priest, He is constant. In the past on earth, in the present in heaven, and in the future in His return to earth forever.

a. 1 Peter

1 Peter provides us with a message, according to 1:3, that turns on new birth unto a living hope that the church has been given in terms of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Everything, the hope of the church, flows from the crucified and resurrected Christ.

b. Revelation

What we find here in the distinctiveness of the various visions, all of that flows out of the vision that is given John of the glorified Son of Man in the midst of the seven golden lampstands. This is the depiction of Rev. 1:12-17. Everything flows out of what is true of the exalted Christ in the midst of the Church - that is the central reality of the Book of Revelation. It presents who the exalted Jesus is in the midst of the Church. So, leaving that as a preliminary kind of probe, we can say that the New Testament in its various parts, in its center on Christ is centered more particularly on His death and resurrection, His suffering and glory.

3.2 The "Center" of Christology - The Old Testament

The death and resurrection of Christ as the center of the OT is a much more problematic point. This is widely denied, by viewpoints that, in other respects are poles apart from each other. The poles that are in reference are: Modern Theology (in the historical critical tradition): The OT is sub-Christian, or even more radically, anti-Christian. This view of polarizing the OT and NT has long history in the 2nd century AD. It was advanced by Marcion who divided between the God of the Old Testament and the God of the New Testament. To him the OT God was wicked, monstrous and unloving in contrast to the NT God who is the embodiment of love. In a modern context, Rudolph Bultmann and James

Barr take the position that Christ can only be found there by a tour de force, by reading Christ in despite what it says.

The other extreme is Modern dispensationalism (at least in its most consistent forms). The death and resurrection (especially as they give rise to the church) of Christ, along with the NT church, is an essentially unforseen mystery in the OT. So far as OT revelation is concerned, death and resurrection, and particularly church represent a great lacuna, gap especially where the OT promises are concerned (addressed to Israel as a nation). On some constructions there are typological allusions, but they are peripheral to its central concern which is promise and realization of national promises. So what takes place in fact is seen to be distinct from God's dealings with Israel. Death and resurrection are virtually unrelated to God's OT plan (parallel, within the mind of God, but not integral to the promises of God to the nation of Israel). What happened was for them because of Israel's rejection of the Messiah.

The writers of the NT in contrast, see no such problem in the OT but rather that the suffering and glory are at the center of the OT, not just there, but at the center. The angle we will take to look at OT is the NT's use of the OT.

Introductory comments on Luke 24:44-47:

These verses are important, standing as they do at the close of St.Luke's Gospel, and intended to give us a cross-sectional (what was typical) view of the time between the resurrection and the ascension. Show what was typical of Jesus' teaching during this 40 day period of time. This is a succinct account of the Post-Resurrection teaching of Jesus. What went on during those 40 days "have been compressed into the span of a few verses." What supports this is that in terms of the time markers, everything through v.43 clearly happens on the day of the resurrection. On the other side of our unit we are at the account of the ascension. But our unit is without time markers. So in an unspecified way, this falls within that period, so it is a summary, what was typical of the time. This is accented here because it will reinforce a later point.

Here is a clear reference to the suffering and resurrection of the Messiah. And coordinate with that are the proclamation of repentance and the forgiveness of sins to the nations. Three Elements come into view: Death, resurrection and preaching to the nations. What is the consequence of preaching the gospel to the nations? It is assembly of the Church. "It is written...Death, Resurrection, Church." This coordinate reference is syntactically dependent on *gegraptai* (it is written). This form introduces a construction in which the subjects are in the accusative and the verb is in the infinitive. Suffer, Rise, Gospel

Preached, dependent on it is written. *Gegraptai* is one of the standard formulas for citing Scripture, to introduce quotations from the Hebrew Bible. So Jesus is telling the disciples, "this is what is written in the OT, Messianic suffering, resurrection and Church." Where? In what sense? We fail to find a particular passage, particular verses that express all of this. You can't find a particular passage where all of these elements are present. Now, certain psalms and the latter part of Isaiah surely picture the individual elements. *Gegraptai*, then is taken here in a more general sense. In what sense more general? How much looser, more general? Here is where the immediately preceding verses help us (vv 44,45).

Jesus is speaking as he did not previously, but in a post-resurrection perspective, from the vantage point of death and resurrection behind him. And what he is doing is recalling his teaching to his disciples "these are my words" during the period of his ministry prior to the resurrection. The resurrected Christ presents looking back synoptically, back in time. "While I was still with you" brings out the climactic character of the resurrection. It is as if he were no longer with them, even though he is there talking to them. This does not represent a stable state of affairs redemptive history. In the temporary sense in forty days, the Resurrected Christ must go to a place of glory, at the right hand of God. This is a transitional nature of this period. Jesus' point concerns what is the sum and substance of his teaching while he was with them. That substance is caught in a *hoti* clause at the end of v. 44 which pertains to the necessary fulfillment of all the things that were written in the Law, Prophets and Psalms concerning himself.

To put it in other terms, a description in terms of its three major sections of the canon. So what Jesus is reminding his disciples here is how the OT in all its subdivisions prophesies concerning himself. Look back to v. 27 same description (not as fully expressed) as what Jesus gave on Emmaeus road. So Jesus is saying, "what I taught you (as a whole) is what the OT in all its parts teaches concerning me." Does the prepositional phrase (controls at least to the end of psalms) circumscribe the entire OT in all its parts with no remainder, or only to certain strands of the OT, along with other teaching? Is Jesus leaving any material out? Is the reference a comprehensive or partial reference, inclusive of everything, or excluding some material? Within this context, the answer ought to be "inclusive, comprehensive". At least two considerations supporting this: First, 44-49 are Luke's way of summarizing what happened during the 40 day period, in terms of teaching. And he wishes to show that it was a period of comprehensive instruction. If this is so, it is not very likely that parts of the OT would have remained pushed to the side. That section would have remained a closed book.

Second, and more decisive, is what is said in v. 45: "he opened their

mind to understand the Scriptures." The movement in thought from 44 45, that helps us understand the mind opening experience, is this: What Jesus had taught during his earthly ministry is now made clear to the disciples. The gospel record gives several indications that the disciples (earlier) were not able to comprehend, even afraid to ask what Jesus meant by death and resurrection (Lk 9:22, 44-45; Lk 18: 31-34). What the disciples were then unable to comprehend, that is now made clear to them. The resurrected Jesus opens their minds. He brings them to understanding. Notice, now, how v. 45 describes their understanding.

It is said to be an understanding of Scripture. Verse 45 does not say he opened their minds to understand these Scriptures, a particular aspect of OT revelation, a set of Scriptures within the OT. Rather, he opened their minds to understand THE Scriptures – the entire OT, as a whole. The "writings" is a term that always refers to the whole of the OT (even in extrabiblical Judaic writings) (Mt 22:29; John 5:39; Acts 17:2). In other words, in the light of the resurrection, from the perspective of fulfillment in Christ, the disciples are now, for the first time brought to an understanding of what Jesus had all along been saying in his earthly ministry about the necessary fulfillment of Scripture. And their new understanding is said to be an understanding of the Scriptures. Putting it anachronistically, Jesus opened the mind of the disciples to understand the consent of all the parts the scope of the whole (Westminster Confession of Faith Ch. 5). They are brought to understand how it all holds together, the coherence, the unity of the OT.

More Reflections

Coming back to vv. 46-47, they add by way of further specification, further focusing what it means that they understand the Scriptures. That focusing is the death, resurrection and church-building gospel. So Death, resurrection and church-building gospel are at the center, heart of the overall message of the OT. This is the focus of what the OT is all about.

The apostolic preaching in Acts:

We look at this against the background of what we have seen in Luke above. Before drawing attention to representative statements, a general comment. This preaching always culminates in a call to repentance (there are not characteristically references to faith, but to repentance. But in the Lukan context, both are included in "repentance." That call always follows out of a focus on the death but especially the resurrection of Christ. The repeated emphasis in this gospel message is preached on the basis of Scripture. It is a message based on the OT. Examples:

1) Acts 3:18ff (Peter)

The things which were previously proclaimed through the mouth of all the prophets that his Christ must suffer, these things are now fulfilled. So the messianic suffering of Christ is a matter that came through the mouth of ALL the prophets. That way of putting it is even more emphatic when you move to v. 24. Jesus is identified as the great prophet promised in Deuteronomy. All the prophets...also proclaimed these days. Surely "these days", in the context, are the days of Jesus Christ. The days of the activity of this great prophet foreseen by Moses; Prophetic tradition going from Moses through former through latter prophets. As many as have spoken! Whatever prophet ever opened his mouth, this is what he spoke about "these days." Similar statements are found in Peter 10:43.

2) Acts 26:22-23 (Paul)

Therefore, having obtained help, the help which is from God, until this day, I stand testifying both to small and to great (insignificant and significant) saying nothing except those things which Moses and the Prophets said would come to pass v.23 that Christ would suffer proclamation to the Gentiles. The setting is a point where the bulk of missionary activity behind him. He is in interrogation before Agrippa. He is taking his whole missionary activity in view. In the final analysis, all that I stand for, all that I have been testifying to, is nothing beyond what the prophets and Moses said would happen, (this is the heart, thrust of what Moses, et al., said) viz., that Christ would suffer, be first to be raised, proclamation, etc. Concomitant with the suffering, resurrection was the proclamation. Similarly 13:27; 17:2-3.

3) 1 Peter 1:10-12

Looking from several mutually related angles, first, Peter reflects salvation. That salvation is what Peter described fully in vv. 3-9. And that is the salvation that is predicated on the resurrection of Christ (v. 3). So he has in view, a salvation that in modern times staked in an accomplished death and resurrection, but will involve the future as well (for an inheritance...kept in heaven...) Looking at what will be true at the return of Christ, the revelation that will take place at his return (v. 7).

a. This salvation is said to be a concern or preoccupation of the prophets (v. 10). And it was not a passing curiosity of them, but an intensive concern (ek compounds on the verbs that have to do with investigating, searching, inquiry--ek intensifies). The NIV is good here, "intently." In view of the scope of the salvation, we can say that this intense concern was also a central concern, an all embracing

preoccupation that they had. It's fair then to suggest at least that even though Peter is referring specifically to prophets, that reference is synechdocic, representative of the whole. So what he is saying would apply more broadly to the
OT. We see such a synechdocic reference in 2 Peter 1:19-21.

b. What the prophets in their plurality say is unified, integrated. And we can say that because as v. 11 makes clear, in what the prophets in their plurality are concerned about, that is ultimately a matter that the one Spirit is disclosing, indicating through each of them. We get an anticipation of the next point in the Spirit as the Spirit of Christ. Christ's Spirit, the Spirit as associated with the messiah is who is at work in the OT prophecy.

b. In v. 11 we have further an indication as to where the sum of the prophetic concern can be located, the focus. We saw in v. 10 comprehensive, then integrated. Now we see the focus of this body of prophecy is specifically the sufferings of the Christ and the glory that would follow, death and resurrection. So again in this context, humiliation/exaltation is central to what the OT is teaching. There can be some debate in the grammar. Is it saying "what person and time..." or "what time and circumstances, or what time and what sort of time". But that won't affect us here.)

d. Notice what is brought out in v. 12. Perhaps most emphatically in NT, Peter is now saying, "they did it for you." Not ultimately for themselves, although they were intensively involved (v. 10). Not for the Old Covenant "we", but the New Covenant "you". Which is to say then, that it is ultimately considered the NT Church that is served by the OT prophets. The OT with its focus on the death and resurrection, as we have already noted. This is one passage that makes a point that we must never lose sight of. The OT belongs to the Church, not to the Jews (whether Dispensational Christian structure or Zionistic Jewish).

4.0 CONCLUSION

The Old Testament also testifies about Christ through the fulfillment of Messianic prophecies concerning the suffering, death, resurrection and glory of the Son of God fulfilled in the New Testament. Therefore, it is worthy to note that the biblical support for Christology is not only limited in the New Testament, but the Old Testament lay the foundation for it. However, it advisable to be careful from falling into temptation of taking any of the two extreme positions; that is either restricting the biblical support for Christ to a number of passages in the New Testament as if the Old Testament has nothing to do with Christ or even viewing every Old Testament passage as if it has a Christological

message.

5.0 SUMMARY

According to the NT, the OT is one large witness to Christ. The OT taken as a whole, we've been able to see from the vantage point of the NT is one large prophetic witness to the Christ, centering on the messianic suffering and glory, death and resurrection. The OT has its integrity in terms of this death and resurrection focus. This is how the various parts hang together or cohere. So, reflecting on this, that is a conclusion that it is well for us now, not so much to qualify, but to make the observation that there are two extremes that have to be avoided. On the one hand, we must avoid restricting reference to Christ to a limited number of passages (those that are seen from a NT point of view to be clearly messianic) as though the rest of the OT has nothing to do with these passages.

As if, alongside the message of Death and Resurrection of Christ is a message that is unrelated. On the other hand, we must also avoid viewing every OT text as if it had a Christological message of its own or even more problematic, to treat every OT text as teaching some specific point about the death and resurrection. This sort of outlook inevitably results in uncontrolled allegory that is always looking behind things in the OT for a presumably deeper meaning. On this approach, OT interpretation becomes a kind of OT scavenger hunt. Who can discover the most subtle Christological types and allusions? Focus the issue by addressing ourselves to: "Is Christ in every sentence of the OT?" Yes and No.

If we mean that in the atomistic sense, that every text has a Christological message all its own, then the answer is no. However, every sentence is in a context. That context, as we have already discovered, is a history. Every sentence is embedded in the ongoing history of God's covenant dealings with his people Israel, as that can involve the various genres. That history has only one direction and purpose, which centers in the sufferings and glory of Christ. So in that sense, we must say Christ is in every sentence of the OT. What we are insisting on is that the OT must be read in the light of the NT.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. How is Christology treated in the four Gospels?
2. What is the position of Pauline Epistles on Christology?
3. What has the Old Testament said about Christ?
4. What is the relationship between the Old Testament and New

Testament on Christology?

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UNIT 2 PERSON AND WORK OF CHRIST: A PROBE OF MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY CHRISTOLOGIES

CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The relationship of God through Jesus Christ with humanity is based on faith, but not sight. So, the right thing for man is to first and foremost accept what the Bible had said about Jesus Christ by faith. Then, the benefits of what Jesus Christ had done will automatically become his or hers. It is rather wrong to first seek for benefits of what Christ had done as a condition to accept what Jesus had done for humanity. In this section, we shall explore the developing views of scholars from the Reformation theology of Philip Melanchthon down to modern liberalism.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- state the positions of Philip Melanchton, Emmanuel Kant, New Liberalism, Historical Jesus' School and Bultmann on the Person and work of Christ
- refute the wrong teachings about the Person and Work of Christ.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 The Background

A favorite quote of a number of contemporary theologians -- Bultmann, for instance -- comes from Philip Melanchton. "To know Christ is to know His benefits." But, we can say, if Melanchton were alive today, or any time since Kant (that is our *today*), he would likely regret having spoken as he did. Even in his own work there are indications that his second thoughts about expressing it that way. These are the opening words of his, *Loci Communes* -- Theological Commonplaces: "To know Christ is to know His benefits. Not, as is sometimes taught, to behold his natures or the modes of His incarnation." For the believer, it is enough to know what Christ has done for me, without the necessity to know ontologically what Christ had done. Kant invited the epistemological bifurcation between the noumena and phenomena with the intention to maintain the self-independence of human being between ultimate unconditional and the dependent and conditional. It has far-reaching consequences in theology, especially in Christology. Ritschl followed the Kantian reason, Ritschl made the distinctions between the rational judgment and the existential judgment. He is trying to make the virtue necessity. Kant is making the value judgment. It is not important the historicity of the death and resurrection of Christ, what really matters is what I draw from his work and my experience from his work. Since I experience the help and impact of Jesus, therefore Jesus is the son of God. Because Jesus has the value of God, therefore he is the son of God, but not the other way around. Ritschl's view is called the old historical liberal view.

It has become a favorite quote of the historical-critical tradition (committed to the autonomy of human reason). But as given, this is out of context. It is the opening words of *Loci Communes*. It goes on "not as is sometimes taught, to behold his natures or the modes of his incarnation." There was a tendency in late medieval theology to divorce the person from the work of Christ and to engage in speculation as to the person of Christ, using the Chalcedon formula as a framework. Melanchthon and others were against a one-sided speculation of the ontology of Christ. What he intended to say is "it is enough to know what Christ has done for me (*Christus pro me*) without having to understand the mystery of his person." In making this assertion, he was not intending to deny the reality of the mystery. He was not denying that there are legitimate ontological concerns about the person of Christ, legitimate metaphysical dimensions that come into the picture in Christology.

3.2 Emmanuel Kant to Ritschl

Kant comes into the picture (Late 18 C). His philosophy resulted in increasing opposition toward any kind of metaphysical thinking in philosophy, which carried over into theology Christology. Opposition to trying to make contact with, reach ultimate reality that underlies human experience. As you come from the medieval period, the dominant model was controlled by a dualism between grace and nature and reason. This is the synthesis endeavor. Aquinas (12 C.) synthesized Aristotle with biblical revelation. This created an unstable alliance between grace and revelation and likewise between revelation and reason. Reason is given freedom but governed by grace and revelation through the Church. The Church tells you what you may think.

In the Renaissance's broader revival of interest in classical culture, you get an increasing emphasis on the autonomy of reason and a decreasing emphasis on revelation. This is the "Enlightenment" (a definite misnomer--though it does have the effect of releasing the human community from what had become the superstition of the church). This resolute commitment to the autonomy of reason replaced revelation. It brought about a different dualism, this time between freedom and nature. Late in the enlightenment, Kant comes along and operates with the distinction of the noumena and phenomena. This is an effort to circumscribe the autonomy of reason. To confine it to the phenomenal realm. Reason in its autonomy, its competence is left to the phenomenal realm. The realm of freedom/noumena has no place for reason. Distinction can be seen as between value/significance and fact or between religion/faith and science or between truth/ultimate meaning and history. When it comes to issues of fact, of historicity human reason must have the final word. In that realm, human reason is autonomous. There is no room for revelation. Revelation in this realm will always be redundant upon reason and subject to the dictates of reason. So rational discourse is limited to the phenomena. Freedom/will comes to expression in the noumena. I can make statements about God in this realm, but can make no rational claim. Presumably making room for faith, this faith that it allows cannot make any claim about anything that happens in history.

This has far reaching consequences for Theology Christology. We can simply sample here some developments. A. Ritschl (1822-1889), for example (and Schleiermacher before him), becomes the Systematic Theologian of liberalism. Following Kant's critiques of pure and practical reason, Ritschl makes a fundamental distinction, an all controlling disjunction between existence judgments and value

judgments. Regarding Christology, existence judgments would have to be said about his person, e.g., pre-existence, natures, miracles, deity, resurrection, etc. But theology is incapable of making existence judgments about Christ that will be meaningful, theologically sustainable. He maintains further that theology has little interest really in making such existence judgments. What counts, he would say, what is important religiously is the value judgments.

In other words, what is important is the value and significance that Jesus' life and activity have for me (also corporate), the significance for the church as a community. Anything that I would say about Jesus, particularly his person (that would be valid) must be drawn from conclusions about his work as I experience that work. So, because I experience Christ's example and help as ultimately important in my life, therefore he is the son of God. Because I experience his help as divine help (ultimate significance), therefore, Jesus is the Son of God. Because, as a man, Jesus has the value of God, therefore Jesus is the Son of God. So Jesus can be no more than his genetic being allows. He cannot be more than a man. But, he wishes to maintain that he has the value of God. That is his impact, in terms of noumena considerations. But we can never put it the other way around: Because his is the Son of God, he does the work of God and helps me. We can go the one way, but not the other.

3.3 New Liberalism

Ritschl is an example of the "Old Liberal" view of Jesus (also Harnack). But now, as we take stock of the unfolding developments towards the present within the Higher Criticism tradition, there is undeniably a "persistence of liberalism" (Stonehouse). So talking about "old liberalism" is misleading. This is why Machen's book, *Christianity and Liberalism*, though old is still relevant. With all the twists and turns in philosophy/theology, the basic image of Jesus remains essentially the same. A polarizing of the ontological and the functional persists. Not quite the Kantian dualism, but cutting across it. On the one hand, it is characterized (to dismiss it) as Greek or Hellenistic thinking. That thinking which has controlled the thought of the ancient church, the ancient claims that are made about Christ, as we see that reaching confessional status in the Chalcedon formula - its interest is in the being of things.

But the modern emphasis is with function, with the effect of things. Characteristically we don't ask what something is, but what it does, how it works. So, transposed to Christology, the dominant emphasis is not who/what Jesus is, but what Jesus does or effects. This polarity is buttressed by appealing to the covenant. What is undeniably present in

the biblical teaching on the covenant is a bilateral or relational element between God and man, as a fundamental characteristic. So, this biblical motive is picked up on in contemporary theology, and a dichotomy is set up between relational/functional and ontological.

3.4 "Historical Jesus" School

More particularly, the Christological consequences of this approach in the recent debate (since 1970) is whether in Christology our approach should be 'from above" or "from below". The issue here is whether in Christology we ought to begin beyond history (with the divine, pre-existent and now exalted Christ)-from above or should we begin with the "historical Jesus" (subject to the control of autonomous historical method)-from below? That is, should we begin with John 1 (pre-existence), or with Mark 1 (no birth narratives, nothing about pre-existence, divine origin, etc)? This way of putting things poses us with a false dilemma. We must look at this whole question in terms of what the Scriptures teach about revelation, and particularly with what the Scriptures teach about the relationship to history.

God's self-revelation is not above history, it is in history. Van Til puts it, "We may say that revelation is historical. But we may also say that history is revelational." The history of redemption is revelational. In that sense, we must affirm that revelation is in history. So you can't say "from above or from below?" They are inseparable. John 1 and Mark 1, are "not either or". To begin with the one is inevitably to be involved with the other. When you take the two and set them in opposition or pull them apart in some way, inevitably the decision is made that we must begin from below in some fashion, with the "historical Jesus" that is, what can be established about him by autonomous historical method. The conclusion is inevitable then, that what we have at most is an implicit Christology. That carries with it the further conclusion that explicit Christology, declarations of the deity of Jesus, assertions that he is the Son of God, is in no sense infallible revelation from God, but nothing more than the fallible expression of the earliest Christians, the questionable confession of faith of the NT writers, and the early church's creeds.

3.5 Bultmann

Rudolf Bultmann has what we could characterize as an extreme neo-Kantian orientation. This is a Christianized version of existentialism. Out of this outlook, he poses this question, "does Jesus help me because he is the Son of God, or is he the Son of God because he helps me?" (echoes Ritschl's question). What he is seeking to do is to drive a wedge between Jesus' person and between his work. Or, being fairer to Bultmann, he wants to absorb the person entirely into his work. It is

significance of Jesus that accounts. That places us before an impossible choice. The person and work of Christ may never be set in opposition, or seen as somehow in tension. The value of Christ's work is just that it is his work. Christ does what he does, and he is able to do what he does just because of who he is. We are wishing to confirm over against so much contemporary discussion, that Christ's person and his work thoroughly permeate one another.

Being and function so thoroughly interpenetrate each other that they cannot and may not ever be separated. The NT knows of no need to choose between an ontological Christology and a functional Christology. For example, this was without being able to do the in depth exegesis, but to bring specific Scripture in view. In his self witness, Jesus connects his person and work in a most intimate way. Linguistically striking are the Christological statements of John's gospel (6:35, 47; 10:11; 11:25; 14:6; 15:1). The striking combination of "I am" gives strong emphasis to the subject. The point, then, to be maintained then, is the unity of Christ's person and work without absorbing the person into the work. With that said, they are closely related.

4.0 CONCLUSION

Modern and contemporary Christologies of Philip Melanchton, Emmanuel Kant, New Liberalism, Historical Jesus' School and Bultmann had different views on the person and work of Jesus Christ. All these views are attempts to investigate which of these two is more important; is it the person or the work of Jesus Christ? However, it is important to note that both the person and work of Jesus Christ are important and should be accepted.

5.0 SUMMARY

Christologies from below start with the human being Jesus as the representative of the new humanity, not with the pre-existent Logos. Jesus lives an exemplary life, one to which we aspire in religious experience. This form of Christology lends itself to mysticism, and some of its roots go back to emergence of Christ mysticism in the sixth century East, but in the West it flourished between the 11th and 14th centuries. A recent theologian Wolfhart Pannenberg contends that the resurrected Jesus is the "eschatological fulfillment of human destiny to live in nearness to God."

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. What is the position of Emmanuel Kant and Bultmann on the person and work of Christ?

2. How would you correct the modern and contemporary Christologies about the person and work of Christ?

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UNIT 3 KARL BARTH'S CHRISTOLOGY

CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Karl Barth is a significant figure in the 20th century theological development who has affected innumerable thinkers. He comes from the Reformed background but his views cuts across various Christian traditions. This explains why it is important to give his Christological view a special unit in this whole work. His views are however, problematic on a number of grounds which shall be treated in subsequent details. He seems to be close to his Reformed tradition especially Calvin but diverges significantly from it. He stood against rationalism and indeed believed himself as propounding a theology or Christology that was contra liberalism.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

distinguish Karl Barth's position on New Testament Christology from the Reformed position
state the areas of similarities between Karl Barth and Reformed view on New Testament Christology.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Barth's View of Scripture

Karl Barth's view is a departure from the Reformed Orthodox position. He thinks the covenant begins with Israel as a chosen people of God, though he acknowledges the covenant with Noah as well. The major thrust of the Old Testament covenant is the ''my people" (Jer. 7:33; 11:4; 30:22; 31:33; 32:38; Ezekiel 36:28). What is of paramount importance for Barth here is the level of mutuality that is involved. "The covenant is in every respect in the arrangement of God, the mighty declaration of the sovereign will of God in history, by which He creates the relationship between Himself and the human race in accordance with His redemptive purpose, the authoritative ordinance (institution) which brings about the order of things" (Barth, 1956:25). So in all this, it is the disobedience of Israel as a covenant people that is in view, not of Adam. He thinks Genesis' reference to Adam should be understood in terms of mankind rather than Adam as a person who transgressed the command of God. He calls the Genesis account of Adam a saga. But Grudem (1994) argues so well against this understanding that if Adam would be rendered man in this case it would not make a significant sense because "there is no single well-known transgression of a covenant by man to which it could refer. Moreover, it would do little good to compare the Israelites to what they already are (that is men) and say that they 'like man" broke the covenant. "Such a sentence would almost imply that the Israelites were not men, but some other kind of creature" (1994:516).

3.2 The Fall and Its Consequences

Barth seems to accept the Genesis account of the fall as a reality when he says, "Finally, the story of the Fall and its consequences (Gen.3) is a happening which, for all its fearfulness, like the later resistance of Israel and the divine judgments which came upon it in consequence, does not take place outside but within a special relationship of the affirmation of man by God, of God's faithfulness to man, which is self-evidently presupposed to be unshakable" (Barth, 27). Yet he does not allude to any historical relationship between God and Adam which holds his view suspect, namely that he does not indeed believe in its historicity as Reformed Theology begins its covenant theology. This holds Barth as a great suspect and is a serious difference between Barth on one side and Orthodox Reformed and biblical theology on the other.

As one reads through Barth's work one becomes more uncomfortable with his inconsistencies. The incarnation is due to the eternal covenant that God elected man before the fall and it is for that covenant that the incarnation primarily occurs. That covenant was broken. The entrance of

sin is "not a work of His creation and not a disposition of His providence. *It really comes about and is only as that which God did not will* and does not will and never will. *It has its being only in the fact that it is non-being*, that which from the point of view of God is unintelligible and intolerable" (Ibid).

Three things are of serious concern here. First, it has to do with the fact that his denial of sin being part of God's creation contradicts what he later writes "There never was a golden age. There is no point in looking back to one. The *first* man was *immediately* a sinner" (Ibid). If the first man was *immediately a sinner* one wonders how Barth truly absolves God of sin as being part of his original creation. The second problem is the nature of the emergence of sin – that is *that which God did not will*. First, it should be noted that Barth associated the origin of sin primarily with God, not with man. It is the negation of God that brings about sin. That implies that if God had not willed that which he did not will, there would not have been sin. Third, by alluding to its *non-being*, Barth actually denies the essence or reality of sin though he admits elsewhere, "It is alive and active in all its fearfulness only on the left hand of God." One cannot help but see so much of contradiction in the thought of Barth. And when Barth refers to the sin of man in any sense that he implies, does that not necessarily imply a previous sinless era?

Barth refers to the will of God which begins with the institution and establishment of His covenant with man. The question that stands at this point is when and where does that will of God begin? Though Barth stated clearly that the covenant begins with the nomadic chosen race of Israel, one wonders why God would leave his will unknown to mankind until after such a long time; that is after the destruction that came upon mankind in the time of Noah. The destruction according to scripture is due to mankind's negation of God's will. But if his will was not made known to mankind and then he suddenly unleashed judgment upon mankind, then Barth's theology would make the creator to be arbitrary in his will, no longer gracious and loving as he is trying to teach about God. Again Barth's view does not show any organic way God relates to his people. He had not made a covenant or revealed his will to Adam and after some thought he decided to make one or reveal his will to a people. Yet an organically working God should be concerned with mankind that has been created in his image to be given an initial privilege to relate with his creator by way of covenant or knowing his will before anything else.

The antithesis that had existed between God and man because of man's sin has been overcome by God himself becoming man, living, acting, speaking, suffering and triumphing over it. Barth severally asserts the

fact of incarnation without qualification that God became man in order that man would attain that mutual union with the divine. It is God without distinction of persons that was incarnate in the person of Jesus. Barth's Trinitarian theology holds sway in his view of the incarnation here. On the purpose of atonement, he says, "The work of atonement in Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of the *communion* of Himself with man and of man with Himself which He willed and created at the very first" (Ibid, 36). So Christ came mainly because of the covenant relationship with God for which man was created. That perfect harmony that God intended originally to exist between him and his creation cannot be annulled in spite of sin, and this is resolved in the incarnation of Christ. Barth thinks that the incarnation was necessary because it is in the nature of God that he would enter into relationship with man whether there was a fall or not.

3.3 Barth's Problem of Consistency

There is a problem of consistency where Barth thinks that the covenant relationship starts with Israel, without making allusion to the first created man Adam which implies God's neutrality in relationship to mankind prior to this covenant institution while also saying that "What is revealed in the work of atonement in Jesus Christ, as its presupposition, is that God does not at first occupy a position of *neutrality in relation* to man" (Ibid, 37). He also opens up the possibility of universal salvation of mankind when he says that by the accomplishment of God in Christ God becomes "the God of all men of all times and places which is also a critical point of all faith in God and in the knowledge of God and service of God" (Ibid).

One of the major points of tension Barth has with Orthodox Reformed theology is his unqualified reference to God's incarnation. He questions the authenticity of inter-trinitarian covenantal arrangement between the Father and Son. In fact he questions the notion of distinct subjects within the Godhead. He says, "The conception of this inter-trinitarian pact as a contract between the persons of the Father and the Son is also open to criticism. Can we really think of the first and second persons of the triune Godhead as two divine subjects and therefore as two legal subjects who can have dealings and enter into obligations one with another? This is mythology, for which there is no place in a right understanding of the doctrine of the Trinity as the doctrine of the three modes of being of the one God. This is how it was understood and presented in the Reformed Orthodoxy itself. God is one God" (Ibid, 65). The problem that Barth is claiming to escape here is the charge of mythology; should it be said that there are two divine persons who covenanted for the redemption of mankind.

His solution is one God in modal changes. One wonders how Barth

escapes that difficulty. If the Reformed Orthodoxy's position is said to be mythological why would the view that God became man not mythological? In both cases this is beyond human imagination. Barth is only trying to assert his imagination, not the mystery of Scripture. Again he says, "When the covenant of grace was based on a pact between two divine persons, a wider dualism was introduced into the Godhead; again in defiance of the Gospel as the revelation of the Father by the Son and of the Son by the Father, which took place in Jesus Christ. The result was an uncertainty which necessarily relativized the unconditional validity of the covenant of grace, making it doubtful whether in the revelation of this covenant we really had to do with the one will of the one God.... The question is necessarily and seriously raised of a will of God the Father which originally and basically is different from the will of God the Son" (Ibid).

Barth's charge of dualism and two different and perhaps conflicting wills here also takes more of speculative face than biblical witness and exegesis. If the Son reveals the Father and the Father the Son then it shows the irrationality of opposing the distinction of two existing persons in the one Godhead. Such revelation without the actual distinct existence of the one being revealed is so irrational and it makes nonsense of Jesus dialogue with the Father if indeed he himself was the Father who turned to be the Son in the person of Jesus Christ. Otherwise how could Jesus cry out "Why have you forsaken me?" Or why would he in his prayer time task the Father that he had glorified him and he should also do his own part of glorifying him [the Son]? The Jews of Jesus time recognized his divine powers but separated him from the Father even as he did not say he was the Father. The point of dualism and separate wills does not also arise because Jesus Christ taught clearly the unity of his will and that of the Father when he says, "I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him who sent me that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day. For my Fathers will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day (John 6: 38-40; cf. 7: 16, 17). That is why he cried out, "Not my will but your will" (Matt. 26: 39, 42; Mk. 14: 36; Lk. 22:42). So a distinction of will is not a separation or difference of will such as would be dualism. The unity of the life of the Triune God is a lovely mystery that has been bequeathed to us by the Son, and it is not for human glory but God's adorable glory

3.4 The Unity of God in Barth's Theology

Barth makes the unity of God originally dependent upon the creation of man. God does not "rest content with Himself nor restricts Himself to the wealth of His perfections and His own inner life as Father, Son and

Holy Spirit but there is already present, and presumed, and assumed into unity with His own existence as God, the existence of the man whom He intends and loves from the very first ... in whom He wills to bind Himself with all other men and all other man with Himself" (Ibid, 66). Eventually, the horizon of man determines who God really is though his being is independent of anything else.[4] Why is it not the reverse where

[4] See Van Til's analysis in *Christianity and Barthianism* (Phillipsburg: P&R, 1962), 38, 39.

the unity of man is patterned after God's unity? Why is it the act of God in the human horizon that counts for his existence?

The major areas of departure between Barth and Reformed Orthodoxy are creation, salvation (election), sin, covenant, scripture and Trinity. The areas of agreement are God's revelation in Christ as the only norm in theology. God's grace is sovereign and free; it has objectively accomplished salvation and it is universal in character. The Apostles' Creed is also a point of agreement. Barth holds that:

1. Scripture is not the highest Truth; it is not an instrument of direct revelation, for it is imperfect. The content of scripture is Christ. Verbal inspiration is not meant by the Reformers to be a miracle. It is a witness to revelation. Calvin does not hold a docetic view of scripture.
2. Christ is the electing God who also is the elected man. God is identical with his saving act. Bullinger, like Calvin, holds Christ as the organ through whom God's electing will is attained for the elect who were foreordained before the foundations of the world. Luther speaks of election apart from Christ. Athanasius also holds that Christ is the basis of election.
3. Calvin and Barth speak of the mystery of man's election but differ on the *nature* of that mystery (Van Til, 1962: 61). Barth charges Calvin of destroying the comfort of election and grace by lurking in the idea of an arbitrary electing God that is beyond Christ. Barth says election is universal. Everyone is elected and only Christ is rejected. The question however for Barth is, "If everyone is elected, from among whom are they?" Election necessarily presupposes rejection, and this election was before Christ was incarnate even as Barth says. Jesus is identical with man's salvation and man's salvation is identical with Jesus Christ.
4. Barth takes Calvin's view of God and man to be defective. That Calvin places God apart from Christ and also man apart from Christ. That he could not provide for the proper hiddenness of God in Christ. Calvin also fails to provide a Christological

context for the idea of scripture. That Calvin could not see that God's final word to man is grace. He places Calvin in the same position that he places Romanism alleging their non recognition of Christ as *Geschichte.* But it seems as if Barth thinks that prior to Christ's coming there was no God; there was no revelation until the one in Christ.

5. Barth also rejects Orthodoxy's views. He disputes them on the question of revelation arguing that revelation is not about the past but present as it is in Christ. Not all of what scripture says can be believed such as holding miracles to be revelation but only as signs of revelation. On religion he disputes the fact that the Christian religion can be built on the words of scripture but only on Christ. Barth is against direct revelation, for revelation must be both wholly revealed and wholly hidden.

3.5 Barth's Concept of Christology

The current debate on the two natures of Christ continues to re-echo the controversy that engulfed the early church. The Barthian perspective largely influences recent scholarship. The Christological view of Barth develops from his Trinitarian dogma. One of the major points of departure between Barth and Reformed Orthodox theology is his Trinitarian doctrine especially his unqualified reference to God's incarnation. To him it is not the Son as a distinct person within the Triune God that became incarnate but God taking modal forms of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. He questions the authenticity of inter-trinitarian covenantal arrangement between the Father and Son. On the notion of distinct subjects within the Godhead, he says,

The conception of this inter-trinitarian pact as a contract between the persons of the Father and the Son is also open to criticism. Can we really think of the first and second persons of the triune Godhead as two divine subjects and therefore as two legal subjects who can have dealings and enter into obligations one with another? This is mythology, for which there is no place in a right understanding of the doctrine of the Trinity as the doctrine of the three modes of being of the one God, which is how it was understood and presented in the Reformed Orthodoxy itself. God is one God (Barth, 66).

Barth thinks he has a better option on the Trinitarian issue to avoid the danger of tritheism and is claiming to escape the charge of mythology; should it be said that there are two divine persons who covenanted for the redemption of mankind? His solution is one God in modal forms. One wonders how Barth escapes the charge of mythology in this case. If the Reformed Orthodoxy's position is said to be mythological, why would the view that God became man not be mythological? Both cases are by human rationalistically mysterious and cannot be so easily accommodated to human imagination. So Barth concludes that when the Son became man it was the entire Godhead that became man.

Barth uses the traditional concepts of Reformed theology but with a different meaning. For instance, he speaks of Christ as "very God" and "very man" or "God-man," but this has nothing to do with affirming both the divinity and humanity of Christ simultaneously. The humanity of Christ is the only fact about Christ. By giving his Son into the world, says Barth, God "sets at stake His own existence as God…. Well, in this act God loved the world so much, so profoundly, that it did in fact consist in the venture of His own self-offering, in hazarding of His own existence as God" (Ibid). Clearly in Barth's idea God appeared as if He was no longer God when he became man by setting aside his divinity as God. God took a risk of self-humiliation by becoming man. Barth still calls Christ God, not because of recognition of ongoing divinity in his humanity but in respect to what he was before the incarnation. In his humanity there is no other God which means no other person of the Trinity apart from Christ for that would be an abstract mythological thinking. Christ is God only insofar as he is connected to his work of reconciliation.

Following this trend is Moltmann (1993). Though Moltmann thinks he is away from Barth, his thinking is quite similar to Barth to some extent. To him the incarnation of the Son is the humanity of the entire Godhead. It is the kenosis of God. He says**,** "The divine kenosis which begins with the creation of the world reaches its perfected and completed form in the incarnation of the Son" (1993:118). Moltmann sees God's act of creation as an act of self emptying – that is to say giving up his Godness

in his act of creation. The futility in this thinking is not too far-fetched. The question immediately is: At what point did God empty himself? Was it just immediately before he began the creation or during the process or after the creation? By what powers did he create then? If by creating the world God gave up his divinity then Moltmann is denying that God as he is in himself did not actually create the world. It was a human being or human power that created the world. This thinking yields idolatry.

It is plain that in the creation act, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit were all involved. It may be rightly stated that God is known by his creative activity. It is only God that creates. But creation does not define God; it only evidences its Creator. The Holy Spirit was involved in the creation with the Father and the Son. Calvin develops this fact alluding to his distinct creative activity as divine functions such as creation, preservation, sustenance, causing growth, quickening, breathing life from his energy, "author of regeneration," "future immortality," our justification, sanctification, "beginning or source and author" of all gifts, aside from the roles of the Father and the Son. See also further development of the active participation of the Holy Spirit in primal creation, as the life giving principle and the moral and spiritual life in the works of John Owen. Writing in the context of the Socinian attacks he develops the relationship between the Holy Spirit and Christ in his work of salvation.

Sinclair Ferguson follows Owen in the affirmation of the Spirit's involvement in the primal creation, life giving and connecting to the work of Christ by a strong appeal to various scriptures but more especially the Pauline theology of the Spirit of Christ drawn from 1Cor. 15. Meredith Kline has also made an extensive case for person of the Holy Spirit. By virtue of his creative activity, the Glory-Spirit sets the archetypal design of the entire creation and manifests the whole divine being. Scripture's reference to the act of creation presents the three persons as God divine, not as human. Again he says, "There is *no God* other than the incarnate, human God who is one with men and women" (119). This sounds so cunning.

Is Moltmann making a good case for the oneness of God or is he making a denial of the distinction between the incarnate Son and the other persons of the Godhead who are not incarnate? The latter seems most obvious. And "God *does not* encounter men and women 'as God'; he encounters them in human form, in the incarnate and crucified Son," and "God is no where more divine than when he becomes man" (Ibid). By making an exceptional rule here, Moltmann's view has repercussions for the Old Testament revelation where God's encounter with humanity was *as God*. God was not incarnate in the Old Testament. In the

consummated eschaton God will encounter his covenant and redeemed people as God.

It is also a contradiction in terms that God becomes divine only when he is human. Humanity does not produce divinity. They are two different entities with distinctive functions. They can only come together in a covenantal way. Again, though Moltmann might not wish to deny the existence of the Triune God, his statement implies exactly that.· But if there is no other God other than the incarnate God and yet we hold that it is the Son that was incarnate then Moltmann is denying the reality of the Father and the Holy Spirit who are not incarnate. He is actually discriminating between the Son on one hand and the Father and Holy Spirit on the other.

To him "the incarnation of the Son is more than merely a means to an end…. Even if we make the 'emergence of human sin the starting point, so as to grasp the necessity of divine reconciliation, and in order to expect the coming of the divine Reconciler, we must go beyond the measure of human need if we are to understand grace as God's grace" (Moltmann, 115). The death and resurrection of Christ was for our justification unto newness of life – that is the attainment of perfection. "It follows from this that the Son of God did not become man simply because of the sin of men and women, but rather for the sake of perfecting creation. So 'the Son of God would have become man even if the human race had remained without sin' " (Moltmann, 116). The "incarnation of the Son fulfils this design of creation" and therefore precedes it (Moltmann, 117). Moltmann's argument is quite sound but it potentially and unfortunately undermines the seriousness of sin. He also loses sight of the fact that scripture refers to the redemptive work of God in Christ as a definite plan (Acts 2:23; 4:28; Eph. 1:9-11). Grudem is right to assert contrary to Moltmann that the covenant of redemption which necessitated the incarnation "was something voluntarily undertaken by God, not something that he had to enter into by virtue of his nature."

Dabney's (1871) explication of the concept of covenant shows that it does not always have rigid particulars in all cases. That is there are distinctive features for each covenant in history. The Adamic administration did not require a mediator as neither are the Angels because their contexts of sinlessness do not require a mediator. On the contrary the Mosaic administration required a mediator as per the context of sin wherefore, God gave stipulations and Moses acted and an arbiter or intercessor. Therefore, the need of a mediator became a consequent absolute necessity. "But, man being fallen, the necessity of Christ's mediation appears from all the moral necessarily bound to

requite it), His goodness (concerned in the wholesome order of His kingdom), and His holiness (intrinsically repellent of sinners)" (464/5). The necessity of a mediator proceeds from God's "voluntary moral perfections" (465).

4.0 CONCLUSION

God's covenantal relationship with man started with Adam, the first man and continued through, Moses, Noah and Abraham. However, the first covenants were broken by sin due to the inability of man to keep terms or conditions of these covenants. So, God initiated another covenant through Jesus Christ which is the final and climax of God's covenant with man. Therefore, the incarnation is not due to eternal covenant that God elected man into before the fall as held by Barth. More so, the first man was not immediately a sinner as claimed by Barth because the Bible said man was made in the image and likeness of God and everything God made was perfect (Genesis 1:31). Man only became a sinner due to his disobedience to God's commandment. On trinity, God is one and consist of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit who are constantly in unity, but has at different times perform different functions as distinct personalities in their relationship with man and the universe.

5.0 SUMMARY

Barth has ridiculed Scripture as the word of God. This has made his Christology to be highly flawed and of less binding force. But we maintain that Scripture is the highest truth of God's revelation to man and it is infallible with Jesus Christ as the centre of it content. So, God's relationship with man in the last covenant is based on Christ's work of redemption. God is divine, but became man in Jesus Christ for the sake of saving man from sin. Even at the time Jesus was in human body, he was still divine and operated as both God and man. The death and resurrection of Christ was to atone for the sins of mankind and justification of the entire universe unto new life.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. What is Karl Barth's position on New Testament Christology?
2. What are the similarities between Reformed view and Barth on New Testament Christology?
3. What is the problem with Barth's view of Scripture as the source of Christology?

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UNIT 4 RATIONALISM AND CHRISTOLOGY: BIBLICAL AND A REFORMED COVENANTAL RESPONSE

CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The two natures of Jesus Christ are very essential in making New Testament functional. This is because both the human and divine natures work together to aid Christ to gain salvation for us. The two natures satisfied the demand of the law for our salvation and also made Jesus Christ to identify with us in our sinful situation without himself becoming sinful. So, since the time of his death and resurrection from the grave, many who confessed their sins and accepted him as saviour are saved.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

explain how New Testament Christology is functional explain the effect of Rationalism on Christology
state the importance of the two natures of Jesus Christ New Testament Christology.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 New Testament Christology as Functional Christology

We need to appreciate that the Christology of the New Testament is predominantly functional. That is where the weight focus, lies on function. The focus is primarily on the work of Christ, on what Christ has done, and on what Christ is doing. It has been necessary to resolutely maintain the deity of Christ for apologetic reasons. That preponderance has sometimes been eclipsed in protestant theology. Partly because we can talk about that functional preponderance. But at the same time, in the unity of person and work (that we have just insisted on), his person has priority. What is in view with "priority" is, in terms of the spatial prepositions (above and below), our approach is not from the outside, not from his work in some isolated way, but from the inside out, with his person drawn/coming into his work.

Remember Mt 15:16, Jesus' question to his disciples (at a watershed point in his ministry) not about what he has done for them, not about particular benefits they recognize themselves to have received from him, but "whom do YOU say that I AM?" Further, v. 17, following Peter's response, Peter is called "blessed", not because of the blessings and benefits he can point to (though that is involved), but because of his insight (faith that grasps) into the person of Christ. The point here, is that only when we understand who Christ is, only when we perceive his person, only then can we truly understand his work, what he has done. At the same time, as we deal with his work, inevitably we will gain greater and greater insight into his person. Obvious, but it is this obviousness that gets lost or distorted particularly where the autonomy matter comes into play.

3.2 The Two Natures of Christ: Probing Questions

The question of the doctrine of the two natures of Christ is one of faith more than reason because we cannot pretend that we are not dealing with the mystery of God's revelation. As we ponder over this our rational faculties quickly reckon with the logical questions of divine and human incompatibility. Is it possible that God as Spirit could and would create matter? Is it possible that God, as Spirit would have a relationship with the creation? Is it possible that the divine and human could coexist simultaneously in one person namely Christ? The Christian answer to these questions moves from a 'yes' to the 'how' of the relationship of the two natures of Christ. While Chalcedon provides the basic paradigms by which this Christology may be understood and developed, it is the intention of this paper to offer a fresh insight into the nature and implications of the union of the divine and human in Christ by way of

covenantal interpretation.

3.3 Early Historical Development

Augustine understood this divine and human natures in Christ thus: "Christ is one Person of twofold substance… being God and man"… who "conjoins both natures in oneness of Person; in Christ there are two substances in one Person." In Augustine's thought, it is one person who subsists in two natures rather than two natures subsisting in one person. Thus Kelly explains Augustine's point further, "Thus the two natures are united in one Person, the Person of the Word." Augustine himself further says, "Into unity with his Person… the form of God remaining invisible, Christ took the visible form of a man" but "neither lost nor diminished the form of God." The incarnation conceals the form of God but not diminish it even as the human was taken into his divinity yet without diminishing it.

Leo agrees with Augustine when he says "in uniting to form one Person each retains its natural properties unimpaired… so that, just as the form of God does not do away with the form of a servant, so the form of a servant does not diminish the form of God." The emphasis that is placed on balancing the real divinity and humanity of Christ is extremely important so that the purpose of redemption is fully accomplished. It is very clear in this thought that there is a mutual relationship between the Creator and the creature. Leo recognizes the distinct principles by which each nature operates: "Each form accomplishes in concert with the other what is appropriate with the other what is appropriate to it, the Word performing what belongs to the Word, and the flesh carrying out what belongs to the flesh."

In the 4^{th} century, the Christological problem of the divine and human nature of Christ challenged the church once more. Apollinarius whose intention was to do away with the seeming dualism that was introduced in the constitution of Christ, rather taught a fusion of the divine and human in Christ. Kelly cites him as saying that the constitution of Christ was "a compound unity in human form (sunqesij anqrwpoeidhj)," thus Christ having an "impassible divinity and passible flesh." Apollinarius holds the opinion of *anhypostasis* of the humanity of Christ as it is clear in his thought. "The body is not of itself a nature, because it is neither vivifying in itself nor capable of being singled out from that which vivifies it. Nor is the Word, on the other hand, to be distinguished as a separate nature apart from His incarnate state, since it was in the flesh, not apart from the flesh, that the Lord dwelt on earth."

He also argues, "Christ's flesh is a proper object of worship" because "it

cannot be separated from the adorable Word to whom it belongs and in Whose divine qualities it consequently shares." Furthermore, "the flesh of the Lord, while remaining flesh even in the union (its nature being neither changed nor lost) shares in the names and properties of the Word; and the Word, while remaining Word and God in the incarnation shares in the names and properties of the flesh." It must be observed that this is a striking logic, but it needs some guidance from extremism. Apollinarius, however, lost this control as he opens up to the view of "exchange of attributes" between the Word, flesh and consequently "being fused in 'one nature'" thus making Christ "only 'appear as a man.'" Overall his Christology was docetic, denying the true humanity of Christ as not having a human mind and lacking the "essential conditions for redemption." His intention to safeguard against separation of the two natures is appreciable but he ends up diminishing the unity into uniformity.

On the other hand, Gregory of Nazianzus teaches the idea that the divine and human in Christ commingle. The two natures concur in unity and a twofold manner so that the Logos it is one person "from two." In clarifying Nazianzus' view, Kelly adds, "So far from conceiving of this union as a moral one, or as a union of 'grace' like that between God and His prophets and saints, Gregory states that the two natures 'have been substantially (*kat ousian*) conjoined and knit together.'" Gregory of Nyssa teaches the mingling of the two natures whereby the flesh was passive while the Word was active. There is the union of humanity and the divine so that pertaining to the human experiences, "The Godhead, being impassible, remained unaffected, although through its concrete oneness with the humanity it indirectly participated in its limitations and weaknesses." In other words the two natures shared in the attributes of each one.

But Nestorius holds the two natures apart because "an authentically human experience would have been impossible if the Lord's humanity had been fused with, or dominated by, His divinity. Hence the two, divinity and humanity, must have existed side by side, each retaining its peculiar properties and operation unimpaired." Yet he certainly does not wish to teach a separation of the two natures as he is assumed. His emphasis was not on the union of *prosopa* but two natures whereby "just as the Word assumed the form of a servant, manifesting Himself as man, so the humanity had the form of Godhead bestowed upon it, the result of the exchange being the unique *prosopon* of Jesus Christ. Neither the Godhead was changed into the human nature nor was the manhood deified, but each took the form of the other.

Hence the incarnate Lord is indivisibly one in *prosopon*, while remaining twofold in nature." His problem however, is whether "the

idea that the unity was to be found in the 'common *prosopon*', was really adequate. All that in fact amounted to the truism that Jesus Christ, the historical Figure, was a single object of presentation, a concrete psychological unity." But more seriously was "what constituted His person, the metaphysical subject of His being, and this Nestorius' theory hardly touched." Eutychus teaches a monophysitic doctrine of Christ that he had only one nature, the divine having swallowed up the human into one nature. What are most prevalent in the above views is a seeming *anhypostatic* concept of the human nature and the question of the relationship of the two natures.

Having condemned Apollinarius, Nestorius and Eutychus for their sinful teachings, the council of Chalcedon formulated the following readings:

In agreement, therefore, with the holy fathers, we all unanimously teach that we should confess that our Lord Jesus Christ is…. One and the same Christ, Son, Lord, only-begotten, made known in two natures without confusion, without change, without division, without separation, the difference of the natures being by no means removed because of the union, but the property of each nature being preserved and coalescing in one prosopon and one hupostasis – not parted or divided into prosopa, but one and the same Son, only-begotten, divine Word, the Lord Jesus Christ, as the prophets of old and Jesus Christ Himself have taught us about Him and the creed of our fathers has handed down.

The Catholics' subsequent development of this doctrine tended to stress *anhypostasis* where the human nature is not hypostatic without the divine nature. E. A. Weis thinks that the church's definition of the hypostatic union of the two natures was problematic given the difficulty that emerges from "two things complete in themselves" becoming "one being." And so "Reflecting on the definitions of the church theologians see the opening to an explanation that this human nature lacks a human personality" (E. A. Weis, "Incarnation," *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 2nd ed. 7, [Detroit: Thomson-Gale, 2003], 374. See also John Murray, *Collected Writings*, 2 [Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 2001], 137). Yet it must be argued that Christ could not have taken a dead nature upon himself but a personality that had complete human faculties as one in his own image capable of response to his divine nature. Though the human had its complete faculties as a personality, the act of the union was not as if the human had started growing on its own while the Logos joined it later. It was an instant, simultaneous union of the divine and human by the agency of the Holy Spirit.

It is observed that what gave the church the biggest trouble about Christology is the question of how to make sense of union of the two natures in relation to the one person. Chalcedon does not teach

anhypostatic human nature of Christ. While the church helped in setting paradigms for future Christology, it could not solve the problem of the two natures, and subsequent theologians have been trying to make sense of Chalcedon in their contemporary contexts.

3.4 Developments in the 19th and 20th Centuries

The difficulty with understanding how the divine could be human tended towards more rationalistic nuances in the post enlightenment centuries than it was in the early church to the Reformation. Although post Reformation rationalism also harked on these issues, there are more interesting developments among prominent figures in the post enlightenment. Some of these found it difficult to overcome the fact that God could indeed become human – something taken to be other than who he is. We shall deliberately narrow down to three important figures in this period, namely, Friedrich Schleiermacher, Karl Barth and Jurgen Moltmann who represent different traditions.

Schleiermacher (1768-1834) denies the reality of two different natures subsisting in one person. His own position is like a flight from reason to mysticism, so that the mystery of the two natures hardly makes sense by rational analysis. According to Muller, Schleiermacher's intention was to preserve the divinity and humanity of Christ by way of "neither exalting the 'dignity' of the person beyond the import of the 'activity' nor claiming an activity beyond the capacity of the person." Rather his interest was the "correlation and mutual interrelation between the language of people and work in Christology." Schleiermacher's problem with the usage of 'nature' in defining the person of Christ is that nature is a sort of limiting concept, indicating the "finite" in contrast to the infinite, for which reason 'nature' and God (Christ) are incompatible. Also on the usage of 'person,' it is more limiting than nature, so that when a narrower concept like 'person' contains a broader one like 'nature' it lacks cogency in the final analysis. So for Schleiermacher, the concept of nature or two natures does not actually count since it cannot be applied to God.

The concept of the two natures, for him, leads to the problem of two wills of Christ as to where the two actually reside whether in the two natures or in the person. Two wills, no matter how they agree, do not constitute a unity. Muller ponders on the idea of Schleiermacher, "How can a unified individual be possessed at the same time of an operative divine reason that knows all things simultaneously and of an operative human reason that knows individual things in succession; and what kind of unity can arise if either the divine or human is equated to the other, whether by the divine knowing in a human fashion or the human in a divine?"

He therefore offers us an "archetypal man, the human *Urbild*, whose relationship to God assures the superiority of Christianity to all other religions." So it is the "mediatorial function" of Jesus plus the extraordinary "presence of divinity in his consciousness" by his faith that made him above human shortcomings. Muller concludes on the remarkability of Schleiermacher's Christology, "Schleiermacher's christology then, stands as an attempt perhaps as the most important modern attempt to overcome the historical, biblical, and metaphysical difficulties inherent in the language of traditional orthodoxy – without losing the grounds achieved by ancient orthodoxy."

Schleiermacher's desire is well appreciated but I think his idea of divine indwelling destroys the idea of divinely becoming human. His own appears much more like an indwelling of the Holy Spirit in someone to a certain remarkable measure due to the one's measure of faith, but not actually God becoming human. It is on the basis of the divine becoming human that is rooted in Scripture that presents the mystery of the two natures. Otherwise this would not be a mystery. On the matter of two wills, it is also unclear what Schleiermacher understands by "unity" or union, which as pertains to the two nature lacks cogency. The concept of the union of the two natures would be appreciated more if it is understood in covenantal categories which is absent in his thought on this. He appears to be asking a question of uniformity than unity.

One still wonders if Schleiermacher really solved the problem he was trying to solve by merely doing away with the concept of two natures of Christ through his concept of divine consciousness. Muller's compliment of Schleiermacher is intriguing as it questions it. He however, does not point out exactly how Schleiermacher's method does not lose the orthodox grounds when Chalcedon does not reflect in the latter's view. Abandonment of the concept of nature with regards to God as Schleiermacher does not actually constitute overcoming the difficulties thereto.

It may therefore be asked that by the exemplification of divine consciousness of Jesus which presupposes emulation is it not possible for another human being to become what Jesus was by doing the same? Schleiermacher's view would lead to such a possibility. This would greatly undermine the unique character of the incarnation, for this would be far out of tune with the reality of God becoming man. It is clear that in his thought the divinity of Christ is defined on the basis of his consciousness, not so much on the objective testimony of his ontic status.

The second most important figure in this millennial context is Karl

Barth (1886-1968) whose perspective largely influences recent scholarship more than Schleiermacher. The Christological view of Barth developed from his Trinitarian dogma. For him, it is not the Son as a distinct person from the Father and the Holy Spirit within the Triune God that became incarnate but God taking modal forms of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The distinction he maintains of the three persons is not of concrete individuality of one from another but of existence at different stages. He questions the authenticity of inter-trinitarian covenantal arrangement between the Father and Son. On the notion of distinct subjects within the Godhead, he says,

The conception of this inter-trinitarian pact as a contract between the persons of the Father and the Son is also open to criticism. Can we really think of the first and second persons of the triune Godhead as two divine subjects and therefore as two legal subjects who can have dealings and enter into obligations one with another?

This is mythology, for which there is no place in a right understanding of the doctrine of the Trinity as the doctrine of the three modes of being of the one God, which is how it was understood and presented in the Reformed Orthodoxy itself. God is one God (Barth, 1956: 65).

Barth thinks he has a better option on the Trinitarian issue to avoid the danger of tritheism and is claiming to escape the charge of mythology should there be said there are two divine persons who covenanted for the redemption of mankind. His solution is one God in modal forms. One wonders how Barth escapes the charge of mythology in this case. If the Reformed Orthodoxy's position is said to be mythological why would the view that God became man not be mythological? Both cases are by human rationality mysterious and cannot be so easily accommodated to human imagination. So Barth concludes that when the Son became man it was the entire Godhead that became man.

Barth uses the traditional concepts of Reformed theology but with a different meaning. For instance, he speaks of Christ as "very God" and "very man" or "God-man," but this has nothing to do with affirming both the divinity and humanity of Christ simultaneously. The humanity of Christ is the only fact about Christ. By giving his Son into the world, says Barth, God "sets at stake His own existence as God…. Well, in this act, God loved the world so much, so profoundly, that it did in fact consist in the venture of His own self-offering, in hazarding of His own existence as God." In his [Son] humanity there is no other God, which means there is no other person of the Trinity apart from the revealed God, for that would be an abstract mythological thinking. Christ is God only insofar as he is connected to his work of reconciliation.

For Barth, God himself becoming man, living, acting, speaking, suffering and triumphing over it, has overcome the antithesis that had existed between God and man because of man's sin. Barth severally asserts the fact of the incarnation that God became man in order that man would attain that mutual union with the divine. It is God without distinction of persons that was incarnate in the person of Jesus. Barth's Trinitarian theology holds sway his view of the incarnation here. On the purpose of atonement, he says, "The work of atonement in Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of the *communion of Himself with man* and of man with Himself which He willed and created at the very first." So Christ came mainly because of the covenant relationship with God for which man was created. That perfect harmony that God intended originally to exist between him and his creation cannot be annulled in spite of sin, and this is resolved in the incarnation of Christ. This implies that the incarnation was necessary because it is in the nature of God that he would enter into relationship with man whether there was a fall or not.

Yet McCormack thinks that Barth places the Orthodox Christology on an "entirely new foundation" by grounding the Virgin Birth in the logic of "*anhypostatic – enhypostatic* conception." Unlike Schleiermacher, Barth does not have a problem affirming the two natures of Christ and their relationship. The union between the Logos and the human nature is a "unity in differentiation" which is strictly a "dialectical union." The humanity of Christ though having soul and body has no personality of its own but only in "*its union with the Logos of God*." Barth may have been coming from the thought direction of Leontius of Byzantium though with the latter's exception that he does not hold the human nature of Christ to be completely *anhypostatos* but as having a *physis enhypostatos* – a hypostasis of the Logos. According to McCormack, Barth makes an important point regarding the nature of the union of two natures.

The divine nature of Christ, which is shared by all members of the Godhead, was not made flesh but the person was. McCormack's use of "all members of the Godhead" makes Barth sound here as if the latter holds the Trinity as subsisting in distinct concrete persons. If that would be the case then there would arise a contradiction in Barth's thought as seen above. Yet the distinction that Barth makes between nature and person is very helpful because it presents a better option to Schleiermacher's dilemma on the usage of nature and person. This union is mediated indirectly through the person.

Nevertheless, the human attributes were communicated to the Logos – the whole person, so that it is not proper to isolate the divine nature from Christ's humanity especially his sufferings. "That which acts is clearly the *Person*. The nature can only act as the nature of the Person.

Here however, the one who acts can only be God, even though in the human nature." Though attributes of the human nature have certain implications for the divine nature, the divine attributes cannot be communicated to the human nature but to the Person – Christ. This view arises out of Barth's disputation with the Lutherans who hold to the communication of the divine attributes to the human nature which warrants the human nature to deification. This is also Pannenberg's Christolotical pitfall as he argues for the deification of humanity through the incarnation by assimilation to God (Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Jesus, God and Man* [Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1978], 39-42). Pannenberg develops this thought from Irenaeus' view (*Against Heresies*, 7/2, 1120) that the incarnation warrants our share in God's perfection.

But I think this is a misreading of Irenaeus' idea because he does not teach deification of humanity through participation in the mystery of incarnation. And our share in divine perfection is relative and taken within the context of the "already and not yet" it should be understood more in terms of our justification that has been credited to us from Christ's account. This is the case by reason of the Reformed principle of "*finitum non capax infiniti*" whereby though "God is capable of the human, the relation cannot be reversed."

Barth's problem with the two wills of Christ is not per the divine and human nature but with the distinction of individuality between the Father and Son.

When the covenant of grace was based on a pact between two divine persons, a wider dualism was introduced into the Godhead - again in defiance of the Gospel as the revelation of the Father by the Son and of the Son by the Father, which took place in Jesus Christ. The result was an uncertainty, which necessarily relativized the unconditional validity of the covenant of grace, making it doubtful whether in the revelation of this covenant we really had to do with the one, will of the one God.... The question is necessarily and seriously raised of a will of God the Father which originally and basically is different from the will of God the Son.

His charge of dualism and two different and perhaps conflicting wills here also takes more of speculative face than biblical witness and exegesis. If the Son reveals the Father and the Father the Son then it shows the irrationality of opposing the distinction of two existing persons in the one Godhead. Such revelation without the actual distinctexistence of the one being revealed is so irrational and it makes nonsense of Jesus' dialogue with the Father if indeed he himself was the Father who turned to be the Son in the person of Jesus Christ.

Certainly Jesus was not mad, neither was he bad. Otherwise how could Jesus cry out "Why have you forsaken me?" Or why would he in his prayer time task the Father that he had glorified him so he too should do his own part of glorifying him [the Son] and even say, "Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit"? The Jews of Jesus time recognized his divine powers but separated him from the Father even as he did not say he was the Father. The point of dualism and separate wills does not also arise because Jesus Christ taught clearly the unity of his will and that of the Father when he says, "I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him who sent me that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day.

For my Fathers will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day (John 6: 38-40; cf. 7: 16, 17). That is why he cried out, "Not my will but your will" (Matt. 26: 39, 42; Mk. 14: 36; Lk. 22:42). So a distinction of will is not a separation or difference of will such as would be a dualism. The unity of the life of the Triune God is a lovely mystery that has been bequeathed to us by the Son, and it is not for human glory but God's adorable glory. It is on this principle that the two wills of Christ by virtue of his divine and human natures equally does not constitute a contradiction but displays a wonderful unity of purpose. We shall take up this matter later in the course of this study.

Moltmann seems to follow Barth's though and thinks he departs from Barth. The principle of Moltmann's thought on the incarnation of Christ is the concept of *kenosis*. Like Barth, he maintains that the incarnation of the Son is the humanity of the entire Godhead. It is the *kenosis* of God. He says, "The divine kenosis which begins with the creation of the world reaches its perfected and completed form in the incarnation of the Son." Moltmann sees God's act of creation as an act of self emptying – that is to say, giving up his Godness in his act of creation. But this is unclear what he meant by that, whether it is in the sense Paul uses in Philippians 2 or another sense.

The futility in this thinking is not too far-fetched. The question immediately is: At what point did God empty himself? Was it just immediately before he began the creation or during the process or after the creation? If prior to the creative activity, by what powers did he create then? If by creating the world God gave up his divinity as some understand kenosis when they refer to the incarnation then Moltmann is denying that God as he is in himself did not actually create the world. If he created, it was not as God, but as a certain being. It was a human being or human power that created the world. This thinking is capable of yielding idolatry.

It is plain that in the creation act, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit were all involved. Scripture's reference to the act of creation presents the three persons as God divine, not as human. Again he says, "There is *no God* other than the incarnate, human God who is one with men and women." This sounds so cunning. Is Moltmann making a good case for the oneness of God or is he making a denial of the distinction between the incarnate Son and the other persons of the Godhead who are not incarnate? The latter seems most obvious. And "God *does not* encounter men and women 'as God'; he encounters them in human form, in the incarnate and crucified Son," and "God is nowhere more divine than when he becomes man." This sounds Barthian yet elsewhere he believes in the distinct individuality of the three persons of the Trinity as opposed to Barth and Rahner. By making an exceptional rule here, Moltmann's view has repercussions for the Old Testament revelation where God's encounter with his people was *as God* not as man. God was not incarnate in the Old Testament. In the consummated eschaton, God will encounter his covenant and redeemed people as God.

It is also a contradiction in terms that God becomes divine only when he is human. Humanity does not produce divinity. They are two different entities with distinctive functions. They can only come together in a covenantal way. Again though Moltmann might not wish to deny the existence of the Triune God his statement implies exactly that. If there is no God other than the incarnate Logos and yet we hold that it is the Son that was incarnate then Moltmann is denying the concrete reality of the Father and the Holy Spirit who are not incarnate. He is actually discriminating between the Son on one hand and the Father and Holy Spirit on the other. Overall what is consciously lacking in the Christological views above in understanding the unique theanthropic constitution of Christ is the light that the concept of covenant brings to bear upon all divine and human relationships.

3.5 A Reformed Covenantal Christology

Closely following the formulation of Chalcedon was the Belgic Confession (1563) as the earliest of the Reformed confessions. It makes a distinction of the two natures as it renders in part:

As then the divine nature hath always remained uncreated, without beginning of days or end of life, filling heaven and earth, so also hath the human nature not lost its properties, but remained a creature, having beginning of days, being a finite nature, and retaining all the properties of a real body.… But these two natures are so closely united in one person, that they were not separated even by His death. Therefore that which He, when dying commended into the hands of His Father, was a real human spirit departing from His earthly body. But in the meantime the divine nature always remained united with the human, even

when He lay in the grave; and the Godhead did not cease to be in Him, any more than it did when He was an infant, though it did not so clearly manifest itself for a while. Wherefore we confess that He is very God and very man: very God by His power to conquer death, and very man that He might die for us according to the flesh (Beeke, 2002:66-68).

The Belgic Confession presents an interesting insight in the relationship between the divinity and the humanity of Christ. It is apparent that the humanity finds meaning only when the divine accompanies it but that does not mean the human is incomplete in itself with respect to its properties. The incompleteness must be understood only in the sense that apart from Christ all of humanity can be nothing. The human soul that was in Christ explains the complete personality of the human nature though, not apart from his divine nature. Once the incarnation took place the divine remained united to the body even in death, though the divine did not die with the body. The divinity of Christ remains distinct in its properties but also holding union with the human in all situations. Whether the human was anhypostatic or hypostatic is not so much the issue but that it was complete in the sense of the goal of the union only when the two natures were united.

As we turn to Calvin we see that while using the Confessional statements as foundational he goes beyond them to the explanation of the rationality of the hypostatic union of the two natures of Christ using the analogy of the distinction of the two substances of man, body and soul within one person. “For the soul is not the body, and the body is not the soul. Therefore, some things are said exclusively of the soul that can in no wise apply to the body; and of the body, again, that in no way fit the soul; of the whole man, that cannot refer – except inappropriately – to either soul or body separately.” It is in this unique covenantal frame that Calvin further affirms the coming together of the divine and the human in Christ. “For we so affirm the Godhead joined to and united to the manhood, that each of them has its whole property remaining, and yet of them both is made one Christ.” The theanthropic constitution of Christ is covenantal and this fact is grounded in the entire concept of the redemptive historical covenant between God and humanity. But the immediate derivation of this covenantal event in the Person of Christ has its foundation in the covenant of redemption between the Father and the Son. In this covenant, the Father would “prepare Him [Christ] a body, fit up a tabernacle for Him, formed as was the body of Adam by the immediate agency of God, uncontaminated and without spot or blemish.”

Defining what and how the union of the divine and the human in Christ in Reformed theology is consistently pregnant with covenantal nuances, Hodge defines the relationship of these attributes as the “communion of

attributes" in which the man Christ is the partaker. This covenantal understanding of the theanthropic constitution of Christ proves more helpful because it explains the purpose of the union of the attributes in the Person of Christ. Van Til, agreeing with Schaff, describes such relationship closely in connection with his Trinitarian theology where the union of the two substances in Christ is "one common life" that they "interpenetrate each other, like the persons of the Trinity." This mutual interpenetration of the divine and human natures in the person of Christ may not be understood as transfer of attributes to each other but as inseparably subsisting in one Person even as the Trinitarian persons each holds his unique attributes while remaining perichoretic in their union of oneness. Berkhof makes a covenantal statement on this fact: "The great truth enunciated is that the eternal Son of God *took upon* Himself our humanity…." This language closely associates with Paul's language where he uses "God reconciles us to himself" (2Cor. 5:18; Rom. 5:10; Col. 1:20) and with John where Christ says when he is lifted up he would "draw all men to himself" (John 12:32).

By taking upon himself the human nature Christ engaged it in a covenantal way, because it is not originally part of him. Otherwise, "The deity cannot share in human weaknesses; neither can man participate in any of the essential perfections of God." The Creator-creature distinction is only bridged covenantally, more so, as it pertains to redemption. So it is only by way of covenant that he could have both the divine and the human natures in his Person. The fact that each nature is not lacking in its distinct qualities nor is it abstractly construed but has concrete individuality or personal subsistence in the Person of Christ points more to a covenantal communion.

This perspective also helps to throw more light on what would have been a problem of divine and human contradiction and calling immutability into question. Schleiermacher's and followers' allusion to this contradiction as seen above finds it solution in the concept of the covenant. O'Collins is right to argue that the ontological gap between the divine and the human "cannot be so great that we are faced with entities or properties that are mutually self-exclusive in a total way." Extrapolating further he says, "If human beings are made in the image and likeness of God (Gen. 26-7), there must be something divine about every human being. If this is our case, for the divine Logos to assume a humanity, there must be something human about God."

It must be contended, however, that while O'Collins' first logic holds true his second logic does not hold necessarily the case. Therefore, "It would be a blatant contradiction in terms of attribute to the same subject at the same time and under the same aspect of mutually incompatible properties. But that is not being done here. With respect to his divinity,

Christ is omniscient, but with respect to his humanity he is limited in knowledge. Mutually exclusive characteristics are being simultaneously attributed to him but not within the same frame of reference."

Here involves the work of the Holy Spirit in this theanthropic constitution whose prerogative is to create archetypally in Christ a union of the two natures that meets the terms of the redemptive covenant. What is often forgotten by advocates of divine and human incompatibility is that this great mystery of the incarnation is an "act of power and grace" that cannot be measured by human understanding nor can it be fully explicated by human vocabulary. Unbelievers unfortunately interpret the power of God in the context of human weakness. It is by the power of the Holy Spirit that this great mystery is appreciated.

The covenantal structure of the divine and human in Christ is well captured in Barth's words thus: "In Jesus Christ it is not merely one man, but the whole *humanum* of all men, which is posited and exalted as such to unity with God." The totality of mankind as represented in the humanity of Christ holding solidaric union with his divinity points to a covenantal structure. This union would also have eternal consequences for the covenant relationship between God and his people in the context of the consummated eschaton.

The nature of the divine and the human in Christ is full divinity and full humanity. Yet it is the divine that takes the human to itself. The human is held in submission to the divine. It is impossible to think of equality between the divine and the human in terms of ontic and the purpose and the goal of the incarnation. The human alone cannot meet the redemptive requirements but the divine alone can. But because the human has to perform its required role, the divine has to take it to that level by way of union with it. But this is more properly explained as covenantal union between the divine and the human. In a covenantal union the superior partner dominates for the benefit of the inferior partner. This may not however be pushed too far as to make the human quiescent to or swallowed in the divine.

Here in the Person of Christ, that which the human was created for was perfectly achieved. Christ was acting in his humanity on behalf of all humanity in perfect obedience, and adoration of the Father. So what he was doing was covenantally assuming both positions of God and man. This is the nature of the logic. He was first God by nature and then man, which adding together earns him the description of theantropic Person. In the covenant relationship humanity is always required to be in submission to God. Therefore, the human nature of Christ was in perfect submission to his divine nature, even as one Person. The idea of

covenant is anchored upon the good and gracious character of God.

Central to the covenant relationship between God and Adam was the law requiring perfect obedience and consequently eschatological life. But when man contravened this law, God did not give up on his requirement of man's perfect righteousness unto that eschatological and eternal life. Such requirement must be fulfilled anyhow. God met this requirement himself through his Son in a unique way.

3.6 The Principle of Theanthropic Christology

The divine and human constitution of Christ is in principle of a fulfillment of that law of the covenant where his human nature was in prefect compliance and harmony with his divine nature. It is the foundation upon which Christ ably demonstrated in his life the perfect obedience required in this union on behalf of man; that man might be restored to that original relationship with his Creator. Witsius sustains this view thus: "The legal covenant entered into with the first man, is founded on the *very nature of God*; at least with respect to the commands of the covenant, and the threatening annexed to them. So that it would be contradiction if these precepts of *the law of nature* should not be proposed to man, or if man, after the violation of them should be saved without satisfaction." What Witsius underscores here is the close connection between the nature of God and the nature of man who by virtue of being in the image of God and having also entered into covenant with him necessarily requires his perfect obedience to his Creator, and wherefore man has failed he must satisfy divine justice in order for that relationship to hold. It is upon that logic that Christ's divine nature communes with the human nature, not abstractly but concretely in his Person so as to meet the divine judicial satisfaction on behalf of man.

Reasoning with Irenaeus, Calvin, says it is on the basis of the theanthropic constitution of Christ that we can truly know God as the Redeemer, "even as the Father, himself infinite, becomes finite in the Son, for he has accommodated himself to our little measure lest our minds be overwhelmed by the immensity of his glory." Here lies the essence of the covenantal constitution of Christ - that we may know more intimately that God is our Redeemer. This is the value of redemptive revelation wherefore, the nearness of God to humanity is not just a nearness of God in the Spirit among humanity, but it is a nearness that Christ as God slept with humanity and woke up with it in his personal life. The Westminster Catechism sums up this fact in answer to question 40 thus: "It was requisite that the Mediator, who was to reconcile God and man, should himself be both God and man, and this is one person, that the proper works of each nature might be accepted of

God for us, and relied on by us, as the works of the whole person." So in principle, God and humanity worked harmoniously in the Person of Christ to both subdue the power of sin and obtain redemption unto a perfect covenant relationship. Without the perfect covenantal union of the two natures of Christ, there would not be truly an unshakeable covenant between God and humanity.

There is a logical priority of the divine over the human by virtue of the fact that it is the initiative of the divine to assume the lower nature of humanity upon himself. This fact is true of Paul when he makes the comparison between the heavenly Adam and the earthly Adam (1Cor. 15:47f). The second Adam who is also the heavenly man became united to the body of the earthly man so that he might destroy the power of death and obtain resurrection and a glorious, imperishable, immortal body for his people.

According to the testimony of Scripture, "the Word was God" qeo.j h=n o` lo,goj and "the Word became flesh," o` lo,goj sa.rx evge,neto (John 1:1, 14). Also in Romans 1:3, 4, Paul says, he was "the seed of David according to the flesh" spe,rmatoj Daui.d kata. sa,rka and "Son of God by power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead," ui`ou/ qeou/ evn duna,mei kata. pneu/ma a`giwsu,nhj evx avnasta,sewj nekrw/n. In the two passages above there is a conscious juxtaposition of the two natures of Christ. In Romans the contrast marker *kata* makes that very clear. That he died proves his humanity and that he was resurrected vindicates his divine nature.

3.7 The Incarnation, not a Loss of Divinity

The incarnation of the Son is not therefore a loss of his divine attributes to humanity. While remaining incarnate he holds his ontological attributes as the second person of the Trinity. Calvin makes one of his core statements of faith: "Here is something marvelous: the Son of God descended from heaven in such a way that, without leaving heaven he willed to be borne in the virgin's womb, to go about the earth, and to hang upon the cross; yet he continuously filled the world even as he had done from the beginning!"

The perfect harmony of the divine and the human attributes in the Person of Christ underscores the archetypal submissiveness of the human to the divine in a covenantal context. The human nature derives its worth on account of the divine nature, for "the humanity of Christ in virtue of its union with his divine nature is immeasurably exalted in dignity and worth, and even power over all intelligent creatures." As a point of note this does not imply the divinity of the human nature of Christ. However, the Lutheran Orthodox theology holds to the

deification of the body of Christ, because the divine attribute of omnipresence transfers to it. This was developed from Luther's idea of the Eucharist in which Christ is literally present in the elements. Though Scriptures have spoken more of Christ's humanity, they leave us in no doubt about his full divinity. The preponderance of Scriptural references to his humanity is to emphasize his genuine connection with us so as to give us full hope and assurance of our full access to God.

In a covenantal arrangement the superior party determines the worth of the inferior party. In the old covenants the inferior party was required to bear the heavy burden of the stipulations without the aid of the superior. But herein lies the uniqueness of this covenantal union where Christ acting on both sides – as God requiring obedience from humanity on the one hand and being given it on the other by himself assuming human position and fulfilling it perfectly. Yet more than fulfilling the divine requirements Bromiley says, "Divinity assumed humanity in order to give humanity a share in divinity." The human nature of Christ was in perfect submission to the divine nature, which renders the impossibility of Jesus Christ to have sinned. This does not, however, mean the passiveness of the human nature but that all the human actions of Christ tended towards conformity with his divine nature because he could not have contradicted his Godness. Grudem thinks that Jesus' ability to overcome sin was largely dependent upon the determination of his human nature rather than the divine.

The Lutheran theology believes in the passiveness of the human nature of Christ. "In the incarnation the divine nature is the active, as the human nature is the passive, factor; any change resulting from the act will affect the human nature, not the divine." Care must be taken in asserting this view so as not to separate the complementary role of the divine to the human nature in accomplishing their set goal, which is to overcome sin through perfect obedience to God in spite of temptations. This is what the Westminster Larger Catechism teaches: "It was requisite that the Mediator should be God, that he might sustain and keep the human nature from sinking under the infinite wrath of God, and the power of death; give worth and efficacy to his sufferings, obedience, and intercession; and to satisfy God's justice, procure his favour, purchase a peculiar people, give his Spirit to them, conquer all their enemies, and bring them to everlasting salvation." It is the power of God that upholds the human life to receive its fullness.

Therefore in Christ, "It is impossible that the person constituted in union with the eternal and immutable Word, can sin; for this union is an absolute shield to the lower nature, against error. In the God-man 'dwells the fullness of the Godhead bodily;'" (Col. 2: 9) for "this lower nature, upon its union with the Word, was imbued with the full influences of the Holy Ghost." Yet the two natures are inseparable and

without conflict except with the differences in respect of their peculiar functions pertaining to them. The two natures acted in distinct manners in fulfilling but one purpose of the incarnation which is redemption. This is to obtain redemption through the satisfactory propitiation by God himself by virtue of its required infinite value and yet also by man as the offender who is rightly required to pay the penalty; hence the God man. It involves reconciliation between God and man so that man's allegiance to his Creator may be perfectly restored.

The full humanity of Christ may not be toned down in any way, but rather emphasized. "Since the children have flesh and blood, he too had to share in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death – that is, the devil…. For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people" (Heb. 2:14, 17).

Here lies the principle of the union of the divine and human in Christ. The human was there to die in faith to the Father while the divine was there to resurrect him (John 10: 17-18); the human was to be lifted up on the cross while the divine was by that means to draw all men to Christ (John 12: 32); the human was to sorrow or weep emotionally with the bereaved while the divine was there to give life and comfort to the dead (Luke 7:11-15; 8: 49-56; John 11: 34-44). This is what Calvin also holds to be true when he says Christ "coupled human nature with divine that to atone for sin he might submit the weakness of the one to death; and that, wrestling with death by the power of the other nature, he might win victory for us." In the Person of Christ humanity was performing its perfect duties in a form of probation, which the first Adam could not sustain. The divine nature enabled the human nature however necessary such as bearing the wrath of God, raising Christ's dead body to life (John 2:19; 10:17-18, Heb. 7:16).

That Christ truly had two natures necessarily and logically implies that he also had two wills or consciousness. Both worked with respect to each nature where it is plausible to talk both about Christ's finite and infinite knowledge (Mk. 13:32; Lk. 2:52; John 2:25; 16: 30; 21:17). Grudem defends this view against the charge of Nestorianism that "it must simply be affirmed that two wills and two centers of consciousness *do not* require that Jesus be two distinct persons." It is in this light that a covenantal interpretation of the two natures of Christ is more helpful. The two natures could communicate their attributes to the Person but not transfer them to one another. If we take O'Collins' definition of person to be correct then it might be helpful to avoid the communication of attributes from nature to nature. He describes a person "*this* rational and free individual, who is the subject and centre of action and relationships

and who enjoys incommunicable identity, inalienable dignity, and inviolable rights." This agrees with Turretin who holds that the "communication of attributes … is an effect of the union by which the properties of both natures became common *to the person*." The human nature of Christ could be adorable because of its affinity with his divine nature but it would be erroneous to talk about worshipping the human nature rather than the Person whose two natures may not be separated and worshipped in parts. It is the whole Christ as the God-man that is worshipped. Because the Person of Christ who subsists in two natures bore the weight of sin it could be said that the human nature communicated indirectly to the divine nature its burdens.

Though his divine nature did not die, it could share in the experience of death and suffering in a certain way, since it remained united to the body of Christ even in death. Calvin also arguing from Scripture's teaching (Acts 20:28; 1Cor. 1: 1; 1John 1: 1) alludes to the indirect communication of properties between the two natures: "Surely God does not have blood, does not suffer, cannot be touched with human hands. But since Christ, who was true God and also true man, was crucified and shed his blood for us, the things that he carried out in his human nature are transferred improperly, although not without reason, to his divinity." By virtue of the complete Person of Christ his divinity equally shared in his human nature's subjection to the law.

3.8 The Humanity of Christ and Soteriology

The soteric importance of the humanity of Christ is its ground for our union with him. By his human nature divinity touches down to humanity and being divinity himself with the Father and the Spirit he makes the ultimate connection between the Trinitarian God and us. It is a union that is both organic and mystical, for it involves both our bodies and our souls (1Cor. 6:15-17). It is on this basis that we also share in his sufferings, death and resurrection (Rom. 8:17; 2Cor. 1:5; Php. 3: 10; Col. 1:24). This also has further implications for our bodily resurrection and glorification (Rom. 8:9-11; Col. 3:3-4). We have a covenantal representation in the life of Christ by which fact the bodily resurrection of Jesus becomes a pledge that we too shall be raised with him in the newness of life and the eternal covenant. Calvin (1960: 482) expounds this wonderful covenantal link in the life of Christ:

This is the wonderful exchange which, out of his measureless benevolence, he has made with us; that, becoming Son of man with us, he has made us sons of God with him; that, that by his descent to earth, he has prepared an ascent to heaven for us; that, by taking on our morality, he has conferred his immortality upon us; that, accepting our weakness, he has strengthened us by his power; that, receiving our

poverty unto himself, he has transferred his wealth to us; that, taking the weight of our iniquity upon himself (which oppressed us), he has clothed us with his righteousness.

It should be made clear that immortality conferred on us is not necessarily divinity even as angels are not, and the transfer of Christ's wealth to us as Calvin says may be understood as righteousness of which we became impoverished as a result of the fall. The Catholics have a similar version to Calvin but its extremity is quite apparent. The Catholic Catechism says, "The Word became flesh to make us '*partakers of the divine nature*.' For this is why the Word became man, and the Son of God became the Son of man: So that man, by entering into communion with the Word and thus receiving divine sonship, might become a son of God. The Son of God became man so that we might become God. The only-begotten Son of God, wanting to make us sharers in his divinity, assumed our nature, so that he, made man, might make men God's." This citation from the Catechism is developed from 2 Pet. 1:4.

Barth comes close to Calvin here but also differs significantly when he says "As in Him [Christ] God became like man, so too in Him *man has become like God*…. In Him humanity is exalted humanity, just as Godhead is humiliated Godhead" (Barth, 1956: 4:1). There is ambiguity in Barth's phrase, "man has become like God" because it has no qualification as to whether it is in terms of ontic or moral status. The becoming of the Logos assumes a *form* whereas that cannot be the case with humanity. Jesus admonishes us to 'be like" or "be as" the Father in heaven, not "*become* like." And when he demands that likeness he specifies its manner – that is to be perfect (Matt. 5: 48). Barth's view re-echoes Satan's luring of Eve in the garden when he told Eve that she and her husband would be "like God" without qualification. Again Barth contradicts himself when elsewhere he says that while "God is capable of the human, the relation cannot be reversed" (cited above).

While Calvin emphasizes our sharing in the benefits of the incarnation by mystical union as seen elsewhere Barth takes us to the very nature of God by comparison. Logically speaking God became man but we did not become God or like God but scriptures say we are his children by adoption (Rom. 8:14-17). This divine connection with human suffering must be seen only in the context of God's redemptive work rather than in the ontological relationship between the Father and the Son so that our theology should not try to nullify the "divine transcendence" or "the victory which Christ has won over sin and death." Contrary to Moltmann's theory, "The true locus of divine suffering is not to be found either in the nature or in the persons of the Trinity, but in the work which they have come to do in the world."

4.0 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it is pertinent to be sober and assert our humility as we deal with this matter. O'Collins' observation is apt here:

The personal union of divinity and humanity entailed by the incarnation exceeds our conceptuality, and cannot be clarified in plain descriptive language in such a way as to be positively intelligible. If we cannot imagine and describe what it is like to be God, we cannot imagine what it would be like to be God and man.

Nevertheless, for the reasons given, the incarnation does not present itself as clearly incoherent.

It is only in the scripture as we hold it to be the true and infallible word of God that we can have our knowledge of God the Redeemer. It is only by the Holy Spirit that we may perceive the radiance and beauty of the God-man and testify that this mystery is trustworthy and adorable. As we mumble our words to express this truth it is only the concept of the covenant that affords us a better understanding of God's special relationship with his people as epitomized in the anthropic constitution of Christ. In the Person of Christ we find our representation and a share in his life, which guarantees our future hope in eternity where God's dwelling will be with us. Here we have a message of hope to the world of the wonderful opportunity that we have in God.

While the general concept of the incarnation finds Athanasius and Barth in one camp the details of the matter put them in sharp opposition. The reason for the incarnation of the Word for Athanasius has a logical historical connection. First, Athanasius would not hesitate to say incarnation of the Son of God who is the second person of the Trinity whereas Barth would prefer to say incarnation of God. Athanasius logic sees the Son involved initially in the creation of the world.

Mankind fell into sin and brought a just condemnation upon the whole creation of God. Justice and goodness held God in a dilemma but was resolved in the incarnation of the Son and reconciliation was obtained between God and mankind. The crux of the matter for Athanasius is sin which brought about separation between God and man which in other words is eternal death for mankind. The reconciliation is needed to restore man to God. The main thrust of this new arrangement of restoration is the matter of relationship which hitherto had been good but spoiled by mankind's rebellion. The question is what is the nature of this relationship?

Reformed theology speaks of God relationship with mankind in terms of a covenant. The Creator-creature distinction or gap is so huge that God could only bridge it by way of voluntary self condescension which is described as a covenant. There is no other way that God could relate with his people but by covenant. Reformed theology views the history of redemption covenantally.

In the context of the ancient near East practice, it was a relationship that involved certain stipulations usually given by the superior partner. Therefore, God gave Adam specific commands and obedience was required, not just for the future well-being of Adam but also for entering a relationship with his creator which was binding.

5.0 SUMMARY

Both the humanity and divinity of Jesus Christ are important to his work as our saviour. The different opinions held about these natures by different authors like Athanasius, Barth and Calvin do not in any way change the status of these natures. The bottom line is that God entered into a covenantal relationship with man through Abraham after the fall of Adam and Eve. This covenant was not just with Israel and for Israel, but it was on behalf of the entire humanity. The first covenant with Abraham could not fulfill God's desire for humanity since it was built on human terms. So, God initiated the second and last covenant through Jesus Christ who is both human and divine to satisfy all requirements to save man from sin.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. What is the problem with rationalism's Christology?
2. Explain your understanding of the covenantal character of the two natures of Christ.
3. What is the importance of the two natures of Jesus Christ to our salvation?

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UNIT 5 CHRISTOLOGY IN AFRICAN THEOLOGY

CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Africanisation of Christianity is to express, understand and live the religion in terms of African culture and perspectives, so that the religion becomes their way of life not only expressed in the Church, but their day-to-day life. Therefore, in order to Africanised Christianity it is important to study how Christology will be Africanised without being swallowed by African Traditional Religion (ATR), since Christology is the heart of Christianity.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

explain Christology in African context state the sources of African Christology.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 The Problem of Christological Concepts

African theologians struggled with developing a Christology that they wished to be distinctively African in contrast to what has been developed from the Western perspective. The struggle for this began with John Mbiti who is considered to be the father of modern African theology. At one time, he wrote about African concepts of Christology but later tried to recant his thoughts. Several other African theologians still considered that there needs to be some christological perspectives that contribute to the early church formulations especially the Nicene and Chalcedonian developments.

John Mbiti

Mbiti has established himself as a modern reputable African theologian. He wrote numerous works on theology and religion, especially African religion. His chief concern was to develop a distinctive African theology. But such theology must be christological in its outlook. Any Christian theology without Christology has lost its distinctiveness. Considering the New Testament Eschatology which rests upon the foundation of the death and resurrection of Christ, the African finds his life enmeshed in the promise of the new life. This worldview of the New Testament that is characterized by spirits and Time provides some fertile connection with African worldview. All of this is woven around the person and work of Christ. The African worldview which has no clear eschatology is shaped and defined by the Eschatology of the New Testament.

Christian Eschatology is sharply different from African concept of the end of time because in the former "all things are taken up in the Resurrection mode, in the very presence of God, partaking of newness and … the divine nature. Newness is the word in Christian Eschatology, and it is newness in Christ" (Mbiti, 1971: 183). This means the resurrection of Christ provides the frame for formulating the Christian worldview and for interpreting all facts in the world. It further means theological vistas for developing an authentic African Christian theology should be thoroughly grounded in the person and work of Christ. The possibility of finding easy access to Christological formulation in the African context can be found in the sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist. Since, these are considered as Christian initiation into the life of the community of Christ, African initiation rites present a bridge for developing a relevant theology.

One of the important eschatological features in African worldview is life after death. The New Testament Eschatology presents a well defined beatific perspective that is transformative to the African view. By this fact, the New Testament presents "the uniqueness of the christian hope of the hereafter" so that the "Resurrection sums up all things in Christ as both Alpha and the Omega" (Ibid, 185). As the church grows in Africa, its theology must be consistent and defined by its Christological dimension, and this must be tested by the New Testament sources. This Christology meets the unique problems of Africans in terms of suffering for them in their socio-economic and spiritual crises. Thus "the final test for the validity and usefulness of any theological contribution is Jesus Christ.

Since His Incarnation, Christian Theology ought to be refered to as Christology because Theology falls or stands on how it

understands,translates and interprets Jesus Christ at a given Time, Place and human situation" (Ibid, 190). What Mbiti underscores here is that Christology is central to all Christian theology. Such Christology must also stand on what the New Testament prescribes. In other words, the New Testament alone gives the sources for the Christology that shapes eschatology. For Mbiti, Christian theology starts and ends with New Testament Christology.

John Onaiyekan

More recently, John Onaiyekan has given a good summary of African contributions to Christology (1997: 355-368). There he points out a number of important things which I shall flesh them out here. First, he argues that every Christology begins with the question that Christ himself laid down about himself in Matthew 16:13-20: "Who do people say I am" or "But you, who do you, say I am?" This question defines the contours of Christology. It is finding the right answer to this question that governs the direction of Christology. In other words, biblical Christology should not be evolved away from this basic question. Peter gave a response that was approved by Christ as being derived from divine interpretation. The question and answer in this text are architectonic in evaluating any Christology as to whether it is sound or not.

Onaiyekan develops his thoughts along several lines. First, Christ is the center of all Christian Theology, and this includes African Theology. Though he is right he also mistakenly tries to connect the African knowledge of the Supreme Being with Christology: "If it is true that Christology is at the very heart of all Christian theology, it is particularly true for African christian theology. It is by now generally agreed by most students of African traditional religions that our peoples have *always had a clear idea*[5] of and firm belief in the Supreme Being. They have a faith in God which is indigenous and cannot be attributed to
foreign influences, whether Christian or Islamic." This seems much too far to be true. Second, he argues that what actually is the case with African theology is a development of Christological trends rather than African Christology. And the point is that these Christological trends are developed within the context of the unique African situation, namely concerns for "life issues" or "concrete issues."

This makes African Christological trends to be much closer to the thoughts of the early Fathers. Third, the diversity of African cultural and socio-political issues such as belief in "spirits and divinities" presents "a richness of trends" in this Christological enterprise. Those who are Emphasis mine.

oppressed see Christ as the Liberator. Fourth, there is certain connectivity between the African Christological trends and the universal church, so that an idea of unique African Christology in the original sense that seems to be cut off from the global church confession is undesirable and unproductive. Fifth, Christology in African Christianity is to be both professional and popular meeting the needs of the academia and the ordinary people.

Concerning the sources of African Christology, Onaiyekan posits that the Bible, the theology of the older church and living experiences of Africans form their Christological understanding. Africans take the story of Christ in the Bible at face value believing in the Immaculate Conception, the death, resurrection and ascension of Christ to be real historical realities. In this trend, concepts like Son of God, Lord, Saviour and Redeemer are compatible with African thought patterns. The early church Christological formulations such as the Apostles' Creed, Nicene Creed and Chalcedon are still reference points for African Christianity. While there is this continuity with the worldwide church in all ages, African Christianity seeks to bring the Biblical Christology to its practical life. The practical application of the person and work of Christ in African experiences is has been stressed in African Christological trends.

Other scholars have tried to develop concepts of ancestor Christology such as Nyamiti (1984) and Bujo (1992) who advocates Christ as proto Ancestor. This Christological however, cannot be said to be uniquely African as if only Africans believe in ancestral linage. This Christological trend also misses the foundational question that Christ laid down about himself to which Peter rightly answered: that is the question of who Christ is, and this is a general question that cannot be made very narrow. Though it is not out of point to narrow the application of Christ to a group of people's experience, care should be taken that the original biblical message is preserved. While Onaiyekan himself started well on that note he does not emphasize the answer that Peter gave which Christ approved. African Christology should be sensitive to that answer which takes an objective view of the person of Christ as the God-man before considering its relevance to African experiences.

Christology first recognises that Christ is the Son of God who became incarnate (God-man) who in his incarnation serves the African need. The objective must be first stressed, then the subjective which is the applicability of the person and work of Christ to the African situation. It is on this basis that African Christology would be biblical and African. The idea of "Kinsman" which Onaiyekan takes as an equivalent of "Pahad Yishaq" in Genesis 31:31, 53 following the argument of

Albright and Geneva Bible translation is not convincing. With the exception of Geneva Bible, no other versions translates Kinsman even other foreign languages. Most translate "fear" rather than Kinsman. As a matter of fact, the Septuagint renders fo,bou which is fear, and in the next verse, 54 has avdelfou.j or "brothers" in plural which refers to Jacob's kinsmen. The two verses do not support reference to God as Kinsman.

Other concepts that refer to Jesus as "Master of Initiation" or *Orisha* are not biblically oriented. If the Greeks referred to Christ as the Ophelus other than the biblical *Christos* it is not necessarily granted that this is biblical Christology, and so we cannot take one extra-biblical Christological projection to be a norm for African Christology. Christological applications should be distinct from the biblical given that Christ is the Son of the living God. If we do not take this as the standard, then cannot escape the fact that we are creating parallel Christological interpretations to Scripture.

The accomplished work of Christ could be rightly applied to the African situation in terms of liberation, justice and peace but this subjective aspect of Christology stands on the objective declaration of Christ as the Son of God, which alone supersedes ethnic and national heroes and divinities to a universal Saviour.

Onaiyekan surprisingly goes on to deny the exclusivity of Christ when he argues thus: "We can no longer hang on to an exclusive Christology developed by those who have not had our type of challenge and opportunity to experience living with people of other faiths" (367). This begs the question. This kind of Christological conclusion ignores the very foundational question that Onaiyekan highlighted as the central Christological question. Furthermore, he completely ignores Peter's answer that stands as the guiding Christological developments of all cultures. The exclusivity of Christ and his redemptive work grant that salvation is found in no one else and no other means except through the person and finished work of Christ. This is the testimony of Scripture and the Christology of the early church fathers.

Denial of this is simply denial of the exclusive claims of Scripture, and it seems that Onaiyekan's conclusion is very much inconsistent with his earlier attestation of the popular African belief in Christ. Exclusive Christology must not be sacrificed on the altar of religious dialogue. We should also be careful that it is not the subjective application of Christology to our various experiences and the relationality to human concepts that define who Jesus is essentially but that he primarily the Son of God ontologically, and only then can we begin to move towards applying his accomplished work to our situation. Otherwise, we can

easily fall into the theological pitfall of liberalism which denies the objective ontological Christology.

Kwame Bediako

Bediako takes his African Christological study from Afua Kuma, an African woman. Afua expressed her understanding of Christ in imageries. To her Christ is the "grinding stone," "the Lion of the grasslands," "the Big Tree," and "the Great Doctor." The cross of Christ is seen as a fishing net where men are caught.

Bediako shows how this woman links the African experience to Jesus. By this approach he tries to show that Christianity is not a foreign or Western religion but that it is rooted in the African experience. Christ saturates the entire African existence – air, home and market. Also like other African scholars, he brings in the concept of ancestor. Ancestors provide identity and protection which Christ represents to Africans. Christ is the ancestor which Bediako tries to approach it from the biblical view.

Christ fulfills and transcends the function of African ancestors. Bediako considers the book of Hebrews as most relevant to Africans where its descriptions of the sacrificial death of Christ to procure redemption for his people properly fit into the African perspective and experience. Christ is the Word of God translated into the human situation and who becomes the African conqueror.

Laurenti Magesa

Magesa (2004) tended to follow liberal scholarship in her Christology. She raised the question: "What is the reality and purpose of the life, teaching, and death of Jesus Christ, the meaning of the Christ event?" (105) the reply to this stands upon "split Christology" whereby liberal scholars differentiates between the Christ of faith and the historical Jesus. She argued thus:

Critically reviewing the current research on the Jesus of history, however, one must agree with those scholars who argue that, despite the important light that the Jesus-of- history studies shed on the issue, it is not possible to have a dispassionate, objective biography of the man Jesus, his 'authorized biography,' as it were. This is because his personal characteristics as a man cannot be definitively known from the evidence at hand. Apart from only certain basic indisputable facts supplied by history, everything else is speculation (Magesa, 2004: 105).

This Christological direction is not helpful to African christianity, to say the least. Though critical scholarship may present a disjointed Christ and Christology, the New Testament does not intend to present it that way. There is one Lord Jesus Christ in christian history. The Gospels have given us enough that we can know, though may not be an entire biographical detail. Magesa's position amounts to incredibility of the Gospels' accounts. Such a partitioned Christ cannot answer to the challenges of African Christianity. If we "cannot know much for certain about the Jesus of history" but only can we "know a lot about the Christ of faith" then such Christology lacks merit and justification. A better perspective is offered by Bock:

The writers of the Gospels make no attempt to develop the life of Christ historically or chronologically. They make no attempt to provide a biography of Christ. The writers, using the same extant material, select and arrange according to their individual emphasis and interpretation that which presents the particular portrait of Christ they desire to convey. The Gospels present the life of Christ thematically and thus are to be viewed as complementary and supplementary rather than contradictory (2002: 23).[6]

Further, she defines the "Christ of faith" as the "content of the canonical writings of the New Testament." The question is whether the "Christ of faith" as it is called has no historical relevance but merely in books.
She queries Bediako's view on the African concept of ancestor and makes a strong case for the connection between such view and Christology. She said:

Ancestors in Africa are the 'principle' or 'source' of personal, family and community life. What happens to living humanity and the universe in general flows through the ancestors from God and back to God… Jesus is not contradicted by this principle of ancestorship in Christian theology, but rather is vividly expressed in and by the category. As an ancestor, the Christian vocation toward life in God cannot be conceived apart from Jesus (Ibid,
112).

So then Christ is the African "Proto-Ancestor or Ancestor par excellence" so that Christ has established a community of believers who live by the rules of faith, hope and charity. But moreso, there are some functional concepts that Christ befits such as "Chief, Master of Initiation, or Healer." It must be stated however, that such concepts

[6] Darrell L. Bock is citing J. Dwight Pentecost, *The Words and Works of Jesus Christ: A Study of the Life of Christ* (Grand Rapids:

Zondervan, 1981), 24. should be employed with greater care only by way of application which distinction should be made between the original biblical person of Christ and the application of who he is to the African person. The tendency for conflating these distinctions is much glaring in Magesa and other writers with similar perspective.

Christology is a very important topic in the study of Christian Theology whether African or Western. This is because of the centre position it occupies in the salvation of mankind. So, it is difficult to come up with a different Christology that will be purely African devoid of the Biblical Christology. This is because the basic source of information about Christology is from the Bible. More so, it is only one Jesus Christ that died on the cross and resurrected from the grave to save the whole universe. So, whether we talk about him in African or Western concept, we are still talking about the same person and what he has done for us. All we need to know and to do is to accept Jesus Christ as Saviour and allow him to help us in our individual situations. By the way, he knows us as individuals and our various situations whether African or Western and has the power to meet our needs.

The basic source of information on the deity of the Son is from the Bible. The New Testament has enough proof on the deity of the Son which needs no argument to anyone who accepts the Bible as infallible Word of God. The Synoptics, the Gospel of John and Pauline epistles all testify of the deity of the Son of God. Jesus Christ as the Son and second person of the trinity was both divine and human in order to save us.

3.3 Developing a Biblical Christology

The pressure of understanding God as three in one came with the appearance of the Son. There are types and foreshadowing of Christ in Scripture. There is concrete substance in the New Testament (in person of the Son of God made flesh). There is evidence for the deity of the Son throughout Scripture. Warfield (1950:220) argues: "The very abundance and persuasiveness of the deity of Christ greatly increases the difficulty of adequately stating it."

Johannine Testimony

The entirety of John's Gospel is predicated on the Deity of Christ. (As it is looked forward to in the OT and concluded in the New Testament). This is outlined in the Prologue to John (Ch 1). It sets up the entirety of what he wants to say. This contains the foundation and the cardinal elements of the Gospel. Jn. 1:1: “In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God and the word was God.” The Son was anticipated since the very beginning of Creation (in a sense). This Son is the one

who was in the beginning either as creature or Creator but John is saying the latter explicitly (v 3, 4, 9). The strongest affirmation you could get in Scripture are: Christ's deity. Nonetheless the Arians and Jehovah's Witnesses contested (subordinate deity). There are four Reasons (to reject their position and that of Jehovah's Witnesses' translation):

(1) A technical reason: anarthrous nouns. Jn. 1:49: "You are the king of Israel" (su. basileu.j ei= tou/ VIsrah,l). Hebrews 1:1-2: "Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son..." (evpV evsca,tou tw/n h`merw/n tou,twn evla,lhsen h`mi/n evn ui`w) The author is saying there has now come, *the* Son. Anarthrous noun doesn't take away the uniqueness of that noun.

(2) A contextual reason: Jn. 1:18 "No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known" (Qeo.n ouvdei.j e`w,raken pw,pote\ monogenh.j qeo.j o` w'n eivj to.n ko,lpon tou/ patro.j evkei/noj evxhgh,sato). "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (Kai. o` lo,goj sa.rx evge,neto kai. evskh,nwsen evn h`mi/n). John uses language that is clear fulfillment of OT (e.g., tabernacle climax in Jesus Christ (v 19)--identification of Yahweh of the OT to the Jesus of the NT). (Only other alternative within John would be polytheism). (Other view does injustice to the entirety of the Gospel).

(3) An "evangelistic" reason: (20:30-31): Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

The declaration of John in the Prologue is now confessed at the end of the Gospel by Thomas as he sees the risen Christ (Ch 20). He says that the Logos is Kurios and the Logos is Theos. The Importance of "in his name"-OT significance. (4) A theological reason: This is based on the VEgw, eivmiprinciple (18:4-6). Then Jesus, knowing all that would happen to him, came forward and said to them, "Whom do you seek?" They answered him, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus said to them, "I am he." (w`j ou=n ei=pen auvtoi/j\ evgw, eivmi)Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them. When Jesus said to them, "I am he," they drew back and fell to the ground. (What he says is clearly blasphemous if not true: claim of equality, Lordship attributes the name "I am"). To miss this in the Gospel of John is to miss entirely the significance of the revelation of the OT. John wants us to see that Jesus is Yahweh. And John's language allows for/makes distinction. The one who is with God is the one who is God. Prologue interprets the rest of the Gospel--they mutually exegete one another. Deity of Christ is woven into every page

of NT, into everything the Gospel writers give us.

The Synoptics

1. A mutual knowledge and intimacy with God

Matt 11:27: “All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.” This is probably the strongest possible statement, which means the knowledge of God in Christ. He speaks of the exclusive mutuality of knowledge that the Father and the Son share with one another. He also speaks of prior intimate knowledge that each has of the other.

In John 1:1, Jesus Christ alone is face to face with God as God. Here is an intimacy which is the exclusive prerogative of YHWH. Christ declaring himself to be the fulfillment of this motif of Yahweh dwelling with his people.

1. The prerogatives of Yahweh are attributed to Jesus

Is 40:1-3: “Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. To Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned, that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins. A voice cries: ‘In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God.’” Mark 1:1-3: “The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in Isaiah the prophet, ‘Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way, the voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.'” Jesus is identified with the coming YHWH of OT expectation. John the Baptist is saying that those that know their (OT) Bibles should know Jesus as this One.

Mark 2:1-5: “And when he returned to Capernaum after some days, it was reported that he was at home. And many were gathered together, so that there was no more room, not even at the door. And he was preaching the word to them. And they came, bringing to him a paralytic carried by four men. And when they could not get near him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him, and when they had made an opening, they let down the bed on which the paralytic lay. And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, ‘My son, your sins are forgiven.’” Here this underlies the virtually explicit claim to deity, backed up by a work of power. This backs up that which cannot be verified by that which can. The miracle points to the greater reality. He

is made alive; able to "move" spiritually.

The deity of Christ expressed in the way the OT is woven into the Gospel narratives. Ps 107:28-30: “Then they cried out to the LORD in their trouble, and he brought them out of their distress. He stilled the storm to a whisper; the waves of the sea were hushed. They were glad when it grew calm, and he guided them to their desired haven...” Mk 4:35-41: “On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, ‘Let us go across to the other side.’ And leaving the crowd, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. And other boats were with him. And a great windstorm arose, and the waves were breaking into the boat, so that the boat was already filling. But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion. And they woke him and said to him, ‘Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?’ And he awoke and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, ‘Peace! Be still!’ And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. He said to them, ‘Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?’ And they were filled with great fear and said to one another, ‘Who then is this, that even wind and sea obey him?’"
The answer to this given in Ps. 107: this is YHWH. He alone can still the chaos and storm that sin brings about in our own hearts and in our world.

2. Universal Lordship/Universal Presence

Matt. 28:18-20: “And Jesus came and said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Jesus is saying: "I share my name with the Father and the Holy Spirit-- this is one name--and in that name I will be with you." In OT, this is one of the primary signs of God being with his people: "I will be with you." Christ is the climax of that promise. (Matthew traces the Exodus motif in the ministry of Moses in various ways.)

Deut. 31:7-8: “Then Moses summoned Joshua and said to him in the sight of all Israel, ‘Be strong and courageous, for you shall go with this people into the land that the LORD has sworn to their fathers to give them, and you shall put them in possession of it. It is the LORD who goes before you. He will be with you; he will not leave you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed.’” What Moses promises, Jesus promises--that YHWH will be with them in himself. Warfield: "The alternatives constantly stare us in the face: either He is God or He is not sane. Either He is God or He is not good... He makes or mars the world." It is important to see in the Gospels that that is what his contemporaries

recognized (either a blasphemer, insane or what he said he was).

3. The Pauline Testimony

Rom 9:5: “To them belong the patriarchs, and from their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen.” Here is an exegetical question: is Christ the subject of praise or is this a general doxology? Paul's doxologies praise the immediate antecedent. Paul's point seems to be to attribute deity to Christ. Titus 2:11-13: “For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, *waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ*.” (1) "Great God" echos Isaiah 9:6: “For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called2 Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” Also, 8:13-14: “But the LORD of hosts, him you shall regard as holy. Let him be your fear, and let him be your dread. 14 And he will become a sanctuary and a stone of offense and a rock of stumbling to both houses of Israel, a trap and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.”

(2) No "two persons" eschatology: Philippians 3:20 “But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.” 1 Corinthians 1:7: “so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift, as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ.” 1 Thessalonians 1:10 -
2:1: “and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.” Paul always gives expectation of one person returning--the Son. Theologically, we should not expect God and Christ to come in distinction from one another. Let’s take three more Pauline considerations:

1) Note the way in which Paul so consistently describes Jesus as ku,rioj. And ku,rioj in the Septuagint is used for YHWH. We are bound to see this. Early church testimony of "Jesus is Lord" is first and foremost an attestation of deity. The Old Testament using name of YHWH over and over (5000x) now comes to its conclusion in God come in the flesh.

2) Paul makes ascriptions to Jesus the way the Old Testament does to YHWH.

a. Isaiah 8:13-14 But the LORD of hosts, him you shall regard as holy. Let him be your fear, and let him be your dread. And he will become a sanctuary and a stone of offense and a rock of stumbling to both houses of Israel, a trap and a snare to the

inhabitants of Jerusalem.

b. Rom 9:32-33: Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as if it were based on works. They have stumbled over the stumbling stone, 33 as it is written, "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame." Who is this stone of offense? It is YHWH. Now it is Jesus Christ (?)

c. Is 40:20-25: "He who is too impoverished for an offering chooses wood that will not rot; he seeks out a skillful craftsman to set up an idol that will not move. Do you not know? Do you not hear? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth? It is he who sits above the circle of the earth, and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers; who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, and spreads them like a tent to dwell in; who brings princes to nothing, and makes the rulers of the earth as emptiness. Scarcely are they planted, scarcely sown, scarcely has their stem taken root in the earth, when he blows on them, and they wither, and the tempest carries them off like stubble. To whom then will you compare me, that I should be like him? says the Holy One."

d. Rom 14:10-12: "For we will all stand before the judgment seat of
God; for it is written, 'As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.' So then each of us will give an account of himself to God."

e. Phil 2:9-11: "Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

3) Activities ascribed to YHWH in the OT are ascribed by Paul to Jesus. [2 Cor 3:16-18 (compare with Ex 33-34); 2 Cor 2:16 (Is 40:13ff); 2 Cor 10:17 (Jer 9:22); Eph 4:8 (Ps 68:18)]. First, he picks up great statements of God alone being Savior and applies them to Jesus (Isa. 43:3; 11; 45:15-21; e.g.; Eph. 5:23; 1 Tim. 4:10; 2 Tim. 1:10). Second, creation as a divine work which Christ and the Father are involved (Col. 1:16).

Third, there is the element of worship (2 Tim. 4:18): **"**To him be the glory forever and ever." Amen. Fourth, prayer is offered directly to Jesus: 2 Cor. 12:8; Acts 7:59; 9:13-14; 1 Th. 3:11-12; 2 Th. 3:15-16. Fifth, God is referred to as Judge and Jesus is also Judge (Gen. 18:25; 2 Th. 1:7 ff; 2 Tim. 4:11).

Warfield (1950:220) argues that Paul occasionally calls Christ God. He argues further that "For that the representation of Christ Jesus as *enmophe theou huparkon* is precisely to call him God is evidenced not merely by the intimation which is immediately given that he who is in the form of God is on equality with God, but by the connotation of the phraseology itse."[3] That as Lord, according to Paul, divine attributes, divine activities and worship are due unto Christ. Paul at no point assigns Christ a secondary placement in his divinity. Paul and John may not be separated as some would like.

In fact, Warfield does not warrant any difference between the Christology of the gospels and of the apostles. The doctrine of the two natures of Christ is both a synthesis of the New Testament teaching and a conception which underlies every one of the New Testament writings severally; it is not only the teaching of the New Testament as a whole but of the whole of the New Testament, part by part. Historically, this means that not only has the doctrine of the Two Natures been the invariable presupposition of the whole teaching of the church from the apostolic age down, but all the teachings of the apostolic age rests on it as its universal presupposition.

4.0 CONCLUSION

Christology is central to Christian Theology to its importance. The basic source of information on Christology is the Bible. It is impossible for African Theologians to develop a new Christology completely distinct from the Biblical Christology. This is due to diversity in African culture and socio-political issues, Africans do not have another Jesus Christ apart from the one in the Bible and there are too many needs or demands to be met by African Christology. Sources of African Christology in addition to the Bible are Theology of older Churches, living experiences of Africans from their Christological understanding and early Church Christological formulations like Apostles Creed, the Nicene Creed and Chalcedon Creed.

The attempt by some African Theologians to present Jesus Christ as the proto Ancestor is not common and unique to all African tribes, so it is not generally an acceptable Christological pattern. In fact it is problematic to take one African experience and develop a Christology from it. It sounds hollow to do so. Jesus Christ who is the subject of Christology is simply the Son of the Living God and the Saviour of this world as Peter confessed. Whether as Westerners, Asian or African, the Bible alone is the source of Christology. Though Christology can have some practical applications in imageries such should not be presented as if they are the original biblical concepts.

5.0 SUMMARY

John testifies that the Son of God was at the beginning (John 1:1). He also said that no one has never seeing the Father face to face, but spoke to us through His Son (John 1:18). According John's testimony, the word became flesh and lived among us (John 1:14). John also confessed that he is the Son of God (John 20:31). The Synoptics also testify in favour of the deity the Son. In Matthew 11:27 it is written that, "all things have been handed to me by the Father and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and any one to whom the Son choose s to reveal him".

Mark said, "The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God" (Mark 1:1). In Matthew 28: 18, Jesus himself announced his universal Lordship by informing his disciples that all authorities in heaven and on earth has been given unto him. Paul in letters also acknowledged and testified of the deity of the Son. So, it is important to note the Son (Jesus Christ) was fully divine and human as enshrined in the Nicene and Apostles Creeds to be able to save this world.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. What is Christology in African Theology?
2. What are the sources of African Christology?
3. With reference to some verses discuss John's testimony on the deity of the Son.
4. What is Paul's testimony on the deity of the Son?

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UNIT 6 CHRISTOLOGY AND ESCHATOLOGY: JESUS CHRIST–THE SECOND ADAM

CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Christology informs eschatology. Eschatology pertains to the ultimate things, which in redemptive history spans the entire creation, fall and redemption. The ultimate things as they have their foundation from the creation are forward looking to the coming of Christ. Christ stands as the pinnacle of all things from the beginning. He is the Second Adam rendering obedience to God where the first Adam failed. Christ is represented as the image of the invisible God. He is God incarnate who did not lose his divinity. He is therefore the final revelation of God. We shall explore details of this fact.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

explain the meaning of Jesus Christ as the second Adam
state the importance of resurrection to salvation and eschatology.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Christology and Eschatology

The tree of life pointed Adam upward and forward toward his glorious heavenly goal under the covenant of works in the Garden of Eden. Let me give you two examples of how New Testament theologians present the work of Jesus Christ as Second Adam in clearly eschatological categories.

The Baptism and Genealogy (Luke 3:21-38)

The baptism of Jesus involves at least two significant factors. First, it is his solidaric identification with his people. Secondly, the baptism of Jesus involves the public identification and declaration of the Son in his messianic role. The baptisms of Jesus, particularly the visual and audible phenomena that accompany it, attest to his unique messianic identity. However, the point of interest to us is the significance of the Lucan genealogy in framing both the person and work of Christ as Second Adam (23-38).

Notice Luke's inversion of the genealogy. He begins in 3:23 with a statement pertaining to Jesus contemporary experience and works from that point backward. In other words, Luke places Jesus as Son of God side-by-side with Adam, son of God. The literary structure suggests that the Jesus is the promised seed of the woman, the true, eschatological Son of God, who will deal definitively with the serpent in his probationary trial. Comments about the opening section of Luke 4: 1-13.

3.2 Jesus Christ as the Second Adam

First, Adam and Jesus face a similar trial in the form of temptation. Second, just as Adam's probationary temptation had implications for all he was created to represent, so also Jesus. But there are at least three basic discontinuities. First, Jesus finds himself in a context that is emblematic of the *fall*. Second, Jesus is without human companionship. Third, Jesus must not only meet the positive precept of the covenant requirements placed upon him, he must also bear its penal sanction.

i. The Temptation and Probation

It is in this covenant-historical context of Jesus as Second Adam that we can appreciate the nature of his probation and temptation. The temptations of Jesus are clearly marked by an if/then structure. (Luke 4:3 "If you are the Son of God" followed by an imperative. Luke 4:7 "If you will worship me. . ." followed by a promise. Luke 4:9 "If you are the Son of God" followed by an imperative. Each of these temptations in one way or another recapitulates the strategy Satan used with Adam. But notice what Jesus quotes in response to each temptation. He quotes Torah. He appeals to the Pentateuch. And he appeals to passages that pertain to Israel's wilderness pilgrimage between Egypt and Canaan. Why would he do this? I think it is Luke's way of speaking of the failure of another Son–Israel.

In Exodus 4:22-23, Israel was God's typological Son–a Son who in many ways replicates the disobedience of the first Adam and anticipates

the obedience of the Second Adam. Not only did Adam fail to render obedience as Son in the Garden of Eden, but Israel failed to offer obedience as a Son in the wilderness. Therefore, in response to the first temptation (tell this stone to become bread), Jesus quotes from Deut. 8:3 "Man does not live by bread alone." What this implies, then, is that Jesus' obedience as Son is designed to answer the *two-fold failure* of Adam as the protological Son and Israel the typological Son. Both failed to render required obedience as sons of God. Therefore, in the following temptation accounts, Jesus offers worship to God alone (vs. 8 again, quoting Torah from Deut. 6:13) and will not, like Adam and Israel, put the Lord His God to the test (again, quoting Torah from Deut 6:16).

ii. The Cross's Goal: Paradise (23:43)

The "opportune time" referenced in 4:13 is the climactic moment of Jesus' suffering on the cross, and this temptation takes an even more subtle form. As Jesus is hanging from the cross, we read in Luke 23: 36: "The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him vinegar, 37 and saying, "If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!"

And when the thief on the cross asks him to remember him when comes into his kingdom, what does Jesus say: "Today you will be with me evn tw/| paradei,sw|" (v. 43).

The point of significance for us is this: neither occurrence of paradise (in Luke or Revelation) can be associated with the earthly, Edenic paradise. The more basic point is this: do you see how Luke naturally describes the outcome of the obedient death of Jesus as Second Adam and eschatological Son? The terminus is nothing less than paradise–a motif we have already developed in some detail above. We will discuss in much more detail later in the course the resurrection of Christ as an eschatological event.

3.3 Christ as Image of the Eternal God

Col. 1: 15a: "He is" introduces a relative clause and refers back to the beloved Son in verse 13. Because the antecedent in view is the incarnate Son, so also we ought to take the relative clause begun in 15a as a reference to the incarnate Son. That argument has some plausibility, but let me point out two things. First, Zerwick, in his *Grammatical Analysis of the Greek New Testament*, notes that evstin can be taken as a timeless/atemporal present, meaning that Jesus is eternally and intrinsically the image of the invisible God (e.g., the Father specifically in view). This grammatical possibility is confirmed by verse 16, which tells us that as the image of the invisible God and firstborn before all creation, Jesus is the agent of *creation* (o[ti evn auvtw/| evkti,sqh

ta. pa,nta). In other words, 15a ought to be understood in view of the *eternal* Son's role in creation, and this rules out the category of incarnation, for the obvious fact that creation *precedes* incarnation.

Complementing this observation, Paul's use of prwto,tokoj pa,shj kti,sewj (firstborn of all creation) elaborates and specifies what is in view when speaking of the Son as the image of the invisible God. prwto,tokoj (firstborn) denotes superiority in rank or dignity. As its usage in LXX Ps. 89:27 indicates, "I will appoint him my firstborn (prwto,tokon in the accusative), the most exalted of the kings of the earth." This is so in light of the o[ti clause: "o[ti evn auvtw/| evkti,sqh ta. pa,nta" because by him all things were created. The point is this: the Son possesses a superiority in rank over all created things, because he is the one by whom all things were created. So, the basic point is this: the language of firstborn over all creation accents the *pre-redemptive supremacy of the Son*, particularly with reference to his eternal status and role in creation.

Given this fact, the distinction between the image language and the firstborn language becomes clearer clear. The image of God language clarifies the Son's essential relationship to the *Father*, and the firstborn language clarifies the Son's fundamental relation to *creation*. But this raises the question: what more precisely do we have in mind when we speak of the eternal Son as the image (eivkw.n) of the invisible God? We need to remember first that it is certainly possible to recognize the continuum of likeness between an archetype and an image. But the Son is an exact, essential image of the Father.

First, notice in verse sixteen that the eternal Son is presented as the one by whom the created world in the totality of its existence came into being. o[ti evn auvtw/| evkti,sqh ta. pa,nta. This sort of language marks out as clearly as possible the pre-existence and deity of the Son. Second, Col. 1:19, and especially Col. 2:9, accents that the fullness of deity resides bodily in the Son of God. o[ti evn auvtw/| katoikei/ pa/n to. plh,rwma th/j qeo,thtoj swmatikw/j("for in him dwells all the fullness of deity in bodily form." Louw and Nida on qeo,thtoj: "the nature or state of being God, possessing the divine nature, or divine being." And this surely helps us recognize that the way the Son images the Father is completely and essentially.

Now, the function of the Son as the eternal image of God and firstborn over creation is simple: kai. auvto,j evstin pro. pa,ntwn kai. ta. pa,nta evn auvtw/| sune,sthken (17). As the eternal image of God and firstborn before all creation, the Son of God is before all things and the one in whom all things cohere or subsist. sune,sthken can be taken to mean either "subsistence" or "coherence." On either read, we must recognize

the high Christology present in 15-17, which affirms the pre-existence of the Son of God and provides the ultimate metaphysical basis for the "philosophy according to Christ" in 2:8.

Ridderbos (1997) on Col. 1:15ff. "Paul's Christological Interpretation of Creation." The language of Col. 1:15-17 speaks of Christ's role in a pre-redemptive (and therefore pre-incarnate) context of *creation*. Remarking on the language of "image of God" in II Cor. 4:4, Herman Ridderbos observes that "when in this context he is called at the same time the image of God, this is to say nothing less than that in him the glory of God, indeed God himself, becomes manifest." In fact, it is to assert that "by calling Christ the image of God he thus identifies Christ's glory with that of God himself. . . and the same thing applies to Col. 1:15. . . (so that) there is special reference to Christ's glory as the Pre-existent One in these passages."

This means that "by the designation image of God he is on the one hand *distinguished* from God, and on the other hand *identified* with God as bearer of the divine glory." In sum, Ridderbos concludes that "it is evident here anew, therefore, to what extent the divine glory of Christ, *even already in his pre-existence with the Father prior to his redemptive revelation*, determines and underlies the Pauline Christology." Therefore, both the Son's eternal ontic status as the image of God and his activity in creation provide the context sufficient to warrant the conclusion, "We have before us (in Col. 1), therefore, a Christological interpretation of Genesis 1."

Let us consider a few comments about the relationship of Christology and the image of God in light of what we have said so far. First, Herman Ridderbos observes that "when it comes to Colossians 1:15 . . . the expression Image of God is here clearly rooted in Genesis 1:27."

What is interesting is this: Paul uses the language of the *first Adam* to describe Jesus in his preexistent state. What sense can we make of this? Ridderbos, again, is helpful. He notes that while in I Cor. 15 and Romans 5, Jesus follows after the first Adam in history. In Col. 1:15, Jesus comes before the first Adam. "Undoubtedly what is said in Colossians 1:15ff. Concerning Christ as the Image of God, Firstborn, and so forth, does not *simply* spring from Paul's conception of Christ as the Second Adam in I Corinthians 15 and Romans 5."

In fact, he believes that a fundamental *difference* exists between Paul's conceptions of Christ in Colossians 1:15ff. on the one hand, and Romans 5 and I Corinthians 15 on the other hand. He says, "Whereas in I Corinthians 15 and Romans 5 Christ is the second or last Adam, who *follows after the first* in the order of redemptive history, in Colossians

1:15 as the Firstborn, the image of God, etc., he is *antecedent to the first. . ..*" The Son of God is antecedent to the first Adam as a *divine archetype* is antecedent to a *created ectype.*

Along these lines, M. G. Kline (1999) suggests that "(T)he eternal, firstborn Son furnished a pattern for man as a royal glory-image of the Father. It was in his creative action as the Son, present in the Glory-Spirit, making man in his own son-image that the Logos revealed himself as the One in whom was the life that is the light of men. Not first as incarnate word breathing on men the Spirit and re-creating them in his heavenly image, but at the very beginning he was quickening Spirit, creating man after his image and glory."

3.4 Christ is the Final Revelation of God

Christ is nothing less than the eschatological revelation of God; the consummate, ultimate Word of God. This is the revelation which there can be none greater. Christ is God's Last Word. This is not "God's latest work" but the absolute, last word. In Heb. 1:1-2, the author writes: "God has spoken to us in these last days" (cf. Heb. 9:26). The writer in 9:26 speaks of Christ in his death and that Christ has "appeared at the end of the ages." The writer is expressing himself in terms of a standard eschatological pattern: the contrast to "this present order" and the "age to come." Christ's appearance as at the eschatological transition. He introduces the eschatological era to come.

The most obvious part of Heb. 1:1-2 is that God has spoke "in His Son." In verse 3:6, contrasting Moses and Christ. Christ is understood as Son and Moses is the servant in God's house. Christ is uniquely and climatically "over" God's house. Just as Christ is Son, in this way he is the final Word. This fact points to a fullness, a finality that cannot be superseded (cf. John 1: 1-18). In John, Jesus is described as the "Word in the beginning with God" and he is identified as God's Son. The writer of Hebrews wants to impress upon us the "last word"-from the hymn, "What more can God say to us?" In vs. 1:2 and 3:6, Son is without an article, or anarthrous. Often in Greek the lack of a definite article is an indication of a definiteness. This is however, not always the case. The writer of the Hebrews is not saying that God has revealed himself "in *a* son" meaning any son, but this emphasis is the *quality of revelation*. The writer of the Hebrews is speaking of "Son-Quality-Revelation." The anarthrous noun is to show emphasis upon the quality of revelation.

To affirm that the final revelation has taken place, is to deny that the revelation is still future. The final revelation has taken place but this also means that the revelation is still future for the church. There is a

central-structural consideration of New Testament Redemption: "Already- Not Yet" structure of redemptive history. Hebrews 9:26-28: "Then Christ would have had to suffer many times since the creation of the world. But now he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself. Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment, so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people; and he will appear (phaneroo) a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him." –This is a clear distinction between first and second coming. These are in an eschatological framework.

The final revelation of God in Christ that takes place at the end of history-that brings revelation to an end-is both present and future. The situation of the Church between the times (the first and second coming) so far as revelation is concerned is in an interim period. The forward movement on revelation is "on hold" an interim period. The writer says that the Church "eagerly awaits" the appearing of Christ; at the same time, as the Church waits, it lives out the eschatological privilege of God in Christ that has already taken place. We need to appreciate from the vantage point of the New Testament, that the first and second coming of Christ are separated, as two aspects, two episodes of the one and same event. This is one eschatological, historical event. God's revelation is final in Christ and it is an eschatological revelation.

i. Testimony in Hebrews 1:1-2a

These 3 sections are about Hebrews. There is a controlling concern about how we will survey this long and rich history and its salient features. What are its defining characteristics. How can we do this and not get lost in its rich details. Heb 1:1, 2 will help us here - they establish all that follows in the book. The nature of this umbrella statement is that it provides us with an overview on redemptive special revelation as a whole. So we will draw attention to several considerations or facets and reflect further on them.

1. God has spoken. God has revealed Himself. At various times in the past and in different way, God having formerly spoken to us in the prophets, in the last Days God has spoken to us in the Son. The fact of revelation is central in the statement. Revelation is central and controlling idea. The main clause of v.2 is preceded by the participial clause of v. 1 which is the controlling idea. And in each of these clauses, the main controlling verb is a form of speech. And the subject of both of these is God. God spoke. God has spoken.

2. We see the contrast in this construction - or at least the distinction in view. An important and decisive distinction which is made in the whole

of God speech - and important division in the whole of God's revelation. And this contrast is expressed in different ways through the grammar and the parallels. a) There is a temporal contrast between what God did formerly in the past, and God speech in these last days. There is the temporal aspect. b) so far as recipients are concerned there is a contrast - the fathers and us. c) between the instrument of revelation used by God in the Prophets and in the Son. So there is a deliberately built in and contrast in view here. It is surely fair to go on and observe (in the context of the book of Heb.) that the contrast can be expressed in the terms of the common denominator which is COVENANT. There is in view the contrast between the old covenant and the new covenant. In 8 and 9 this is explicit this distinction between old and new.

3. In God's past speech, the old covenant revelation is described using compound adverbs. These are hopax Logomenon (spoken once). So it is difficult to document a full usage of these. We are left with the context and other stuff. We must draw attention to their position in that they are together at the beginning of the construction to give them emphasis - this is not where you would expect a Greek adverb to be. So they are adverbial highlighted. These stress the idea of variety and of diversity, and if a distinction is to be made (they overlap a lot) the first draws attention to parts, installments, times as spread over an unfolding process, and the 2nd highlight ways and mode.

In view of the contrast we will explore this distinction between old and new in the matter of God's revealing Himself. We can get at this question is we follow the writers next 2 uses of the verb "spoke." And these will also be of direct relevance to us because they will also have God as the implied subject. CONTRAST. So in Chapter 2:2-4. This is difficult Greek. For if the word spoken through angles was firm and if every transgression and disobedience receive just recompense, then how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation? (relative clause describing salvation) Salvation which received beginning to being spoken (which began to be spoken) through the Lord and was confirmed unto us by those who heard. So this is the contrast of arguing from the lesser to the greater. And in this notion of what stands firm there is the contrast of the word spoken through angels and the word spoken through the Lord.

The contrast in view

a) The angels - this is almost certain to the use of angels in mediating the law to Moses **(**Gal 3:19, Act 7:38, 53). This is important because, the use of angels shows, that the prophets of v. 1 is synecdochic. A synecdoche (a part referring to a whole). Bread refers to complete food. Sails refers to a ship. So in 1:1 the writer is not just

referring to the prophets of the OT as distinct from the Law or other writings. So we know from this view that the angels were speaking to Moses that the Law is in view

b) The writers a fortiori argument (lesser to greater) - what is confirmed or binding. And the basic thought is that if the old covenant revelation is firm and binding, how much more is it that new covenant revelation is firm and binding. So we see in this that the fullness and the finality of God's revelation in Christ. God's speech in the Son is the speech of the Lord 1:2 and 2:3.

c) This speech by the Lord is confirmed by those who heard. These are not just any hearers, but they are specific eye and ear witnesses which are certainly to be seen as a reference to the apostles. It is not any hearers, but apostolic hears who confirm the revelation of Christ. And this answers the prophet and the angles as the instrumentality of the God in speaking. It is not likely to see Paul wrote this because the author of Hebrews seems to be distancing himself from the eye and ear witnesses.

In Hebrews 3:5-6 the contrast in view is between Moses and Christ. Moses is faithful in God's house as a servant (noun) and as a witness of the things that would be spoken. This is the next occurrence of "speech" with God as subject. And Christ on the other hand is the faithful Son in charge over God's house. So here there is the similar contrast between old and new. Moses is for witness to the things that would be spoken. Present and aorist have only relative time values, relative to the main verb, but future participle have absolute time value. Moses is witness to the things that will be spoken: the things that will be said in the future. In this context, this witnessing activity of Moses is part of a large overall contrast between Moses and Christ identified as Son - and Moses as a witness, he is a speaking witness to the things that would be spoken, so it is God's speech in the Son that comes into view in v. 6.

And this is not really a different contrast than that which we see in 2:2,3. And here we can appreciate the synecdote. Moses, when he comes into view is the OT prophet par excellence. Moses is head prophet in the OT. We see this in Deut 18:15, 18. So Moses here stands in v. 5 for the whole Old Covenant, for both the Law and the Prophets. So the contrast here in chapter 3 expressed in terms of persons is the large contrast between old covenant and new covenant. And we should add that the covenant in view and the covenantal activity is described in architectural terms (a house building description) this is a graphic way to show God's covenant program.

a) The organic unity of special revelation. We want to highlight here in terms of the building model, as God is to be seen as master architect, God has just one house. So we see in Chapter 3 contrast, two

different projects but rather with reference to what is going on in the house of God.. Moses in all he did was a faithful servant in the house. Moses is show as the faithful servant while Christ is seen as the faithful Son who has been set over the same house. And here we note plainly that the author of Hebrews while giving references to differences the writer is committed to the underlying basic unity of God revealing activity. This is unity that underlies and integrates the diversity in God's covenantal and revelational activity. The writer of Hebrews is not a dispensationalist but a covenant theologian.

b) The organic unity is historical. We see this is all of our work in our passages (these are seen in Hebrews) God's covenantal house-building activity is a historical activity. The house doesn't appear ready made and prefabricated from outside history. The Bible is not like the book of Mormon or the Koran. The pattern is there from the beginning. The blue prints are these from the beginning. Its type is there from the beginning and the pattern is heavenly, but the house itself is not. So that what we discover in Hebrews and elsewhere in the scripture that the distinctions which are basic is distinction like first and last, old and new, prior and subsequent.

Chapter 1 shows us that God's revelation in His Son is a matter of what God is now doing in these last days, just as this stands in relationship to His speech which was made earlier. And we see this in the adverbs that are in 1:1. This language in v. 1:1 accents the historically differentiated character of rev. So in all the unity of rev is the unity which is unfolding in a historical process. It is an organically unfolding history. We need to see that God's revelatory activity does not leave us with more or less loose collection of revelation. The Bible is not a loosely collected anthology of revelation. God's revelatory activity in its historically organic character does not leave us with disjointed and ad hoc oracles. God's revelation does not consist of a revelation for the moment given to random individuals or isolated groups. But it is a coherent history. The unity of the Bible is characterised by a coherent history.

Note that the point about this organic coherence that we have in view against a collection of disjointed oracles - we need to see that from its beginning the church has been sensitive to the historical character of rev.

You are saved not by what you know, but by what God does, and by what God does in history. And in this way you don't want to polarise the matter of who God is. Salvation depends not on what we know, but on what God has done. The Christian religion is anti-Gnostic. You don't want to polarise salvation and knowledge, but you must put the accent in the right place. And it is only in the last several centuries that this factor has been better understood.

Biblical Theology is a discipline that is formally concerned with the history of revelation. Now no doubt, we need to say that it is possible to be overly preoccupied with the historical character of revelation that leads to distortions in preaching and teaching. But we do need to recognise that there is no greater threat to a proper understanding of rev than the tendency to dehistoricise revelation. The tendency to treat the historical character of rev as disposable is to be avoided passionately. The historical character of rev is bound up and is in one piece with the reality of the incarnation and the reality of who Jesus Christ is. We cannot undermine the point of the incarnation.

First, all post fall special Redemptive is Redemptive-historical or covenant-historical. This now brings us to speak specifically of Christ as the center of revelation. In Heb.1:1-2, it is difficult to deny from these verses that God's Old covenant revelation in its many forms focuses in Christ. It is difficult to deny that the prophets spoke to the fathers with a view to the Son, and that Christ in this sense is the center of all revelation. Abstractly it could be contemplated that old covenant revelation dealt with other matters pertinent to the fathers or Israel as a nation and that only now has God spoken in a way that concerns His Son (1:1) might be misconstrued this way. But, any uncertainty as to what the writer means in v. 1:1,2 (any such abstract reading) is removed when we comes to chapter 3. And when we consider what is spelled out in terms of the house building model.

Surely the climatic point in 3:6 is that the Son is what the one house is all about! Amen. We need to see Moses as the mediator of Israel. He is witness to the things that would be spoken in the Son. Moses as we see here in the large angled vision of the writer in this passage, we see this as not part of what Moses did, but all that Moses did is a testimony of what God is still to do in the future - and this can be nothing other than God speech in the Son (His revelation in Christ). Furthermore consider what Jesus says about Himself in John 5:45-47, Jesus rebukes the Pharisees and says if you believed Moses you would believe me, for Moses wrote of me.

Second, what we have then in this material is the Christ centered character of Redemptive revelation. Christ is the center of Scripture. This is what our work is about. And it is important to understand how Christ is the center of scripture. This is the most important point for the understanding of all biblical revelation! This is a point which we could give extensive attention to, but we will differ this to the discussion elsewhere with extensive concern in New Testament studies and in Systematic Theology- doctrine of Christ. But we will look at this briefly here for pedagogical purposes.

Christ is the great fact, and the central reality of the history of special revelation. All special revelation either looks forward to the coming of Christ, or looks back to His person and work in the Old Testament and New Testament respectively. So all the various strands and aspects that are in view with the places and ways in 1:1 all find their point in Christ. Example) 2 Cor 1:20 – "Whatever promises of God there may be, in Christ they have their 'yes' and their 'Amen.'" So we are drawn here to the Christocentric character of redemptive special revelation. As we emphasize strongly here, we want to make sure that we don't fall into a christomonistic position while we do want a Christocentric position.

We want to recognize that we will do justice to biblical revelation as Christocentric only as we honor it is its fully theological Trinitarian character. Christ is the center of God's revelation as He is the fullness of the revelation of the triune God. We are brought to affirm the Christocentric in 1Tim 2:5 - One mediator between God and man is Christ. Neither the Father or the Spirit can be said to be mediator - this is reserved for Christ. In this way Christ is uniquely the mediator of God's Christocentric revelation. Barth ends up eclipsing the ontological existence of the Father and the Spirit and ends up with a form of modalism in his doctrine of the Trinity. This is one of Barth's heresies.

Third, to be even more specific, it is the death and resurrection of Christ, of the incarnate Christ, is the focus of all special revelation. This is where we speak of a Christocentric revelation, this is at the center of the center - the Messianic suffering and glory. Look into these passages. Luke 24:45-46. I Peter 1:11; I Cor 15:3, 4; Romans 4:25. These show how the OT in its entirety point to Christ. The large picture that we have in view here is that scripture teaches us that Jesus Christ is the second person of the trinity. Christ is God's own eternal Son, the second person of the Trinity. But we need to understand that the essential deity of Christ and His eternal pre-existence - as precious as that is - is not the main point of special revelation.
We see this in the opening verses of John's gospel. John 1:1 and John 1:14. It is not as the Logos who was in the beginning with God that Jesus is the center of rev, but as He was that Logos who because flesh and dwelt among us that Jesus is the center of revelation - specifically the crucified and exalted Jesus. We must talk Paul seriously when he tells the Corinthian in v. 2:2 that he was resolved to know nothing but Christ and Christ crucified. His ultimate epistemological commitment was Christ and Christ crucified. And to know Him is to know the one who was equal in glory with the Father from the before the beginning of the World. But it is not this preexistent glory of the Son, but in 2Cor 2:8, we see the crucified and exalted glory of Christ which is the center of all special revelation. It is this gospel center which is the point of all God's

special revelation (1 Cor 15:3, 4).

3.0 CONCLUSION

Jesus Christ is the second Adam because his role as the Saviour of mankind fulfilled God promise of the seed of the woman crushing the head of the serpent. He was also tempted like the first Adam by the devil, but he overcame all the temptations. His victory over Satan automatically gave him victory over sin and the power of death and made him the Saviour of the world. This was why he was able to resurrect from the grave to proof that all those that will believe and accept him as Lord and Saviour will have victory over death and will be raised with him at his second coming to heaven.

4.0 SUMMARY

Jesus Christ is the second Adam because he is the promised seed of a woman, the true eschatological Son of God in his dual nature to deal with Satan inorder to fulfill what God said that the son of the woman will crushed the head of the serpent (Genesis 3:15). The first Adam suffer trials from the devil and he was defeated and Jesus Christ as the second Adam was also tempted by devil, he was not defeated hence he obeyed God the Father even unto death on the cross. Both the first Adam and the second Adam were tempted. The first Adam was disobedient; the second Adam was obedient to God. Jesus obedience gave him victory over the power of sin and death and he became the Saviour of this world who is returning for the second time to judge the universe according to the deals of each individual.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. How is Jesus Christ the **sec**ond Adam?
2. Explain how Christ is the image of the invisible God.
3. Explain the Christocentricity of revelation.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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