

# **1209 INTRODUCTION TO THEOLOGY**

1. These notes are designated for the use of students at all levels. Material in the Appendix and marked out by square brackets [ ] is especially relevant to degree and graduate diploma students.
2. Since this material is a summary of different ideas advocated in church history, not all that is covered can be recommended as in agreement with the teaching of the Bible. This material will be indicated by an asterisk (\*).

## **1. Introduction to the Task of Theology**

### **1.1 A working definition of theology**

#### **1. The term ‘theology’**

- a.      theos = God                logos = word
- b.      discourse about God
- c.      science of the knowledge of God

#### **2. Christian theology : specific reference to the God of Christian faith and worship**

#### **3. Historical uses of ‘theology’**

Patristic and early Middle Ages - theologia meant the doctrine of God, (i)e. trinity and related issues.

#### **4. Related areas of study**

To be distinguished from ‘religious studies’; this discipline has no implicit faith commitment, no assumption of the existence of a deity or deities. It is concerned with human religious belief systems and practices.

#### **5. Other responses**

- a.      atheism, ‘atheology’ (‘no-theology’)
- b.      feminism, ‘thealogy’ (‘theology of the goddess’)

#### **[6. Some definitions:**

- a.      Traditional R.C. : the truth of revelation as defined by the Church
- b.      Karl Barth : dogma is the agreement of Church proclamation with the revelation attested in Holy Scripture
- c.      G.C. Berkouwer - the co-relation of faith and gospel
- d.      John Macquarrie - ‘the study which, through participation in and reflection upon a religious faith, seeks to express the content of this faith in the clearest and clearest coherent language available’
- e.      Karl Rahner - ‘the **science** of faith. It is the conscious and methodical explanation and explication of the divine revelation received and grasped in faith”]

## 1.2 Who is a theologian?

1. All Christians are theologians because they:
  - a. embrace a faith system
  - b. reflect on it
2. The issue is not who will do theology but whether we will be good theologians. This means intentionally thinking about our talk of God.
3. This is something exhorted in scripture, e.g Matt 22:37; 2 Cor 10:5; 1 Pet 3:15

## 1.3 What is good theology?

1. Good theology must be centred on Christ who is the Teacher of our faith. It must be open to the Holy Spirit whose task it is to reveal to us the things of Christ (Matt 23:10; John 14:26; I John 2:20, 27).  
*'no one will make you a doctor or a teacher of the Scriptures except the Holy Spirit'.* (Luther)

2. Good theology will be biblical. This is because Jesus' own teaching was based on the Old Testament, and the New Testament witnesses to him.

The Bible shows us the way to and the way of life. The Bible is our guide to Christ.

3. Good theology will be personal and devotional, not simply intellectual. That is, it is not something one 'does' or learns, but a matter of life.

Theology is : 'the doctrine of living to God' (J. Arndt).

A theologian : 'is one whose heart is true' (Evagrius Ponticus).

'It is the heart that makes the theologian' (Pecit facit theologum).

4. Good theology is done in the context of the church. It will be neither individualistic nor revolutionary but seek to reflect on how the community of God has expressed its faith in God.

It is essentially the church's word about God in responsive transmission of the Word of God to the church (K. Barth).

## 1.4 What makes a good theologian?

1. If 'thinking theologically is not a matter of thinking about God but thinking by means of God' (La Cugna), then it must be that God makes theologians.

'All theology is taught by God, teaches God, and leads to God'. (Aquinas)

2. If being a theologian means being conformed to Christ in his relationship to the Father by the power of the Spirit, then this will involve a pattern of death and resurrection.

'By living, yes, by dying and being damned is the theologian made - not by thinking, reading or speculating'. (Luther)

3. "a theological thought can breathe only in the atmosphere of dialogue with God." (H. Thielicke)

[‘It (my theology) reminds me of straw’ (Thomas Aquinas)]

‘theological work can be undertaken and accomplished only amid great distress, which assails it on all sides .... this distress is ultimately caused by the object of theology itself. Without judgement and death there is no grace and no life for anybody or anything, and least of all, for theology ... hidden in the great distress in which alone it can take place, its still greater hope and impulse are present. Precisely in judgement is grace displayed and granted; precisely in death is life awakened and sustained. Precisely in humility may courage be taken. In theology, precisely he who abases himself is he who may, indeed must, rise up’. (K. Barth) ‘The angels will laugh when they read my theology’ (K. Barth)]

### [1.5 The process of theology

1. Exercised under the Lordship of Jesus in his prophetic office.
2. Biblical narrative —— conceptual-systematic —interpretation ——— articulation  
framework (beliefs) of our lives of beliefs in  
and experiences | life and  
practice |  
context of: Church  
Prayer  
Praise  
Fear of God  
Humility ]

### 1.6 The value of theology

1. It helps overcome wrong ideas:
  - a. in the Church
  - b. outside the Church
2. It helps us to respond to new questions.
3. It helps us to grow as Christians by teaching us the faith accurately  
(Matt 28:18ff; Eph. 4:11-14; 1Tim 1:10, 6:3, Titus 1:2).
4. It helps us to understand how the Bible fits together. (Like putting together pieces of a jig-saw puzzle.)
5. It helps us to obtain a more complete and consistent picture of God’s Word.

### 1.7 The dangers of theology

1. Substitution : theology replaces faith (idolatry, theologism). The science of the knowledge of God is not knowledge of God.
2. Dogmatism: our systems are only models and not God himself.
3. Intellectualism: temptation to stop short of personal transformation.

## **2. Method in Theology**

### **2.1 The search for an integrating motif for theology**

Is there a central organising principle around which the whole of theology can be structured?

Some suggested themes:

- a. Aquinas - the vision of God
- b. Luther - justification by faith
- c. Calvin - the glory of God
- d. Covenant Theology - the covenants of God
- e. Wesley - responsible grace
- f. Schleiermacher - human religious experience
- g. Liberal Protestantism - kingdom of God
- h. Barth - the self-disclosure of God in Christ
- i. Dispensationalism - dispensations of salvation
- j. Process theology - becoming and creativity
- k. Liberation theology - liberation from oppression
- l. Feminist Theology - the experience of women
- m. Narrative Theology - the story of the Bible
- n. Erickson - the majesty of God.
- o. Grenz - the eschatological community of God

### **2.2 Three contemporary methods of asking theological questions**

#### **1. The Christocentric Method (Karl Barth) :**

- a. theology of the Word of God
- b. the Church must test itself by Jesus Christ as attested in scripture
- c. subjection to the living Word of God in Christ
- d. the questions which theology must address are put to us by the Word of God
- e. to begin elsewhere is to answer our own questions

‘From God to reality, not from reality to God, goes the path of theology’.

(D. Bonhoeffer)

#### **2. The Correlation Method (Paul Tillich) :**

- a. apologetic theology
- b. questions to do with existence are raised by society and culture
- c. the Christian message seeks to answer these questions
- d. there is a moving back and forth between Church and culture so that both learn
- e. to begin elsewhere is to talk only to ourselves

3. The Praxis Method (liberation theology) :
  - a. Latin American, black, feminist
  - b. questions are raised in the context of the struggle for freedom and justice
  - c. theology follows action, otherwise it supports the establishment
  - d. to begin elsewhere is to promote an ideology of self-justification by which we maintain the status quo.

### **3. Types of Theology**

#### **3.1 Biblical theology**

1. Nature
  - a. Since the biblical documents are our source of information about Christ they are the ultimate source for Christian theology.
  - b. This means involvement with biblical criticism and interpretation
    - (i) book eg. the structure of Genesis
    - (ii) author eg. Paul's theology of the cross
    - (iii) theme eg. the Kingdom of God
    - (iv) Testament eg. covenant in the O.T.

#### **2. Purpose**

Through exploration of the story line of the Bible to come to a conclusion on the content of the Word of God.

#### **3.2 Systematic theology**

1. Nature
  - a. Attempts to achieve a 'system' by means of connections. This involves order in topics, consistency in language, coherent interrelationships.
  - b. Tends to ask atemporal questions, e.g. "what is sin?"
  - c. Involves greater detail, accuracy and organisation than normal Christian reflection.
  - d. Depends on other intellectual sources for the development of its ideas, e.g. Platonism, existentialism.
  - [e. Is sometimes called "dogmatics". This is really a term for theology which focuses on Christian self-understanding, rather than the coherence of Christian beliefs with knowledge in general. ]

## 2. Purpose

Tests the conformity of different idioms used by the Church to the Word of God.

(The content of the utterance of the church (Barth)., “what we must say”.)

## 3.3 Historical theology

### 1. Nature

- a. Fills the gap between the time of the reception of God’s Word and the present time of the Church’s Word by studying the church’s word in the intervening period.
- b. Universal gospel expressed in particular historical contexts.
- c. Theology does not arise **ex nihilo** e.g. dualist anthropology.
- d. Provides positive examples and enduring insights.
- e. Exposes past mistakes, reminding us of the relative value of theological expression.
- f. Examples of areas of interest include:
  - (i) controversy e.g. Arianism
  - (ii) author e.g. Abelard on atonement
  - (iii) movement e.g. the Counter Reformation
  - (iv) theme e.g. the doctrine of the Trinity from the Apologists until the Reformation

### 2. Purpose

“the investigation of the church’s word about God with the intent of testing and achieving its purity and faithfulness as the responsive transmission of God’s Word in changing languages, vocabularies, and intellectual and cultural contexts” (G.W. Bromiley).

## 3.4 Moral theology

### 1. Nature

- a. The study of ethics and ethical questions in the light of Christian self-understanding.
- b. Involves a number of dimensions, e.g. biblical, traditional, philosophical.
- c. Areas of interest include : law, conscience, work, sexual ethics.

### 2. Purpose

To enable Christians to recognise the law and will of God and to find direction in living a life pleasing to him.

### 3.5 Practical theology

#### 1. Nature

- a. Concerned with the interaction of belief and behaviour
- b. A traditional emphasis in theology, e.g. Puritans.
- c. Interacts with other disciplines, e.g. sociology, psychology.
- d. Fields of study include:
  - (i) homiletics
  - (ii) liturgiology - reflecting on the knowledge of God in the context of worship
  - (iii) Christian education
  - (iv) pastoral theology

#### 2. Purpose

To conform Christian living to that of Christ.

(The goal of the utterance of the church (Barth).)

### [ 3.6 Philosophical theology

#### 1. Nature

- a. Needs to be distinguished from “philosophy of religion” which may entail no faith - commitment.
- b. Attempts to use contemporary philosophical concepts to articulate and explain Christian beliefs.
- c. Attempts to build Christian theology on a secular philosophy, e.g. doctrine of Logos (Stoicism), transubstantiation (Aristotle), Kerygmatic theology (Heidegger)
- d. This enterprise has been opposed by some theologians. For example, Tertullian “What has Athens to do with Jerusalem? Or the Academy with the church?” Barth argues that this approach supplants the Word of God from its proper place.

#### 2. Purpose

Seeks to give rational expression to belief in Jesus Christ as the supreme revelation of the truth by finding the common ground between Christian faith and other areas of intellectual activity.

In relation to non-Christians this is apologetic theology. ]

### [ 3.7 Apologetic theology

#### 1. Nature

- a. The raw material for apologetic theology is provided by other types of theology.
- b. Proclaims what the church believes, teaches and lives out in worship.

## 2. Purpose

A defence of the revelation of God in Christ against non-Christian opposition.

### 3.8 Narrative theology.

#### 1. Nature

- a. Retells and adapts the stories in which the central and distinctive ideas and values of the Christian faith are set. (eg. The Narnia stories of C.S. Lewis)
- b. Understands revelation in terms of the story of the Bible (Jesus) rather than a set of ideas or a system.

#### 2. Purpose

To effectively communicate Christian truth using the power of the narrative in a post Christian environment where many of the interpretive sign posts of traditional Christian ideas have been removed.

### 3.9 The unity of theology

In practice the various fields of theological investigation have become increasingly disconnected. This must represent the dominance of technique over the spiritual discipline of the subject. The nature of the true unity of theology must correspond to its controlling subject matter, Jesus Christ : ‘in him all things hold together’ (Col 1:17)

## 4. How does Theology Start?

(The Question of Prolegomena)

### 4.1 The need to ask about a starting place.

1. ‘God’ is not a ‘familiar subject’ like the everyday elements of universal human experience, that are registered by the senses. This means:

- a. need to demonstrate that we can know anything about God, i.e. how a knowledge of God is possible. ‘How’ precedes ‘what’.
- b. question of method is primary, things which must be said about the task of theology before the task begins
- c. prolegomena means ‘forewords’.

2. Traditional approach uses the following order:

- a. apologetics
- b. natural theology
- c. Scripture
- d. dogmatics : being of God, works of God, creation, humanity, Christ .....

3. Post-Enlightenment Approaches (18th-20th centuries)

- a. seek a universal ‘point of contact’, common to all people., e.g.
- b. Schleiermacher, ‘the feeling of absolute dependence’
- c. Tillich, ‘method of correlation’
- d. Rahner, transcendental capacity of human beings (sense of beyond) is completed by the content of Christian revelation.

4. Criticism of these approaches.

- a. Karl Barth (neo-orthodoxy)

- (i) redefines prolegomena as ‘the things which must be said first in theology’
  - (ii) need to begin with the Word of God, i.e. the fact that God speaks to us, the God who does the speaking
  - (iii) move from particular (Word made flesh) to general humanity
  - (iv) denial of a ‘point of contact’
- [b.] Postliberalism
- (i) notion of prolegomena is misplaced, human discourse is plural not general
  - (ii) language is only intelligible within a specific frame of reference, cf. games
  - (iii) intrasystemic justification of a language system (Christians can speak meaningfully within their communities) ]

5. If we in some measure accept these criticisms, theology must begin with the exercise of faith.

## 5. The Nature of Faith

### 5.1 Some historical positions on the nature of faith.

- \*1. Thomas Aquinas (1225 - 1274)
  - a. Aquinas' emphasis is on the way things about God are known (epistemology).
  - b. Traditional RC view (likewise, “Protestant scholasticism”).
  - c. Post-enlightenment criticisms of faith are usually directed at this approach.
  - e. Faith mid-way between knowledge (scientia) and opinion.
  - f. Scientia is rationally compelling truth in the face of undeniable evidence e.g. mathematical proof.
  - g. Christian faith accepts the propositions set down in the Bible and the creeds are true.
  - h. Some of these can be shown to be rational by logical argument e.g. existence of God, immortality of the soul.
  - i. Others are accepted on the basis of the authority of revelation e.g. Trinity.
  - j. This position presupposes the reality of divine revelation, and acknowledges that Catholic faith depends upon the action of the grace of God.
  - k. ‘intellectual assent to the content of revelation as true’.

2. Martin Luther (1483-1546)
  - a. Luther's emphasis is on how salvation may be grasped (soteriology).
  - b. 'The Fall' (Genesis 1-3) is a fall from faith, for God expresses who he is in his Word, e.g. Gen 2:17.
  - c. Faith **is** the right relationship with God (Gen 15:6), to have faith is to live as God intends. (Not life plus faith; to believe is to obey).
  - d. Faith is more than historical knowledge - saving faith concerns a conviction that Christ was born, died and rose **for me** personally.
  - e. Faith is more than assent - it involves personal commitment to the truth, trust in the character of God as revealed in his promises in Scripture. There is a faith which believes what is said of God is true; there is a faith which throws itself on God.
  - f. The efficacy of faith does not depend upon its intensity but the faithfulness of God with respect to his promises (McGrath, p.156).
  - g. Faith unites the believer to Christ - faith makes the person and promises of Christ available to the believer. (McGrath, p.156)

NB for Luther faith is a gift

### 3.5 Aquinas and Luther compared

Aquinas	Luther
Philosophical	Religious (personal)
Propositions	Promises
Evidence	God's character
(Aquinas - Church, Fundamentalism- Bible. )	
Theological	Christological

### 4. John Calvin (1509 - 1564)

#### 1. It involves the inner person:

Calvin asserts that the faith that embraces Christ is "more of the heart than of the brain, and more of the disposition than of the understanding" (*Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 3.2.8).

#### 2. A trinitarian reality:

Calvin's definition of faith as "a firm and certain knowledge of God's benevolence toward us, founded upon the truth of the freely given promise in Christ, both revealed to our minds and sealed upon our hearts through the Holy Spirit" (*Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 3.2.7).

#### 3. Stresses God's side:

Faith is like an empty open hand stretched out towards God, with nothing to offer and everything to receive.

### 5.\* Post - Enlightenment emphases

1. Immanuel Kant (1724 - 1804)
  - a. For Kant faith is belief held on the grounds that are subjectively adequate but objectively inadequate i.e. it is impossible to justify the truth publicly about matters of faith.
  - b. Faith is the moral commitment or existential decision which goes beyond the evidence.
  - c. Faith is a lower form of knowledge.

2. Popular conceptions.

In the modern period generally, religious faith has been unfavourably compared with scientific knowledge. Science deals with hard facts which can be demonstrated to all clear thinking people, religion deals with some private truth or undemonstrated state of affairs.

This perception is not true to the facts of how science actually works, and is breaking down in the crisis of the post-modern period (See later).

6. Neo-Orthodoxy.

1. Karl Barth (1886-1968)

“.... Where faith is, it does not have its ground and its truth and its measure in itself as a human act or experience, but even though it is a human act and experience it has these things in its object, in Christ, or God’s Word. .... The interpretation of faith as *fiducia*, trust, or confidence in the older Reformers and the whole of the older Protestant theology has nothing whatever to do with a shifting of the reality of faith from its object to the believing subject. The stressing of *fiducia* is designed to differentiate real faith from a mere *opinio historica*, from a neutral recollective knowledge and affirmation of biblical or ecclesiastical statements such as is possible apart from reality of faith.... In the resurrection of Jesus He gave a surety to all, and this surety is simply what they can now have in the form of faith... the form of faith as the obedience of humility... it is the fullness of faith, its object, which gives to it this character.... we say the most positive possible thing that we can say it as a human form of being, a human act and experience. For in this way it imitates Jesus Christ in whom it believes... (2 Cor 8:9).... (Phil 2: 7-8).”

## **6. Why must the Theologian be Converted**

(Commitment and Neutrality in Theology).

\*6.1 Arguments against the need for a theologian to have faith.

1. Pre-commitment means prejudice, only neutrality can produce impartiality ie. commitment to truth.
2. Truth claims need to be grounded in public, universal norms of intelligibility and justification ie. scientific.
3. Only a neutral scholar can follow the argument wherever it might lead eg. abolition of theology.
4. This puts the focus upon the theologian and his/her faith, rather than in God.

## 6.2 Arguments for the necessity of personal faith in the theologian.

1. Commitment is entailed by truth ie. not abstract but to be lived, e.g. liberation theology.
2. All scholarship is precommitted to something, to deny this is to keep the assumptions hidden.
3. Theology is an exercise of faith.  

'Faith seeking understanding'                  ie. it is relational, a matter of what God grants in grace.
4. Theology is not an individualistic exercise. The faith of the theologian is part of the corporate faith of the worshipping, prayerful community which is the Church.  

Theology has discipleship as the context.  
Theology is a confessional exercise.  
The first task of the theologian is to serve the people of God.

## 7. Orthodoxy and Heresy: Distortions in Theology.

### 7.1 What is Heresy?

1. 'Heresy'
  - a. Greek hairesis, act of choice, attachment eg. to one of the philosophical schools.
  - b. NT neutral (Acts 5:17, 15:5, 26:5) or negative use (1 Cor.11:19, Gal.5:20, divisive faction.)

### 2. Early Use

Irenaeus (c.130 - c.200) and

Tertullian (c.160 - c.225) faced distortions in various areas of theology. Heresy as wilful choice of philosophical opinion over revealed truth.

### 7.2 What is Orthodoxy.

1. Greek orthodoxa, right honour, ie. true devotion to God.  
Not just belief, but also life and worship.
2. Clear definition of 'orthodoxy' developed through the Ecumenical Councils of the fourth and fifth centuries.
3. Strictly speaking, as in the patristic period, heresy was limited to the doctrine of God and Christ.

Medieval period of canon law, Reformation confessions, Counter-reformation - much wider application, eg. Doctrine of justification.

### [7.3 Historical aspects

1. Walter Bauer: Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity (1934)
  - a. primitive Christianity, unified not by doctrine but allegiance to and worship of the same Lord
  - b. ascendancy of church of Rome, orthodoxy defined by agreement with bishop of Rome
  - c. 'heresy' became disagreement with Rome

- d. marginalisation of minority groups eg. Donatists
- 2. Henry Chadwick: The Circle and the Ellipse (1959)
  - a. 2 views of orthodoxy: the first sees Rome as normative; the second views all Christian communities as linked by the foundational events at Jerusalem
  - b. ellipse, 2 foci: at Jerusalem and Rome
- 3. Assessment
  - a. Bauer's position is influenced by dogmatic assumptions, that the essential shape of Christianity evolved slowly.
  - b. Denial that there could be an original substance to the Christian faith. ]

#### 7.4 Theological Aspects

This is usefully outlined in FDE Schleiermacher, The Christian Faith (1821)

1. Heresy preserves the appearance of Christianity but denies its essence. (McGrath, p.175)
2. Essence of Christianity - redemption through Jesus Christ, through no one else and no other way. Therefore the Christian understanding of God, Christ, humanity must be consistent with the principle of redemption through Christ alone.
3. Rejection of this principle is the rejection of Christianity ie. unbelief.
4. Heresy - inadequate or inauthentic form of Christian faith
  - acceptance of the principle of redemption through Christ but internal inconsistency so
    1. Christ cannot effect redemption or
    2. Humanity cannot be justified
5. Person of the redeemer
  - a. essentially similar to us if mediator
  - b. fundamentally different from us if he is to be without the need for redemption ie. Jesus has a divine-human nature
6. Denial of the human nature, no point of contact with humanity - Docetism (Jesus only 'Spiritual').
7. Denial of the divine nature, no ability to redeem - Ebionitism (Jesus a 'good man')
8. Person of the redeemed
  - a. explain why redemption must be from outside of humanity
  - b. explain how redemption can be received
9. Denial that we need a redeemer from outside ourselves - Pelagianism (We can save ourselves)
10. Denial that redemption can be accepted - Manichaenism (World too evil to save).
- 11.4 natural heresies of the Christian faith.

## **8. Revelation**

### 8.1 The idea of revelation

1. Major theme in traditional dogmatics - Catholic, Reformed, Liberal
2. Denial of the importance of the subject of revelation by some modern liberals, e.g F.G Downing, James Barr. They argue that the Bible is concerned with the “what” of salvation rather than the “how” of revelation.
3. Variety of biblical terms
  - a. phaneroo: to make manifest what is already available
  - b. apokalypto: uncovering or unveiling that which is hidden
  - c. always, ‘outside’ to ‘inside’
  - d. includes phenomena like: ‘word’, ‘teaching’, ‘counsel’, ‘prophecy’, ‘light’, ‘name’, ‘open’, ‘shine’ etc.
4. Not an exhaustive disclosure of God but still genuine
  - a. Greek Orthodoxy: mystery, apophatic theology
  - b. Luther: ‘hidden revelation of God’

### 8.2 A definition of revelation

‘The disclosure of the knowledge of God’

- a. disclosure - not discovery, God comes to us from without
- b. knowledge of God
  - objective genitive: knowledge about God and his relation to us (information)
  - subjective genitive: God’s self -disclosure or self-communication, God’s own self-knowledge

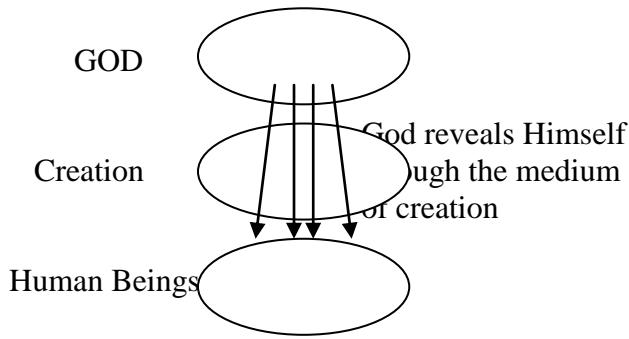
### 8.3 General and special revelation

#### 1. General Revelation (GR)

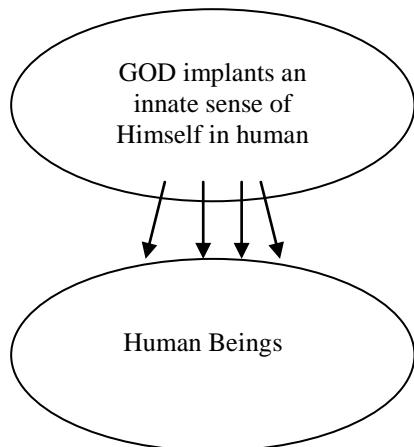
- a. The revelation of truths about God through nature and history, eg. Psalm 19:1ff, Romans 1:16-25.

Calvin: 5 aspects

beauty	wisdom	mankind	government	providence
aesthetic	intellectual	human	structural	providential
- b. General revelation is ‘general’ because it is open to all persons. GR corresponds to common grace, viz. God’s action through created structures eg. government (Rom 13:17), conscience (Rom 2:15), religion (?) for mankind’s good.



Mediate General Revelation



Immediate General Revelation

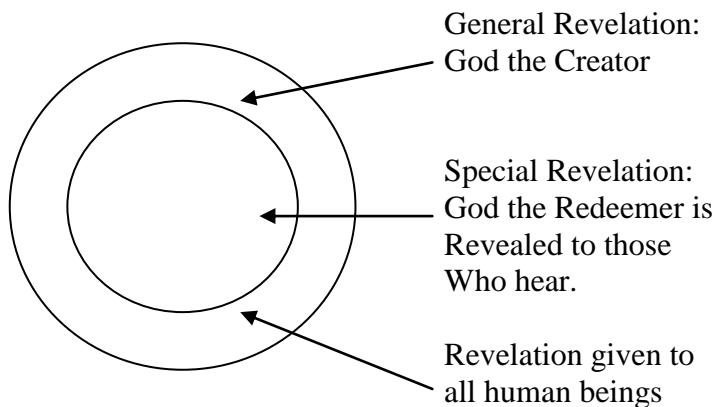
## 2. Special revelation (SR)

- a. Is centred around the work and person of Jesus Christ. Scripture is the site of special revelation as the Holy Spirit witnesses to Christ through it.
- b. SR is open only to those who hear the gospel.
- c. SR presupposes the inadequacy of GR.

## 3. General revelation limits

- a. By its inherent form, eg. impersonal world and personal God, trinity, omnipotence etc. Adam needed a Word of God to tell him what to do and what not to do.
- b. Sin: Rom 1:16ff, 2:14, Acts 17:24ff - people transmute GR into idolatry, no true knowledge of God results. All moral and spiritual knowledge apart from SR is impure. The result is a diversity of religious, political, philosophical and moral systems. GR leaves humans under the wrath of God.

4. General revelation function
  - a. Humanity is unable to free itself from the presence of God. A contact with God in creation remains. Humans are still the work of God's hands (yet not seen as Father's hands).
  - b. Common grace preserves the human race from total anarchy, something of God's commands and ordinances remain.
  - c. GR subserves SR i.e. providence is for salvation.
5. Special revelation function
  - a. As humanity is fallen and indicted by its failure to respond to GR it needs another revelation.
  - b. In Jesus God makes himself known to sinful people so that a relationship is re-established ie. redemption.
  - c. The recipients of SR are the elect of God given the gift of faith to see God in Christ. God's purposes for mankind is achieved in them.
6. Special revelation sufficiency
  - a. Jesus is a better mediator than nature. As God he can reveal God, not only as Creator but Redeemer and Father. Jesus is the fullness of creation (Col. 1:19).
  - b. Scripture has a propositional and cognitive content not available in nature eg. heaven, hell, Satan, second coming
7. General and Special revelation
  - a. Harmonise in the overall plan of God.
  - b. Not just in parallel. SR opens our eyes to GR. A glass by which the book of GR is read (Calvin). The world is like a book whose meaning only the Book can expound. Our eyes are opened to this world only as they are opened to Jesus.
  - c. The same Spirit who gave scripture opens our eyes to the world and leads us in both cases to God.
  - d. GR reminds us of the guilt of our eyes in the past and highlights for us the absoluteness of the revelation of God in Jesus.
8. Conclusion
  - a. Not 2 revelations but a two-fold revelation (2 aspects of the same God's revealing of himself).
  - b. Both serve to effect God's purposes:
    - (i) GR - preserves and indicts
    - (ii) SR - saves and brings us into fellowship with God.
  - c. When God dwells with humanity there will be no distinction.  
‘And our eyes at last shall see him, through his own redeeming love’.



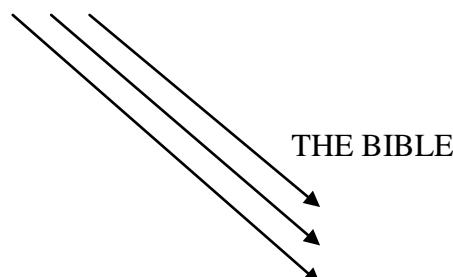
## 8.4 Models of revelation

Go beyond scriptural material. Reflective, systematic.

### 1. Revelation as doctrine

- a. RC tradition - Church dogma ie. interpretation of Scripture plus 'the deposit of truth'  
- importance of magisterium
- b. Protestant orthodoxy - truths about God contained in Scripture
- c. Fundamentalism - revelation as Holy Scripture
- d. All actual knowledge is conceptual, conveyed by proposition. 'Propositional revelation'
- e. Conservative evangelicals deny revelation continues today. The Holy Spirit 'illuminates' the revelation in the Bible.

HOLY SPIRIT



### f. Criticisms:

- (i) Schleiermacher: 'the hardened form of flowing lava', dead orthodoxy. Arid, rationalistic, impersonal
- (ii) Lindbeck: intellectualist, literalist, God cannot be defined exhaustively or timelessly in propositional form
- (iii) Neo-orthodoxy: bibliolatry, the homoousios is shifted from Christ to the Bible.

g. Conclusion:

Dynamic element to propositional revelation. Cognitive and experiential elements of revelation can't be divorced. Revelation is at least propositional eg. Decalogue.

2. Revelation as presence

- a. Denial of propositional revelation - the truth of God cannot be captured (objectified) in ideas.
- b. Brunner: Truth as Encounter
  - (i) in revelation God encounters people and conveys truth of himself ie God is communicated
  - (ii) 'I - Thou' not 'I - It' knowledge, not information but personal presence
  - (iii) revelation is a call for decision, the whole person must turn to God
  - (iv) not assent to propositions but trust in a person, revelation occurs in communion or fellowship
  - (v) truth is not independently accessible in time-space, it comes into being as the sovereign and transcendent act of God
  - (vi) the Bible, or doctrine, is not revelation, human words cannot encapsulate God
  - (vii) faith arises out of encounter, it leads to belief in certain claims found in the Bible
  - (viii) the Scripture is 'the crib in which Christ lies' (Luther), Christ meets me as a person through the witness of the Bible.

3. Revelation as experience

- a. God is made known in individual experience eg. Schleiermacher
- b. The object of faith is one's self-projection (Feuerbach)
- c. How can one test or communicate experience?

4. Revelation as history

- a. Wolfhart Pannenberg (1928- )
- b. Denial of subjectivity of liberal theology.  
Rejection of neo-orthodox view of a special saving history knowable only by faith, given as a response to a Word from beyond history.
- c. Revelation takes place in the fabric of history, and is open to ordinary historical investigation.
- d. Revelation involves act plus interpretation.
- [e. 'Dogmatic Theses on the Doctrine of Revelation'
  - (i) The self-revelation of God in Scripture did not take place directly, after the fashion of a theophany, but indirectly, in the acts of God in history.
  - (ii) Revelation is not completely apprehended at the beginning, but only at the end of revelatory history.

- (iii) In contrast to special divine manifestations, the revelation of God in history is publicly and universally accessible, and open to anyone who has eyes to see it.
  - (iv) The universal revelation of God is not fully realised in the history of Israel; it was first realised in the destiny of Jesus of Nazareth, in so far as the end of history is anticipated in that destiny.
  - (v) The Christ-event cannot be regarded as revealing God in isolation; it is set in the context of God's dealings with Israel.]
  - f. God is (implicitly) conveyed in all historical events. This must be crystallised in religious traditions. Full disclosure of God within history comes in the monotheistic religion of Israel and in Jesus.
  - g. The resurrection is the central act of divine revelation in history. This is where the fullness of God's rule and plan for humanity is revealed : 'the end of the world has begun'.
  - h. Comment:  
Faith is more than a rational evaluation of evidence.
- \*5. Revelation as supernatural invasion
- a. This view focuses upon the extraordinary disclosure of what is usually concealed, by means of prophecy, vision, dream, miracle and so on.
  - b. Attention is often given to the subjective state of the receiver, eg. Mohammed.
  - c. Comment:
    - (i) leads to a hierarchy of gifted mediators over normal men and women
    - (ii) obscures the relational dimension of revelation

## 9. Natural Theology : Its Scope and Limits

### 9.1 Positive Views

1. Natural theology - knowledge of God and the divine order which man's reason can obtain without the aid of revelation.
2. Traditional task of natural theology - to supply rational proofs of the reality of the matters with which theology deals eg. existence and attributes of God.
3. Two storey view
  - bottom storey, natural theology - reason
  - top storey, revealed theology - revelation
4. Sources of the knowledge of God in the created world.
  - a. human reason - Augustine located the image of God in the human intellect
    - 'vestiges of the Trinity'
  - b. order of the world
    - Aquinas, design etc
    - congruence ('fit') between the way our minds work and the structure of the universe eg. mathematics, 'anthropic principle'

- c. Beauty of the world - sense of beauty arises from contemplating the world, intimation of the holiness of God eg Hans Urs von Balthasar, Jonathan Edwards.

## 9.2 Calvin on the relationship between general and special knowledge of God

Calvin : Knowledge of God the Creator - knowledge of God the Redeemer

1. Institutes, book I - how do we know anything about God?
2. General knowledge of God - in humanity, in the natural order, in history
3. ‘Sense of divinity’ or ‘need of religion’ - inbuilt sense of the existence of God. 3 results.
  - a. universality of religion (idolatry)
  - b. troubled conscience
  - c. servile fear of God

Potential points of contact for the Christian proclamation.

4. Creation as ‘theatre of the glory of God’ - ordering of the world reveals God as creator, wisdom and justice. Invisible God reveals himself in the visible order.
5. Calvin’s argument is based on reason, not scripture.
6. Limitations of natural theology
  - a. finitude of human existence
  - b. sin distorts and confuses
  - c. natural knowledge of God leaves man culpable.
7. Revelation in scripture recapitulates and expands general revelation.
8. Only Scripture reveals God’s redemptive acts, focus on person of Jesus
9. No saving knowledge of God apart from the scriptural testimony to Christ.

## 9.3 The Barth-Brunner debate

1. Emil Brunner : Nature and Grace (1934)
  - a. Image of God (imago Dei) not totally destroyed by sin
  - b. Imago Dei understood personalistically - personal knowledge of God, but in a perverted form. Man responds to God by idolatry.
  - c. Sinful humanity can recognise God in nature, events of history, conscience.
  - d. Point of contact remains for the gospel, grace has a foothold
  - e. Human nature has an idea of what revelation is about, eg. ‘sin’ is not meaningless, revelation corrects and expands an already existing concept.
2. Barth: Nain (1934)
  - a. Denial of general revelation
  - b. Opposition to Lutheran doctrine of the ‘orders of creation’
    - family, state, church
    - preserving orders

- c. Nineteenth century liberal Protestantism - religious consciousness as point of reference, 'Germany' (culture, state, religion) became ultimate principle eg. support for Kaiser, 'German Christians'.
  - d. Sovereign freedom of God in revelation - not aeroplane coming to landing strip, but bomb clearing its own space
    - (i) 'God is known by God and by God alone'
    - (ii) God creatively reveals himself where there is no point of contact
    - (iii) the only bridge or analogy between God and humanity is Jesus Christ
    - (iv) the possibility of the knowledge of God is its actuality, the constantly repeated and ever new miracle of the Word of God.
3. Barth's tests for the Word outside the church
- a. It should harmonise with the Christian message.
  - b. It should not contradict the classical Christian creeds and confessions.
  - c. It will be judged by its fruits.
  - d. It will be judged by the effect it has in the Christian community.

#### 9.4 Helmut Thielicke's rejection of natural theology

- 1. It places reason and (human) nature on the same level as supernatural revelation. God and humanity are put on the same plane.
- 2. Natural theology becomes the judge of all supposed and partial religious systems.
- 3. Natural theology becomes a means whereby God is actually avoided.
- 4. The actual function of natural theology is to confirm human self-understanding and self-assertion. This means that such religion becomes the 'opium of the people'.

## **10. The Trinity**

### 1 The Doctrine of the Trinity and Scripture

#### 1. Scripture does not directly teach the doctrine of the Trinity

- the word ‘trinity’, which means three in unity, is not found in Scripture
- doctrine is the Church’s exegesis of what God has said in Scripture
- the writers of Scripture did not have to combat the errors of later times which led to the formulation of the Church doctrine of the Trinity
- the language of doctrine is not the language of the witness of Scripture.

#### 2. The root of the doctrine of the Trinity is found in Scripture

- in Scripture God speaks of himself
- the doctrine of the Trinity has no other basis than God’s revelation in Scripture e.g. culture, history, philosophy
- doctrinal statements about the Trinity claim to be indirectly identical with what is contained in revelation

### 2. Biblical foundations

#### 1. There is one God

- against polytheism (Exod.20:2-3)
- oneness of God (Deut.6:4-7, unique (class of his own and a unity)
- N.T.: ‘one God’( 1 Cor.8:4, 6; 1 Tim.2:5-6, James 2:19.)

#### 2. Suggestions of the doctrine of the trinity in the Old Testament

##### a. O.T. ‘personifications’:

- not distinct persons, but more than mere titles or activities
- indicate that the divine unity is not bare, plain, distant, inactive but dynamic, transcendence and immanence.

##### (i) Name

- Exod.32, Deut.12, God’s name to be revealed, ‘name’ dwells with his people

##### (ii) Glory

- Exod.40; Ezek.10, glory dwells in tabernacle
- Temple as well as in heaven (but can depart) without compromising oneness.

##### (iii) Angel

- terms ‘Lord’, ‘angel of the Lord’ used interchangeably e.g. Gen.16:7-13; 18:1-2; 19:1ff; Judges 6:11ff; 13:2ff; Mal.3:1.

- (iv) Wisdom
  - treated as if a person, separate yet dependent on God e.g. Proverbs 8 - creation. cf. Prov.1:20-23; 9:1-6; Job 28; Eccl.7:24
- (v) Word of God
  - God himself under the metaphor of speech
  - going forth of God actively in guidance, judgement, redemption e.g. Ps.29; 119:89; 147:15-20; Isa.55:10-11.
- (vi) Spirit
  - God's presence and power in creation (Gen 1:2; Ps. 104:30)
  - strength of Messiah (Isa.42:1-3)
  - agent of new creation (Ezek.36:26, 37:1-14).

b. indications that God is not a solitary person

- Gen.1:26; 11:7; Isaiah 6:8; plural subject 'us' used with a singular verb 'God', 'I', points to an inner plurality
- use of Elohim for God, quantitative diversity in unity cf. 'heaven', 'water'.

3. Each of the persons of the trinity is God in Scripture

- Father, assumed throughout (Gen 1:1 etc.)
- Son, confessed in N.T. (John 1:1 – 4; 20:28; Heb. 1:3,8 etc.)
- Spirit, intimated in N.T. (Matt. 28:19; 1Cor.2: 10 – 11 etc.)

4. Persons inseparably linked yet distinct

- three Persons linked in unity and equality; Matt 28:19 - 'name' is singular; 2 Cor.13:14 - dynamic attributes in salvation; Eph.4: 4-6 - 'one Spirit ... one Lord ... one God' cf. 1 Cor.12:4-6, 2 Cor.1:21-22; Gal.4:6; Eph.2:20-22; 2 Thess.2:13-14; Tit.3:4-6, 1 Pet.1:2.
- unity in saving work (the work of God presupposes the being of God.) Whole pattern of life of Christ - put forward by God the Father in the power of the Spirit e.g. baptism (Matt.3:16-17)
- distinct from one another i.e. Father is not Son is not Spirit e.g. Matt. 3:16 – 17; John 1:1 – 2; 14:26

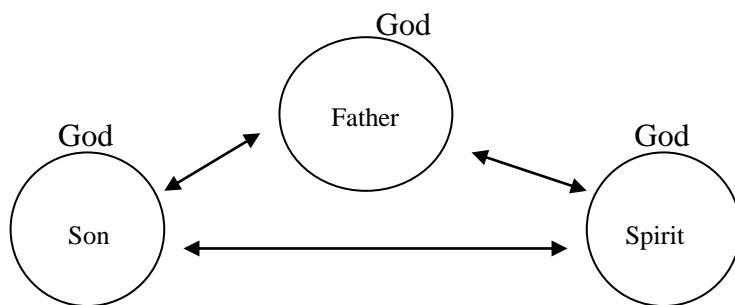
5. Conclusions.

1. There is one God
2. God is three persons
3. Each of the persons is God

### 3. Erroneous views of the Godhead

#### 1. God is three gods not one God.

- a. this is tritheism
- b. it is an example of polytheism
- c. it denies the complete unity of the Trinity.
- d. it is unbiblical (Deut 6:4etc.)
- e. it leads to moral disintegration, divisive competition, loss of a unified world view



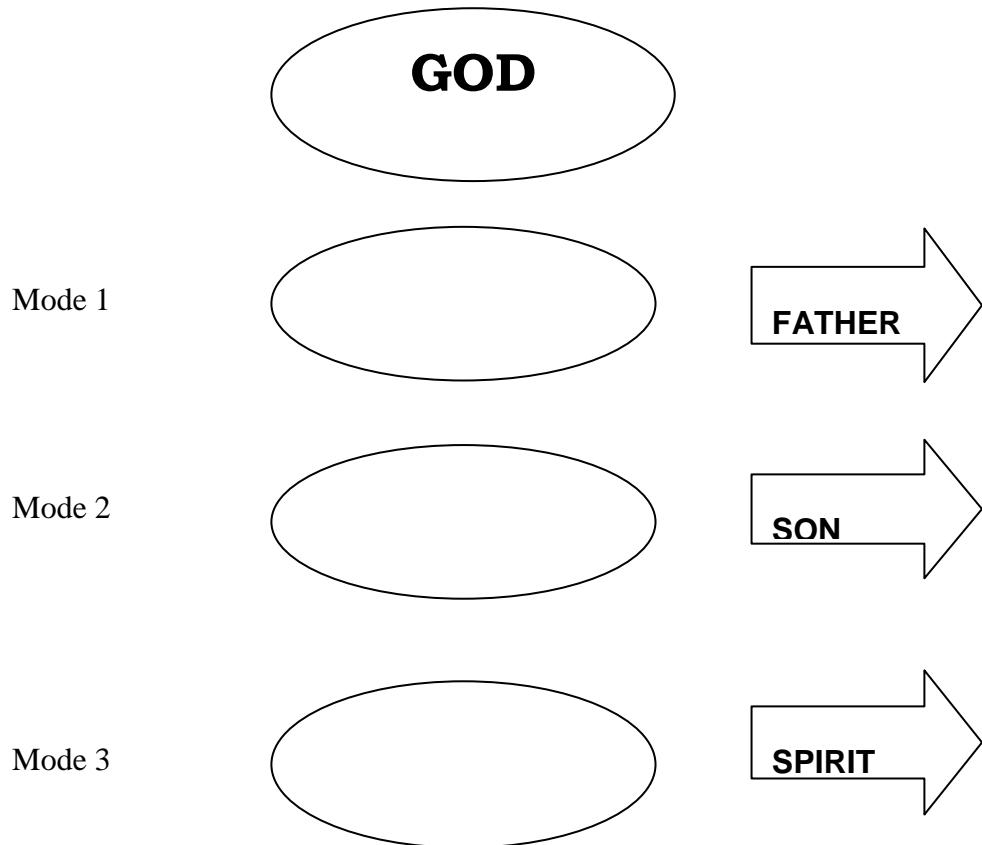
#### 2. God is not inwardly Father, Son and Spirit.

- a. adoptionism or dynamic monarchianism; (*mon-archon* = sole principle/rule)  
(Theodosius in second century, Paul of Samosata in third century)
- b. the Spirit or Christ came upon Jesus at his baptism so that he was
  - dynamised to become Son of God and do his works. Jesus remained 'mere man', he is the supremely inspired man, not God in the flesh.
- Father  
Spirit power of Father through Spirit rests on:  
↓  
Jesus  
e.g. baptism
- N.B. no genuine share in the rule.
- c. Jesus is not truly God; at most he is the best of men
- d. this denies the scriptural identity of Jesus (see before) and leaves us without any direct contact with God
- e. modalistic monarchianism  
(Noetus, Praxeas in second century, Sabellius in third century.)
- f. Father, Son, Spirit are not distinct entities but successive revelations of aspects or modes of the one God.
  - (i) the one God revealed in the manner of creator and law-giver: 'Father' (O.T.)
  - (ii) the one God revealed in the manner of Saviour, Jesus Christ: 'Son'

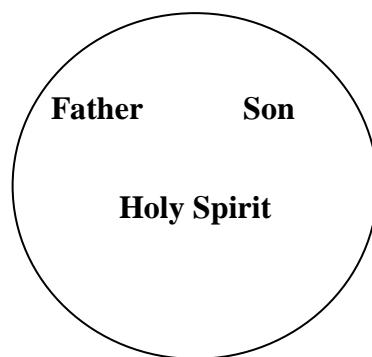
(N.T.)

- (iii) the one God revealed in the manner of the sanctifier and giver of eternal life: ‘Spirit’ (post Pentecost)
- g. appeals to the testimony of the oneness of God in Scripture (John 10:30;14:29 )
- h. this position is not biblical (see before)
- i. implies that the solitary God needed to create the world for fellowship
- k. implies that the devotional life of Jesus (prayer etc.) is a charade
- l. implies that God completely died on the cross
- m. we do not know who it is that we pray to, worship etc.
- n. we are left on the “outside” of God because his ‘inside’ is a mystery

One rule of 'GOD' expressed in 3 ways (modes).



Father, Son and Holy Spirit are three different ways of looking at God.



3. God is the Father.
  - a. the Father is unknowable (this is a property of God)
  - b. the Spirit and the Son are knowable, therefore less than the Father.
  - c. the Son is begotten in time by the Father (John 1:14; 3:16,18;1 John 4:9) as the first of his creatures (Col 1:15)
  - d. Father and Son create the Spirit.
  - e. there is a graded hierarchy: Son is essentially subordinated to Father and Spirit to Son.
  - f. only the Father is truly God (Arianism and Jehovah's Witnesses)
  - g. if Jesus is not 'one being' (*homoousios*) with the Father (Athanasius)
    - (i) he cannot reveal God.
    - (ii) God does not reconcile us to himself.
    - (iii) Christ (and the Holy Spirit) is not the fit object of Christian worship.
  - h. this position is not scriptural
    - (i) begetting is an eternal act in God cf. John 1:1
    - (ii) 'firstborn' means privilege (Col.1:15)

#### 4. Conclusion

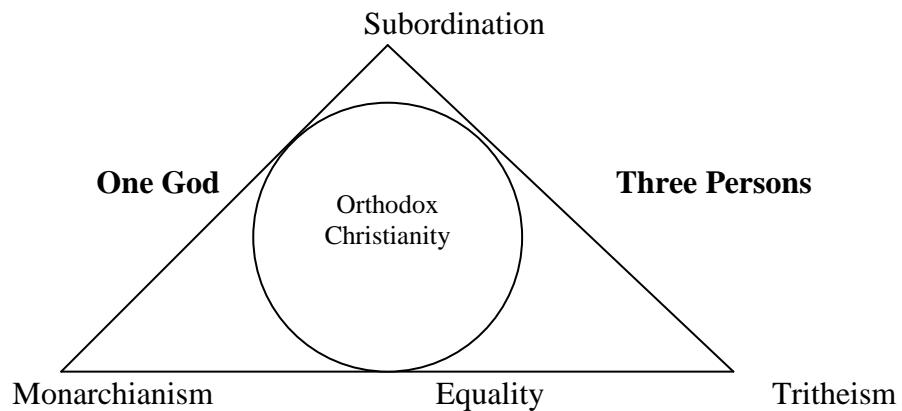
What all false views of the trinity have in common is a denial that the life of God is an interpersonal sharing, communion and fellowship. This is God's inner glory.

#### 4. Balancing it out: Orthodoxy

1. Orthodox Christianity affirms:
  - a. there is one God.
  - b. there are 3 Persons in God.
  - c. the 3 Persons are equally God.

2. Heresies deny one of these truths, or affirm the opposite.
  - a. there are 3 Gods (tritheism)
  - b. there is only 1 Person in God (monarchianism)
  - c. there is a hierarchy of deity (subordinationism)

3.



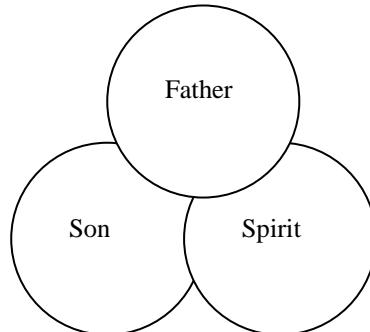
(Sherlock 1991:192)

## 5 The Doctrine of the Trinity: Terms and Concepts

1. God is God in his acting in creation: ‘economic Trinity’
  - a. the acts of God recorded in the Bible are the revelation of God’s character.
  - b. if God acts as Father, Son and Spirit, then he must be so.
  - c. these are acts towards the world
  - d. this is known as the ‘economic trinity’
  - e. from the Greek *oikonomia*  
*nomos* = law, *oikos* = house  
: the administration of a household, plan of action.
  - f. the ‘economy’ of God is the whole shape of his work (Eph 1:10), the plan of salvation.
2. God is prior to his acting in creation: ‘essential Trinity’.
  - a. from the Latin *essentia* = being  
(equivalent expressions are ‘immanent’ or ‘ontological Trinity’)
  - b. the nature of God is eternal.
  - c. this exists apart from God’s relationship with his creation.
  - d. the eternal realm of God-as-he-is-in himself is known as the ‘eternal trinity’
3. God is what God shares in himself : ‘one in being’
  - a. ‘being’ (equivalent expressions are ‘substance’ or ‘essence’) is what makes a thing to be what it is.
  - b. the essential nature or formative principle which makes God to be God ('Godness') is shared being.
  - c. the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are one in being (Greek = *homoousios*; Latin – *una substantia*)
  - d. God is being-in-communion.
4. God is as God shares in himself: ‘three Persons’

- a. Father, Son and Holy Spirit are relational terms.
- b. in theology ‘person’ (Latin = *persona*; Greek = *hypostasis*) means that which makes something itself in relation to others.
- c. there are 3 relational terms used to describe God; Father, Son and Holy Spirit, these are the 3 Persons of the Godhead.
- d. ‘Person’ does not mean an individual separate from other individuals.

## GOD



- e. the 3 Persons of the Godhead are distinct: Father is not Son is not Holy Spirit.
  - f. this can be expressed in terms of ‘relations of origin’ and ‘personal properties’.
5. God is in each of the Persons: ‘interpenetration’
- a. Father, Son and Spirit are not separate.
  - b. each of the Persons fully shares with the others all of the divine nature and attributes.
  - c. the Persons ‘interpenetrate’ each other  
(Greek = *perichoresis*, *peri* = ‘around’; *choreo* = ‘dance’, Latin = *circumincessio*)
  - d. each Person is intercontained by and in the properties of the other Persons.  
(they ‘in-exist’)
  - e. the Persons are equal in wisdom, power, eternity etc.
  - f. the life of the Father, Son and Spirit is a life of mutually embracing love.
6. God is in all his acting: appropriation.
- a. God’s essence is indivisible.
  - b. the whole Godhead is present in all of God’s acts.
  - c. the Bible and Christian tradition ascribe actions belonging to the whole Godhead primarily to one Person.
  - d. this is known as ‘appropriation’.
  - e. scripture emphasizes:  
(i) creation : Gen.1:1ff ; John 1: 3; 1 Cor.8:6; Heb. 1:2

- (ii) redemption : John 3:16; Gal. 4:4; Eph. 1:9 – 10
- (iii) sanctification : John 14:26; 15:26; 16:7
- f. models of appropriation:

Bible	Patristic	Augustine	Aquinas	Calvin
Father: creation	'from'	unity	power	beginning
Son: redemption	'through'	equality	wisdom	arrangement
Spirit: sanctification	'in'	connection	goodness	efficacy

## 6. Trinitarian Spirituality

1. Church Types
  - a. the *Church of the Father* with its specific focus on creation, the work/s of the heavenly Father.
    - (i) a focus lends itself to neglect the salvation “effected by Christ” e.g. liberalism.  
“Its positive emphasis upon the value of man is not matched by the complementary truth of his deep need of forgiveness by the death of Christ.” (Adam 1986:8)
    - (ii) civil religion falls into this category. In the American case God is the source of life and of inalienable rights, as well as being the guide of national history. Cf. the alliance between church and state in South Africa (Afrikaans), and in Serbia.
  - b. the *Church of the Son*, which concentrates on the Son who is the Saviour, and neglects the Father and the Spirit. Such theology of a saving God is reflected, “in open admission of sin and guilt, and acceptance of God’s judgement and His highest standards, in the sure knowledge of forgiveness in Christ. Just as the Church of the Father’s neglect of salvation leads to the forgetting of judgement and grace, so also the Church of the Son may go to the other extreme and enforce a strict moral code on its members, and treat people as sinners rather than as people in God’s image.” (Adam 1986:9). Viz. conservatism. This functional emphasis on the Redeemer (Jesusolatry) tends to neglect nature and history.
  - c. the *Church of the Spirit*, which concentrates on the empowerment to minister. The emphasis is on the power and gifts of the Spirit. While the Church of the Father looks at creation, and the Church of the Son looks at the church since Christ’s birth, the Church of the Spirit however is concerned with the work of God today, with little or no emphasis on the tension involved in waiting for the return of the Son i.e. triumphalism.  
“Whereas the Church of the Father tends to forget that God’s promises of salvation have been fulfilled in Christ, the Church of the Spirit is in danger of expecting too much fulfilment in this present age.” (Adam 1986:11)  
Emphasis on the Spirit tends to neglect the testing of spirits, and community formation.

(Adam. P. 1986. *Living the Trinity*. Bramcote: Grove.)

## 2. Worship Types

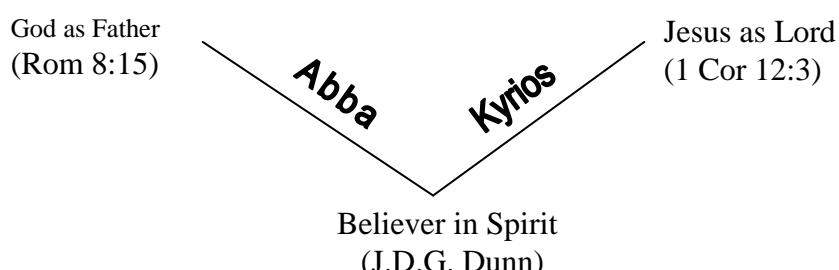
- a. Biblical pattern – to Father, through Son (Matt. 6: 9; John 16: 23; Eph. 2: 18; 5: 20) by Spirit (Rom. 8: 15, 26ff., Eph. 2:18).
- b. praise and worship should respect this order i.e. focus on Jesus as leading us to Father by Spirit (Acts 7:60; Rev. 5:11 – 14). E.g. ‘There is a Redeemer ...’

## 3. Prayer

- a. only because God communicates in himself can we communicate with him. cf. Pantheism (meditation not prayer); strict monotheism (Jehovah’s Witnesses etc.)
- b. the 3 Persons are involved in all prayer e.g. ‘Our Father’; to Jesus (Matt. 28: 17-18; Acts 11: 5-8; Rev. 1: 12-20); in Spirit (Acts 20: 23; Rom. 8: 15 f, 26f; 1 Cor. 2: 13 etc.); prayer to any Person will be to the Godhead.
- c. pray to the Father exclusively → patriarchal monotheism → hierarchy in church, family, politics, nature.( Control, authoritarianism.) denial (practical) of glorification of Christ.
- d. pray to Jesus only → friend, ‘buddy’, Elder Brother, suffering companion. E.g. Zinzendorf – Christ as ‘Brother Lambkin’. God as Father only through faith in Christ (Christomonism).
- e. pray to Spirit only → ‘Christian spiritism’, loss of boundaries set by the word(logos), emotionalism.  
N.B. ‘We pray to the Spirit through the intercession of Christ and by the grace given to us by the Father’. (Bloesch).

## 4. Personal Spirituality

- a. Christian spirituality is centred on Jesus (Christocentric), it is to have the spirituality of the humanity of Jesus by being “in Christ” (union, participation). It is to be taken within the circle of the inner life of the Godhead.
- b. “Christian spirituality is life in the Trinity. The Christian lives in the acceptance of sonship knowing God as Father. He realises this in the Sonship of Jesus Christ, his saving work of forgiveness and his gift of eternal life. He actualises this by the gift of the Holy Spirit who enables the believer to cry ‘Abba Father’ (Rom. 8: 15; Gal. 4:6).” (J.M. Houston).  
Life goes out from the Father who supplies; in, to, and through the Son who receives; and returns to the Father in and through the supply of the Spirit given by the Son.



- c. All deviations in Christian spirituality (rationalism, mysticism, Mariolatry) are distortions of the trinitarian life.
5. Trinity and Society (L. Boff 1988, Maryknoll: Orbis)
- a. disintegrated understanding of the 3 Divine Persons leads to a disunited society without integrated expression
  - b. in colonial and agrarian societies the father has knowledge and power; paternalism. People are objects of help. God is represented as almighty Father, supreme Judge and absolute Lord of life and death. There is no real room for the Son and the Spirit in communion with the Father. With the Father as dominant the relationship is vertical with believers as servants and not sons, e.g. Spain, Latin America.
  - c. in modern and democratic environments the leader is part of a political party or social movement, he/she has reached this position through personal endeavour or by charismatic personality. The extreme expressions are the “duce”, “Führer”, “caudillo”. This person is the big brother, guide or companion. Jesus is the “Brother” or “Chief”. This leads to emotional or juvenile piety and enthusiasm for the “leader” Jesus. The religion of the Son is dominated by horizontal relationship.
  - d. in charismatic groups, subjectivity and personal creativity predominate. Individuality is expressed in terms of “witnessing”, “God enlightened me”, “the Spirit led me” etc. In the religion of the Spirit alone the main relationship is with the inner self.
  - e. in disintegrated societies relationships in their three dimensions are juxtaposed and not cohesive:
    - Verticality: Father (God) as oppressive, mystery, unpredictable, hidden (oppression)
    - Horizontality: Son, self sufficiency, authoritarianism (domination by leaders)
    - Interiority: Spirit, anarchism, lack of concern (insensitivity)
  - f. to be integrated a society needs an upward reference point and memory of origins (Father); sideways relationships and solidarity (Son), and a personal dimension and inner life of creativity and dreams (Spirit).
  - g. without community and participation society is pathological. Upwards, outwards and inwards must coexist.
  - h. “The Trinity is our true social program.”

## 7. Usefulness of the Doctrine of the Trinity

### 1. The priority of communion

- a. reality neither individual ('being') or general ('Being') but 'shared being' (*homoousios*)  
both polytheism and pantheism, utter difference and identity, are avoided.
- b. God is the sort of God who shares his own Being - therefore it is possible for him to share himself with us through Jesus and the Spirit.
- c. all real knowledge of God is a sharing in God (participation). Cf. Matt 11:27; John 14:10; 15:15; 17:22.

### 2. Centrality of relationships

- a. - God exists in relationship
  - God is not 'a' person, nor can a person be reduced to a relationship
  - God exists as persons-in-relationship (*hypostasis*)
- b. 'made in the image of God' means living in relationship. Human life, mirroring God's life, can only be authentic in community.

### 3. Relationships are about other-centred love

- a. Father gives of his substance to Son and Spirit etc. and they respond in love.
- b. Love is the ideal and standard of human living. The doctrine of the trinity expounds the love of God.
- c. other-person centredness is the true glory of human life.

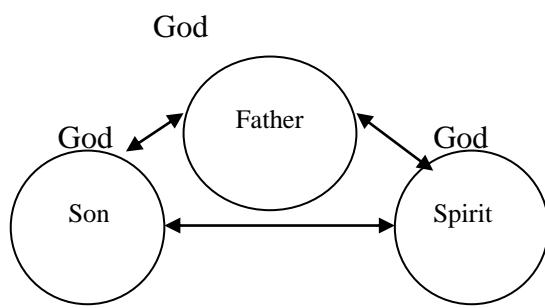
### 4. Others are not competitors but partners

- a. God not three individuals competing, nor a plain oneness unable to relate to that which is not God. Distinctiveness of 'persons' means that 'otherness' is already present in God.
- b. God is free to be God-in-relation ie. creator, revealer, redeemer.
- c. fear of the other (gender, race, age, culture, nation) reveals a non-trinitarian spirituality
- d. the 'other' in creation can be created without God ceasing to be God
- e. creation can be recognised and respected without being confused with God
- f. Authority exists for communion, not exclusion nor absorption.

## 8. Some Applications of Doctrine of the Trinity

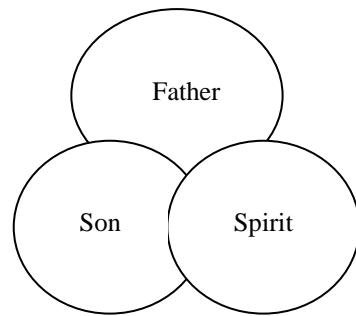
### 1. Trinity and community

NOT Exclusive Personhood



(Existence, then relationship)

BUT inclusive



(Existence - in - relationship)

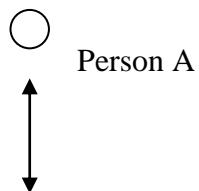
(John 14:10,11; 17:21,2)

### (ii) the human community

↓  
Genesis 1:26

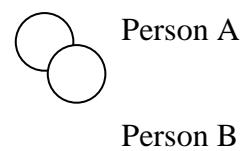
Creation of humanity in the image of God

NOT



Natural isolation with optional connection

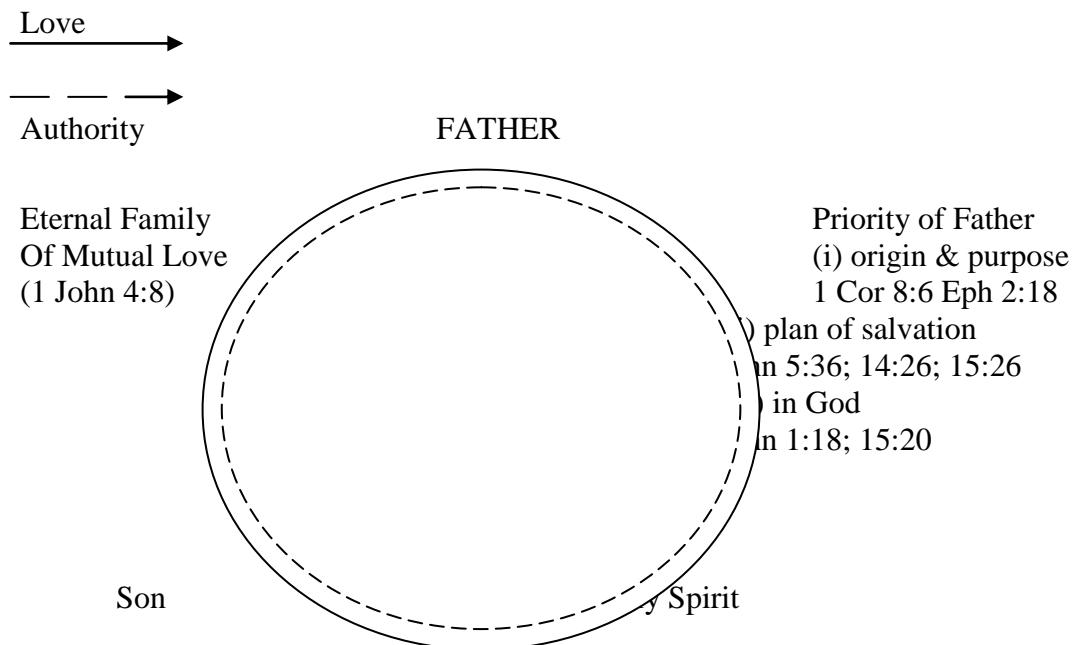
BUT



Grow as persons-in-relationship

## 2. Trinity and Family.

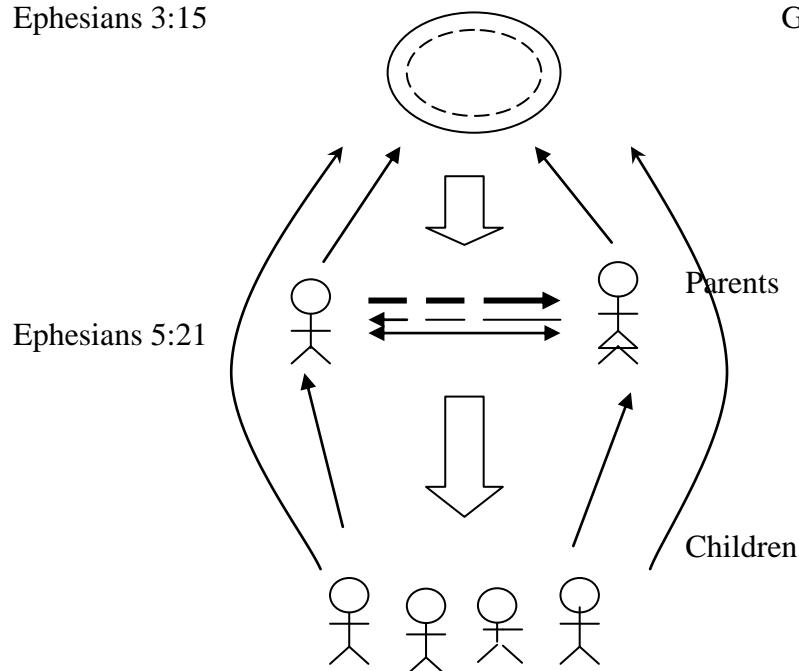
### 1. THE ETERNAL TRINITY AS FAMILY



### 2. THE CREATED FAMILY

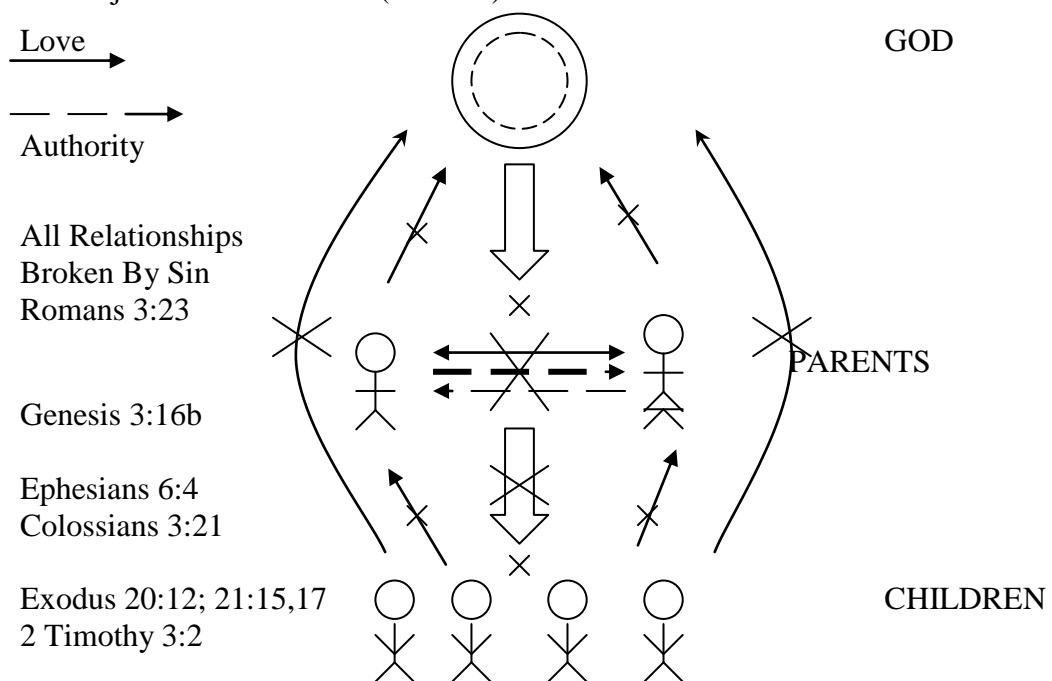
Creation of Humanity in the Image of This God (Genesis 1:26-28)

Ephesians 3:15



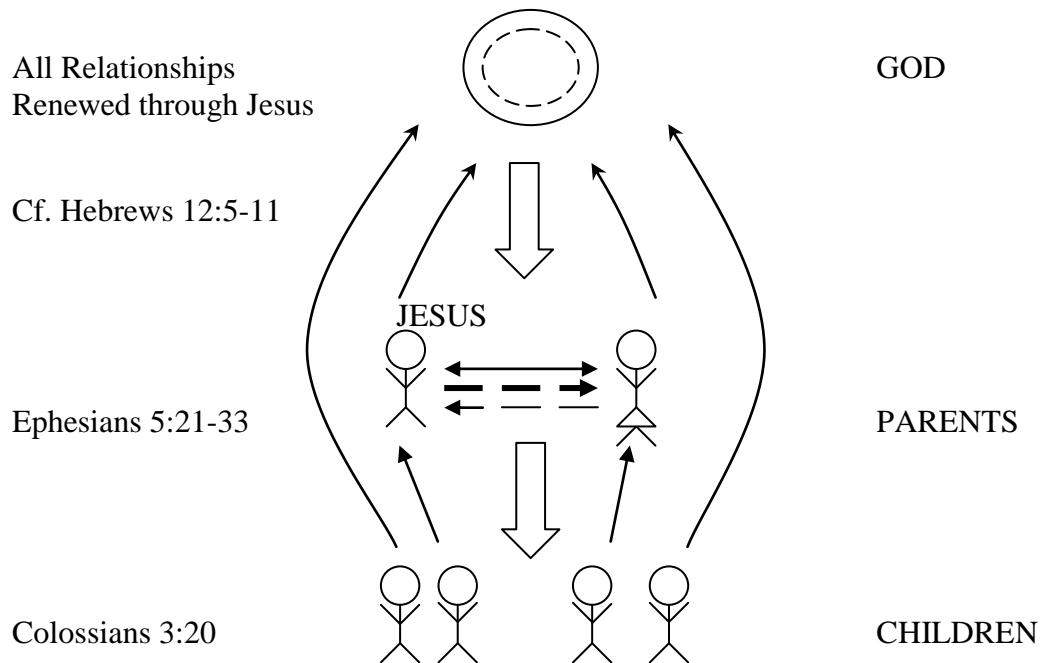
### 3. THE FALLEN FAMILY

Rejection of the Father (Jer 2:27)



### 4. THE RENEWED FAMILY

Acceptance of the Father (Romans 8:15)



SEE ALSO: Deut 6:6-7, Proverbs 22:6; 2 Timothy 3:14-15.

## **11. The Being and Attributes of God**

### **1. The Question of the Being of God**

It is impossible to avoid asking this question, whoever believes *that* God is, will necessarily wonder *what* or *who* God is.

This does not assume that we can define or comprehend God. It does assume however that he has taken the initiative to reveal himself. The starting point for the Christian doctrine of the being of God is therefore his self – revelation in Christ, recorded in the whole of the Bible.

This needs to be strongly emphasised, as the history of this doctrine has been constantly influenced by thought forms deriving from secular culture (especially Greek).

### **2. Approaches to the Attributes of God**

- a. Different theologians have distinct methods of dividing up the characteristics of God.
- b. The most common of these is to distinguish between attributes in which we may share, such as love, wisdom, goodness, righteousness and so on, and those which creatures cannot possess, such as self – existence, unity, eternity and infinity. (Communicable and non – communicable attributes.)
- c. A major difficulty with this approach is that it can tend to be abstract and divorced from the concrete relationships into which God enters with his creation. It is to be doubted if the biblical writers ever speculated on the properties of God outside of their experience of him in saving history.

### **3. A Sketch of Some of the Eternal Attributes of God**

- a. Omnipresence (all – present): the Bible teaches that God is everywhere present at once (Jer 23:23 – 24; Ps 139: 7 – 10; Acts 17:28; Col 1:27). The significance of this fact is that God is unavoidably near either to bless (Ps 16: 11; 2 Cor 3:17; Rev 21:3) or to punish (Amos 9:1 – 4; Rev 6:16).  
The Bible emphasises God’s presence to bless, as this is how he is completely present to himself as Father , Son and Holy Spirit.
- b. Omniscience (all – knowing): that God knows all things (Matt 10: 29 – 30; 1 John 3:20) including the deepest inner truths of creatures (Ps 139: 1 – 2, 4, 16; Heb 4:13) as well as the future (Isa 42: 8 – 9; 46: 9- 10) is abundantly taught in Scripture. In addition, many texts say that God knows not only all actual events but all possible ones (1 Sam 23:10 – 13; 2 Ki 13:19; Ps 81: 14-15; Matt 11:21 – 23).  
The ultimate ground for God’s omniscience lies in his perfect knowledge of himself (1 Cor 2: 10 –11; John 5: 20). As this is a relational knowledge it has the same practical implications as omnipresence.
- c. Omnipotence (all – powerful): God has the name Almighty and all things are possible for him ( Gen 17:1; Job 9:12; Ps 115:3; Jer 32:17; Matt 19:26; Luke 1:37;Rom 1: 20;Eph 1:19).

The omnipotence of God is a confession of faith, often in the context of existential struggle. This reaches its climax in the prayer of the Son to the Father “*Abba* Father, all things are possible for you” (Mark 14:36). The measure of the omnipotence of God *for us* is the death and resurrection of Christ.

#### 4. The Divine Name

- a. The key text here is Exodus 3:14. God declares his name to Moses in a hitherto unprecedented way. God declares “ This is my name forever, this is my title for all generations.” (v.16).
- b. As **the** divine name it was especially sacred (Lev. 24:16). Pious Jews substituted the name *Adonai* in reading the scriptures, and scribes used the vowels of this word in place of the originals. (This is part of the explanation for the development of the English *Jehovah*).
- c. As God’s special or proper name (Ex 15:3; Ps 83:9; Isa 42:8; Hos 12:6) it is confined to the Hebrew Scriptures, never used in the plural or with a suffix or of other gods.
- d. The name seems to be derived from the Hebrew verb “ to be” (*hayah*), and is to be pronounced YAHWEH.
- e. This does not refer to a static state of existence but to dynamic action. Where the verb “is” occurs something happens. As in “The word of the Lord came to (literally : “is” )....” E.g. Gen 15:1; 1 Sam 15:16; 2 Sam 7:4; 1 Ki 18:1,31; 2 Ki 20:4; Isa 38:4; Jer 36:1;37 :6.
- f. In the context of God’s conversation with Moses, the promise “I will be with you” (Exodus 3:12), and the repeated reference to the patriarchs “ the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob” vv. 6,15,16), the divine name conveys “I will be (do) What I was (did) “. The stress is not on God’s self – existence (aseity) but on his faithfulness. Hence his unchangeableness or immutability (Ps 102:26 – 28, Isa 41:4; 48:12; Mal 3:6; Rom 1:23; Heb 1:11 – 12; James 1:17).
- g. A major error in the doctrine of God took place when a Hebrew verb for the living God of the Bible was replaced by a Greek participle used as a noun: “being”.

#### 5. The Love of God

##### 1. The Biblical Material

- a. The Old Testament picture of the love of God is rich but incomplete . God has chosen to be in covenant relationship with Israel (Deut 7:7f; 9:4 – 6; 10:15.etc.).

This is a commitment which he sustains despite the unworthiness and rebellion of the people (Ezek 16:1 – 14). The special word for this is *hesed* , which can be variously translated as “loving kindness”or “steadfast love” or “ covenant mercy”. See for example Deuteronomy 7:9,12; 1Ki 8: 23; Isaiah 54:8. The impossibility of God abandoning his people, despite their harlotry, is the theme of the whole of Hosea, see, for example, 6:4; 11:8.

- b. The coming of Christ brings the revelation of the love of God to completion. It is now stated not only that God loves, but that “ God is love” (1John 4:8,16 cf. 2 Cor 13:11).

- c. As an absolute statement this makes sense only in terms of the love relationship between the Father and the Son
- d. The Father loves the Son (John 3:35) and the Son loves the Father (John 14:31). As such he is able to bring the Father pleasure (Matt 3:17).
- e. This explains how it is that God does not need the world, but can love it freely. The love of God in himself is an eternal reality (John 17:24).
- f. It also reveals why God can take joy in his creatures as they love him (Isa 62:5; Zeph 3:17 – 18). In the image of God they are participating in the Father – Son relationship.
- g. The focus of the Bible is on the love of God revealed in the death of Christ (John 3:16; Rom 5:8; Gal 2:20; 1 John 3:1; 4:10).

## 2. Theological Considerations

- a. The love of God is not really one of the attributes of God but the very dynamic of his essence which underlies and penetrates all the other moral attributes. Because God is love he is good, gracious, merciful, patient etc.
- b. If love constitutes the being of God, it can only be thought of as the total self – giving of each of the persons of the trinity for one another. This makes it clear why the statement “ love is God” would be idolatrous.
- c. If God **is** love then his love cannot be identified with any particular action to the exclusion of others. All that can be said is that certain actions reveal the love of God to us more clearly than others.
- d. Our very purpose and destiny is to be shaped in the image of the God of love. In particular this means the command not only to love others in the family of God (John 13:35; 1 John 4:11) but those who are enemies (Matt 5:43 – 48).

## 6. The Glory of God

- 1. God is a God of glory
  - a. The Bible makes frequent reference to the glory of God. It is something which belongs only to God and he refuses to share with those who are unlike him (Isa 42:8 cf. Rom 1:23).
  - b. The glory of God, even if it involves physical manifestations (Luke 2:9 etc.), is not a created thing (1 Tim 6:16). It is something which is “above heaven and earth” (Ps 148:13).
- 2. Glory exists in God
  - a. Stephen refers to “the God of glory” (Acts 7:2). Moses prays to see the glory of God (Ex 33:18). Paul speaks of “ the Father of glory ” (Eph 1:17). All of these suggest that glory is a relational property in God’s own nature.
  - b. Jesus says that he has shared the glory of the Father in eternity (John 17:5). The Holy Spirit can be called “ the Spirit of glory” (1 Peter 4:4).
  - c. In terms of our previous discussion, it can be seen that the glory of the Father is to love the Son, the glory of the Son is to love the Father and the glory of the Spirit is to communicate the Father – Son love.

### 3. Glory is God's Gift to Humanity

- a. To be created is to be made for the glory of God (Isa 43:7). To sin is to lack this glory (Rom 3:23).
- b. This glory has been restored to humanity in the person of Jesus (John 1:14; Heb 1:3).
- c. Christians are expected to grow in this glory (2 Cor 3:18).
- d. In the light of the life of Christ, it becomes apparent that the command to put God and his glory before all other priorities is not a selfish demand but the only way in which a creature can receive a share in the glory of God which is our eternal satisfaction (2 Peter 1:4; Rev 21:23).

## 7. The Holiness of God

### 1. Terminology

- a. The key Hebrew word is *qadosh*, this is derived from a verb *qad* which means “to cut off” or “separate”. It is one of the most common religious words of the Old Testament and is applied primarily to God.
- b. The same idea is conveyed by the New Testament words *hagiadzo* and *hagios*.
- c. The fundamental idea is of a relationship existing between God and some person or thing.

### 2. God is Holy

- a. This is a repeated refrain in the Bible (Lev 19:2; Pss 71:22; 78:41; Isa 1:4; 5:19; 6:3; 1 Peter 1:16; Rev 3:7; 4:8 etc.).
- b. This is most helpfully thought of in trinitarian terms.
- c. The Father is holy. This is not only based on the references to the holiness of “God”, but on the prayer language of Jesus (John 17:11).
- d. Jesus is repeatedly called the “holy one of God” (Mark 1:24; Luke 4:34; John 6:69; Acts 3:14).
- e. The Holy Spirit is by his very name and nature totally holy.
- f. The best way of thinking of the eternal relationships within the trinity as holy is to note their total, permanent and exclusive communion. The Father has forever set apart the Son as the exclusive object of his love (John 10:36), the full source of his pleasure (cf. Mark 1:11; Matt 12:18). The Son is always devoted and obedient to the Father (John 8:29). The Holy Spirit is the one who passionately unites Father and Son.

### 3. God's Holiness in Relation to Creatures.

- a. The first property of God's holiness in relation to creation is his majesty. This is his otherness or transcendence; God is far greater than anything he has made. He is lofty, exalted and awesome (Ex 15:11; 1 Sam 2:2; Isa 57:15; Hos 11:9). The majesty of God causes his creatures to be aware of their finite nature and frailty.
- b. The second dominant feature of holiness is moral purity. This means that God cannot abide sin, it is the very opposite of his nature (Job 34:10; Hab 1:13).

- The revelation of the purity of God convicts men and women of the terrible nature of their sin, they cannot stand in the presence of a holy God (Isa 6:5; Luke 5:8; Rev 15:4).
- c. The holiness of God often comes out in contexts to do with redemption (Ex 15:11; Ps 77:13; Isa 42:14;etc). If holiness induces a sense of separation and confrontation, it also singles out to bless, help and restore.  
It is “opposition to the opposition in which man exists over against him (God).” (Barth). Holiness is “hot love”; that in God which refuses to allow sin to be an undisturbed obstacle to his fellowship with his created sons.
  - d. God repeatedly commands “you must be holy for I am holy” (68 times in the Old Testament (cf. 1 Peter 1:16). Such an imperative, conveyed by law and gospel, reflects God’s absolute desire that humans share in the total, permanent and exclusive relations of the trinity

## 8. The Wrath of God

### 1. The Strangeness of the Wrath of God

- a. Unlike the other attributes of God, wrath is not something which pertains to God’s eternal nature. God *is* love, righteous, wise, good etc. He however needs to *become* angry ( Num 11:10; Judges 10:7; 1Ki 8:46;11:9 etc.) The Bible never says that “God *is* wrath”.
- b. There was never an eternal cause in the Godhead itself which would move God to become angry.
- c. The Old Testament expresses this by saying that God does not “afflict or grieve anyone from his heart” (Lam 3:33). The work of judgement is a “strange” or “alien” work (Isa 28:21).

### 2. The Cause of the Wrath of God

- a. The only cause of the wrath of God is sin (Ex 32:9 – 10; Deut 9:7 – 8; 2 Ki 22:13 etc.).
- b. God intensely hates all sin.
- c. This means that the doctrine of the wrath of God belongs as much to the New Testament as it does to the Old (John 3:36; Rom 1:18; 2:5,8; 5:9; Col 3:6; 1Thess1:10; 2:16; 5:9; Heb 3:11; Rev 6:16 – 17;19:15).
- d. The wrath of God is not to be equated with any sort of emotional instability or irritability, these are always condemned in the Bible (Genesis 47:7; Ps 37:8; Prov 30:33; Amos 1:11).
- e. Wrath is not the opposite of love, indifference is. God’s wrath may be thought of in terms of injured love (Jer 13:12- 14; Hos 5:12, 14).

### 3. The Purpose of the Wrath of God

- a. The purpose of the wrath of God is to destroy sin.
- b. This is revealed in the cross, where Christ bears the wrath of God (Rom 3:25-26).
- c. If God were not a God of wrath he would either be sinful or indifferent to sin. In either case he could not be worshipped.
- d. This means that the wrath of God is to be an object of praise, like all the other attributes of God (Rev 6:9;11:16 – 18; 156:3 – 4; 16: 4 –7;18:20; 19: 1 – 2).
- f. This is especially so when we realise that Christ has delivered us from the wrath to come (Rom 5:10; Eph 2:3; 1 Thess 1:10).

## 9. Transcendence and Immanence

### 1. The Nature of the Properties

- a. They are not distinct attributes as such, but the way in which God exists in all his attributes in relation to the world.
- b. Transcendence refers to the fact that God has existence in himself and does not need the world ( Ps 94:8ff; Isa 40: 18ff; Acts 7:25; Rom 11:33 – 34). He is transcendent “over” the world.
- c. Immanence describes the presence of God in the world, he is active in and upholds all things (Job 27:34; 33:4; Ps 104: 29 – 30; Matt 5:45; 6: 25 – 30; 10:29 – 20; Acts 17:27 – 28).

### 2. The Balance of the Properties

- a. Imbalance or overdue stress on one or other of the properties leads to a non – biblical view of God.
- b. In Islam,for example, God is almost completely transcendent. His relations with the world tend to be viewed as sub – personal. Since he is so far away, personal petition is useless.
- c. In the typical Eastern religions (Hinduism, Buddhism), the supreme reality is one with all things, transcendence is denied. Revelation and intercession are impossible.
- d. Only in the Christian doctrine of God is the deity fully transcendent (incomprehensible) and fully immanent (knowable). The Incarnation of Christ reveals the unity of transcendence and immanence in God.

### 3. The Basis of the Properties

- a. This can be found in the nature of God as trinity.
- b. In considering the relations within the trinity it is the Father who can simply be called “God” (John 3:16; Acts 2:32; 1 Cor 1:3; 8:6;). Jesus eternally acknowledges the first place of the Father (John 14:28; 1 Cor 15:28). The Father therefore is the ultimate source of transcendence.
- c. The Son shares in the transcendence of the Father by being one with the Father in his eternal glory; he too is Alpha and Omega, Lord of Lords (John 10:30; 17:5; Rev 1:17; 22:13; 19:16). At the same time all things consist in the Son, who will fill all things with himself (Heb 1:3; Eph 1:23; 4:10). He therefore is both transcendent and immanent.
- d. The Holy Spirit is most identified with immanence in the scriptures. He is the pervading presence of God in the world and the one who indwells God’s people (Ps 104: 29 – 30; 139: 7; Eph 2:21 – 22).
- e. For God to interact with the world then, is not a denial or contradiction of his true nature, but its expression.

## 12. Some topics in the Doctrine of God

### 1. Can God's Existence be Proved?

#### 1. Content and purpose

- a. not usually in the context of understanding preceding faith, but 'faith seeking understanding' (Anselm).
- b. clear the ground, raise questions in the mind of unbelievers
- c. show Christian faith is not irrational

#### [2. Two basic types of argument

- (i) a priori - moves wholly within the realm of thought e.g. 'ontological argument'
- (ii) a posteriori - begins with some observation of reality outside of ideas e.g. 'cosmological argument'.

#### 3. The ontological argument

- a. 'perfect being' theology: 'that than which nothing greater can be conceived'
- b. St.Anselm (1079) - ontology = 'being'
  - not an argument but a meditation (Proslogion) for the sake of his monks, why the God in whom they believe necessarily exists.
- c. McGrath, pp.158-159
  - the idea of God as 'g.c.b.' exists in the understanding
  - if I deny the existence of this being in reality then I am not understanding the meaning of 'g.c.b.', for the affirmation of the existence of the 'g.c.b.' is contained within the idea of the 'g.c.b.'
  - therefore the 'g.c.b.' necessarily exists
- d. Criticisms
  - (i) Gaunilo - most perfect island Anselm: definition of **God**
  - (ii) Aquinas - we don't know God's essence, cf. existence (from effects), know 'that' God is, not 'what' God is
  - (iii) Kant - 'existence is not a predicate' i.e. can't move from thought to reality; from the logical to the ontological.
  - (iv) Pantheism may be compatible with this argument]

#### 4. Thomas Aquinas' Five Ways

- a. Arguments rather than proofs, context is faith

Thomas is clear that only with faith's assent do the Ways give joy and salvation, without this they yield hatred and become demonic. (James 2:19)

- b. 'analogy of being' - imprint of the Creator on the creation e.g. Ps 94:9; Acts 17:29
  - wisdom and power of God is reflected in the order of the world
  - Cause produces like effects.

- c. 'The Five Ways'
  - (i) use of Aristotelian categories
  - (ii) arguments are cumulative - most abstract to most concrete
    - 1 God premoving    2 works in things    3 maintains them
    - 4 gives them worth    5 purpose and direction
  - (iii) universal providence assumed - Exodus 3:16
- d. Criticisms (Duns Scotus, William of Ockham, Hume, Kant)
  - (i) impossibility of infinite regress needs to be demonstrated
  - (ii) compatible with polytheism
  - (iii) prime mover might no longer exist
  - (iv) notion of causal law can't be proven
  - (v) illegitimate jump from finite cause to infinite cause
  - (vi) design is a subjective perspective
  - (vii) evil exists in the world (dysteleology)

## 5. Theological comments.

- a. "proofs" assume God has not taken the initiative to reveal himself in nature and history. What sort of a god would be worth believing in?
- b. if God could be proved he would no longer be the true God.
- c. "Faith is the creator of God, not in his person, but in us." (Luther)  
Without trust it is not God who is known.
- d. A first cause is not "the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob," the God of Israel, Immanuel. He is not an object among other objects.
- e. We cannot speak correctly about God if we do not thank him (Rom 1:21). The proofs themselves can be exercises in idolatry.

## 2. The Doctrine of God: Issues of the Modern Period

### 2.1 A Personal God

#### 1. Introduction

- a. Language of Christian theology is personal eg. love, wrath, reconciliation, Father
- b. The God who reveals himself in the personal Christ must be personal
- c. The Christian practice of prayer and worship implies that God is personal
- d. Revelation as self-communication implies that God is personal
- e. 'Person' refers to that which is 'most perfect in all nature' (Aquinas)

2. Difficulties with the concept of a personal God
  - a. Anthropomorphism - talking about God as if he is a human being eg. Tillich - 'difficulties of location'
  - b. Speaking of God as 'a person' may imply that God is not a Trinity of three persons
3. Replies
  - a. Religious language is analogical
    - used of God 'person' doesn't imply location
    - anthropomorphic expression is not anthropomorphic conception
  - b. The term 'person' in Trinitarian theology has a technical meaning
4. Defining 'person'
  - a. Latin : persona = mask; role in a play
  - b. Tertullian - a person is a being who speaks and acts
  - c. Boethius (c.480 - c.525) 'a person is the individual substance of a rational nature'
  - d. Modern thought
    - (i) 'person' has conscious self awareness and is capable of verbal communication
    - (ii) 'person' means voluntary and intentional action. God is an agent, character traits are revealed in actions eg. 'God is who he is in his works' (Barth)
    - (iii) 'person' involves reciprocity of relationship. God is involved in concrete relationships
    - (iv) 'person' is higher concept than 'individual' - implies relationship, society, community
  - e. 'impersonal' or 'transpersonal' eg. Aristotle, Spinoza
    - isolated, abstract perfection
    - God to be loved means to be aesthetically admired, imitated; no personal communion]
  - f. Trinity - analogy of human relationships, hence : 'persons', is made possible by relationships within God ie. three Persons
    - our relationship with God is analogous to God's inner life (God is not a self-enclosed monad)

2. Dialogical Personalism
  - a. Martin Buber : I and Thou (1927)
    - influential; neo-orthodoxy, existential theology
  - b. 2 categories of relation - primacy (a priori) of relation

- (i) 'I - It' - subject-object relation, active subject and passive object, unidirectional
    - relation to things, world of space-time
    - indirect knowledge, specific content, 'possession', using things
    - self-consciousness of 'I' in 'I - It' relation, differentiated from object, isolated
  - (ii) 'I - Thou' relation:
    - subject-subject relation, mutual and reciprocal
    - relation to persons, not world of space-time objects, things
    - direct knowledge, no specific content, no possession but presence
    - 'I' in 'I - Thou' relation is conscious of itself as subjectivity, connection to 'Thou', relationship
    - we do not experience 'Thou', we know 'Thou'
    - 'I - Thou' relation involves the whole being
    - in the 'I - Thou' relation I become 'I' and say 'Thou'
- c. God is the eternal 'Thou' who cannot become an 'It'
- 'Thou' of God meets us in all 'I - Thou' relations
  - relation with God gathers everything up into it
  - God cannot be absorbed mystically by the self
  - God always 'Thou' to us, relation cannot be feeble, simply lose immediacy
  - 'idolatry', world of 'It' allowed to obstruct the way to God
  - God is not a 'thing', the object of a cult or the possession of a religion.
- d. Implications for Christian theology
- (i) God cannot be objectified ie. described, captured, encapsulated in a formula
  - (ii) Divine revelation is self revelation, not just collection of facts but knowledge of a person
  - (iii) God is not an object to be sought and found cf. liberalism. God is not an object but a Subject. God always holds the initiative in self-revelation ie. in Jesus Christ. Theology is a human response to a divine disclosure

## 2.2 Is God Male?

1. Biblical language
  - a. Theos - masculine; masculine pronouns
  - b. Majority of analogies are male eg. King, shepherd, father
2. Analogy
  - a. Usefulness of male roles in Israel for analogies does not mean that God is equated with masculinity
  - b. Feminine analogies - carrying and comforting children cf. God to Israel

### 3. Attribution of sexuality

- a. Attribution of gender is idolatrous, reversion to paganism. It is to redeify and mythologise.
- b. Sexual distinction of male and female read back into Godhead leads to polytheism eg. 'Father and Mother' - four principles in God
- c. OT deliberately restricts feminine analogies to simile (intent, not identity) ie. likeness. (Deut 32:11; Job 38:29; Ps 131:2; Isa 42:14-15; 49:14-15; 66:13; Matt 23:37). Any suggestion of feminine in God is strongly avoided, as this leads to immanent and pantheistic views.
- d. Language of mothers and fathers is appropriate, but the OT restricts naming language or metaphors of God to masculine imagery. eg. God is like a mother, but he 'is' our Father
- e. The danger is that we will resymbolise on the basis of our cultural experience and spirituality.
- f. The key here seems to be that God has identified himself (theologised) by the ontological symbol of Fatherhood, he is the Father of the Son. This makes 'Father' a unique analogy, as it is internal to deity.

## 2.3 Can God Suffer?

### [1. Greek metaphysics

- a. Greek: apatheia, Latin: impassibilitas : without passion, cannot be moved by outside forces, complete inner freedom of spirit - self-control
- b. Plato
  - opposite to traditional way of portraying the gods as capricious, invested with human emotions
  - perfection as self-sufficiency (aseity), God needs neither the service nor friendship of people
- c. Aristotle
  - God as Unmoved Mover, actus purus - acts but is not acted upon
  - pure causality, pure thought thinking pure thought
  - perfection means absence of passion
  - God as theos apathes
- d. Stoicism
  - wise man strives for apatheia ie. to be like God
  - not indifference, but living in accordance with a higher order than the world with its fear and anxiety.]

### 2. Patristic period

- a. Philo - 'that God is unchangeable'
  - first attribution of classical Hellenistic attributes of God to the God of the Bible : immutability, timelessness, impassibility
  - change, hence suffering, would imply imperfection
- b. Church fathers

- 'the sufferings of the God who cannot suffer'
- only Origen speaks of the suffering of God as such, God suffers in the human nature of Christ
- apatheia is what distinguishes God from creatures
- salvation as freedom from perishability depends on this notion of God's being

[c. Early heresies

(i) patriconianism - Noetus, Praxeas, Sabellius (third century)

- denial of 3 Persons in Trinity
- God in a single unity, appears in successive modes or operations : Father, Son, Spirit
- the Father suffered and died as the Son on the cross

(ii) theopaschitism - John Maxentius (sixth century)

- 'one of the Trinity was crucified'
- orthodox, but potentially misleading
- fell into disuse]

3. The Medieval period

a. Anselm

- passion not a worthy attribute of God
- we experience God as compassionate, but his being is not affected by us
- see McGrath p.250

b. Aquinas

- one sided relation between God and the world.
- nothing can add to or remove from God's fullness.
- God's concern for the world cannot change his blessedness.
- God properly removes misery by love, doesn't experience this misery.
- if God suffers then our eternal union with him would involve suffering.
- any suffering by God is swallowed up by his infinite joy.
- Christ, who is God, suffers, but only in his human nature.

4. The Reformers

a. Reformed theology

- followed the classical approach.
- increasingly influenced by Aristotle.

b. Luther - Heidelberg Disputation (1518), attack on the medieval theological method : theologia gloriae - Aristotle's method, attributes of God, his wisdom, power, glory seen in creation. This approach leads to pride, attempt to share in the wisdom and knowledge of God - direction taken by the Fall. Result is the

Christian imperialism of medieval ecclesiastical society. Both laity and state are subordinated to the power of the church.

- theologia crucis (theology of the cross), new theological epistemology, God shows us what he is like, reveals his heart not his hands, deals a fatal blow to human pride, his love is shown in lowliness. Not success but suffering love for those unlike us. Like the servant king.
- Deus crucifixus : 'the crucified God'

## 5. The Modern period - Influences leading to a rejection of Impassibility

- a. 'History of dogma' movement - recognition that patristic period had absorbed Hellenistic ideas
- b. Rediscovery of Luther
  - Weimar edition of Luther's complete works (1883)
  - resurgence in Luther studies
- c. Rise of protest atheism
  - impact of WWI
  - no 'God' could allow such suffering
- d. OT studies - Abraham Heschel : Die Prophetie (1936), The Prophets (1962); TE Fretheim : Suffering of God (1984)
  - Pathos of God expressed by prophets
  - opposition to method and conclusions of classical theism
- e. Process philosophy
  - mutual relation between God and world
  - 'the fellow sufferer who understands' (AN Whitehead)
- f. Discussion of nature of 'love'
  - scholastics, 'love' in terms of good will, God can 'love impassibly'
  - 'love' involves genuine mutuality, entering into the sufferings of others

## 6. Major works

- a. Kazoh Kitamori
  - A Theology of the Pain of God (1946)
  - true love is grounded in pain
  - God's taking of pain and suffering into himself dignifies human suffering
- b. Jurgen Moltmann
  - The Crucified God (1974)
  - the cross is the foundation and criterion of true Christian theology (follows Luther)
  - the cry of dereliction (Mark 15:34) is an event in the inner Trinitarian life of God
  - the Son suffers abandonment and the Father suffers the loss of the Son

- 'death comes upon God', not because he is deficient and forced to suffer, but because he freely wills to suffer so that humanity is redeemed
  - this provides the theological basis for the political and psychological liberation of humanity
- c. Neo-orthodoxy.
- a. Barth
    - God suffers as a free choice of grace, rather than by nature.
  - b. T.F. Torrance.
    - soteriological rather than logical approach.
    - as God is (paradoxically) human and divine in Christ, he is possible and impossible at the same time.
- [d. Contemporary "Catholic Thought".
- a. since the relationship between the persons of the trinity are fully realised in love, God as God cannot suffer by constraint.
  - b. if God shared our suffering then his plan of salvation would not be pure love but self concern.
  - c. the incarnation means that God the Word suffers as a human.
  - d. if God suffered as God the total situation would be hopeless
  - e. God's suffering is a moment in the victory of his joy and love.]

## [2.4 The Death of God

1. Traditional spirituality
  - Luther
  - Charles Wesley : 'Amazing love .... thou, my God, shouldst die for me .... the immortal dies..'
2. \*Western culture
  - Hegel (1802), Good Friday experience of the death of God as the basic religious awareness of modern times
  - Friedrich Nietzsche : The Happy Science (1882).
 

'God is dead! God remains dead! And we have killed him!' The notion of God does not belong in a world come of age. Men must be gods or supermen, taking history into their own hands, building it on the corpse of God; the cross is the victory of men over God.
  - Feuerbach, Marx : theology becomes anthropology
  - Gabriel Vahanian : The Death of God : The Culture of our Post-Christian Era (1961)

### 3. \*Secular theology

- a. Response to Barth's rejection of all natural theology
- b. 'Death of God' movement - William Hamilton, not 'the absence of the experience of God' but 'the experience of the absence of God'.
- c. Prediction of complete secularisation of western society
- d. Paul van Buren : The Secular Meaning of the Gospel (1963)
  - 'God' lost all meaning, used to express gospel in atheological terms
  - no transcendent God, complete immanence of God in humanity
  - commitment to a 'Jesus-ethic' based on his lifestyle
- e. Thomas JJ Altizer : The Gospel of Christian Atheism (1966)
  - no longer acceptable to speak about Jesus being God, could talk about God being Jesus ie. ultimate moral authority for the Christian
- f. Secular Christianity soon declined
  - no power to motivate the Church
  - did not interest non-Christian thinkers

### 4. Death of God in Jesus

- a. Eberhard Jungel : The Death of the Living God (1968)
  - God becomes involved in 'perishability', 'transcience' through the death of Christ
  - God or the Mystery of the World (1983), God's self-identification with the transitory world of suffering
- b. Jurgen Moltmann : The Crucified God (1974)
  - death taken up into God on the cross ie. not 'God in history' but 'history in God'
    - : 'even Auschwitz is in God himself. Even Auschwitz is taken up into the grief of the Father, the surrender of the Son and the power of the Spirit']

## 2.5 The Omnipotence of God

### 1. The Biblical material

- a. 'God Almighty' eg. Gen.17:1; Matt.19:26
- b. Sovereign
  - nature eg. 2Ki.6:5-7; Isa.44:24; Mark 4:35-41
  - history eg. Acts 17:26
  - salvation eg. Matt.19:26; 1 Cor.1:24; Rom.1:16
- c. Will never frustrated eg. Ps.115:3

## 2. Patristic period

- a. Nicene Creed : 'I believe in God the Father almighty ...'
- b. Opposition to Greek thought (demiurge), polytheism, Gnostics, Marcion

## 3. Medieval period

- a. Anselm
  - Proslogion
  - ability to sin etc is not power but powerlessness ie. they are deficiencies not positive qualities.
- b. Aquinas
  - to sin is to fall short, God's omnipotence makes this impossible for him.
  - God possesses only perfections.
  - God cannot do logical contradictions ie. absurd things, such as making square triangles.
- [c. \*Voluntarism
  - opposition to Averroes (1126 - 1198). Islamic and Aristotelian scholar, God compelled to act in certain ways by external forces - this was the source of his reliability.
  - Duns Scotus, William of Ockham. God's will completely free and unconstrained in itself.
  - potentia Dei absoluta (absolute power of God). God's power to will whatever he chooses out of an infinite array of possibilities, limited by nothing eg. God had power to annihilate himself
  - potentia Dei ordinata (ordained power of God). Self-limiting choice of God to will certain things rather than others. God is now no longer able to do anything different.]

## 4. Protestant Scholasticism

- a. Not two powers but one, 'ordained' power is a particular expression of 'absolute' power.
- b. 'ordained' power refers to the outworking of the eternal decrees of God in history.

## 5. Modern period

- a. CS Lewis - impossibilities are non-entities
- b. God cannot do what is contradictory to his nature eg. as love
- c. Karl Barth

Barth refuses to define omnipotence in a philosophical way, instead he turns to the Scriptures and the creeds which speak of the Almighty Father, with the Son and the Holy Spirit. Might considered apart from right (eousness) is devilish. The omnipotence of God cannot be understood apart from his works. This leads to a focus on Jesus, and his saving work.

God's omnipotence is not exhausted in his omnicausality. "God has the power, as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, to be Himself and to live of and by

Himself. This is His omnipotence. Everything else which He has the power to do, He has the power to in virtue of this power...

...is simply a manifestation, revelation and application of this power... a recapitulation of his own being."

This means that all God's works possess the goodness and truth and power of how God is in Himself as Father, Son and Spirit. Such an approach seems to be the most appropriate to any discussion of the divine attributes.

## 6. Divine self-limitation

- a. Kenotic theory - Phil.2:6-7 Greek: kenosis - 'emptying'
- b. German kenotic theory
  - [(i)\* Gottfried Thomasius (1802 - 1875) - in becoming incarnate the Logos laid aside the absolute or metaphysical attributes of God eg. omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, but retained the essential or moral attributes eg. love, holiness, truth.
  - (ii)\* WF Gess (1819 - 1891) - all divine attributes laid aside in the incarnation. Logos ceased to exist on a cosmic scale; solely a human soul and consciousness.]
- c. English kenoticism
  - (i)\* Charles Gore (1853 - 1932)
    - The Incarnation of the Son of God (1891)
    - concern to maintain Jesus' full humanity
    - voluntary self-emptying of the Logos' divine knowledge
    - did not deny the life of the Logos as a separate consciousness outside the incarnate state
  - (ii) PT Forsyth (1848 - 1921)
    - The Person and Place of Jesus Christ (1909)
    - Jesus retracted his divine attributes to make them potential rather than actual
    - re-integration of the attributes of God with humanity through moral obedience
- d. Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906 - 1945)
  - Letters and Papers from Prison
  - 'religionless Christianity'
  - the God of the Bible 'conquers power and space in the world by his weakness'
  - opposite of a human religiosity which in distress looks to the power of God in the world
  - see McGrath, p.261

## 3.6 God in Process thought.

(See Appendix 2)

## 13. God the Creator and Preserver

## 1 The Doctrine of Creation

[(The expression from the world's point of view of the doctrine of God)]

### 1.1 The Biblical doctrine of creation

- a. the O.T. vocabulary - bara', asah, yatsar
  - none of the terms of themselves mean primary or absolute creation i.e. creation out of nothing e.g. Gen. 1:21, 27; Isaiah 45:7, 12.
  - bara is used of God's action alone, in places points to unique action of God e.g. Gen. 1:1.
- b. the N.T. vocabulary - kitidzein, poein
  - 'to make', 'manipulate' e.g. 1 Cor. 11:9; 1 Tim. 4:4;
  - i.e. no special vocabulary
- c. Hebrews 11:3 : 'what is seen was made out of the things which do not appear'
  - invisibility does not imply non existence.
- d. although the doctrine of creation 'out of nothing' (ex nihilo) does not appear in the Bible as such it seems to be taught in 2 Maccabees 7:28 (c.50 B.C.) , and certainly in Philo c. 20 B.C. - c. 50 A.D.

[1.2\*Hellenistic dualism (Non - biblical views of creation.)

- a. Plato - Timaeus, the demiurge or craftsman fashioned the present form of the world out of pre-existent matter.
- b. Aristotle - matter is eternal, God orders the world.
- c. Gnostics, Manichees, some Church fathers - adopted this model, offered as an explanation of evil in the world, i.e. God not responsible for the intractability of matter.]

### 1.3. Creation is a Trinitarian Act

- a. Each of the persons of the trinity are involved in creation. The Father is the direct agent of creation, all things are from the Father ( 1 Cor 8:6; Rev 4:11; 10:6). The Son is the mediator of creation, everything is through the Son (John 1:3; 1 Cor 8:6; Col 1:15 – 17; Heb 1:10 – 12). The Holy Spirit is the executor of the act of creation, all things are made by the Spirit (Gen 1:2; Job 6:13;33:4; Ps 104:30; Isa 40:12 – 13).
- b. Creation is an outflow of the dynamic of the trinitarian life, where the Father is the first giver of life, the Son the one who expresses or mediates the life of the Father, and the Spirit the one who binds together the loving purposes of Father and Son for each other.
- c. This explains why the Bible teaches that creation exists for " the glory of God" (Ps 19:1 – 2; Isa 43:7; Rev 4:11). The universe's purpose is to share in and express the life and love of God in which it was created.
- d. This means that God did not need to create the world or humankind, but creation is a free and gracious act.
- e. The world has order, purpose and destiny, not in relation to itself, but in relation to the revelation of God given in Christ.
- f. As the First and the Last (Rev 1:17; 2:8), Jesus sets the framework for the meaning of creation.

- 1.4. Creation ex nihilo
- a. this does not imply “nothing” was some sort of thing God acted upon to bring the universe into existence.
  - b. the Bible clearly affirms that God is the creator of all things (Gen 1:1; Ps 33: 6,9; John 1:3; Acts 17:24 – 25; Col 1:16; Heb 11:3; Rev 4:11).
  - c. end of second century on e.g. Theophilus of Antioch - doctrine of creation ex nihilo became orthodoxy.
  - d. Augustine
    - creation a free act of God
    - not eternal cf. generation of the Son, but eternally willed
    - did not occur after a time because time was created with the creation of the world.
  - e. recognition that there was no alternative to ex nihilo as an interpretation of Gen. 1:1
    - dualism, makes matter equal with God.
    - pantheism or monism, God and world are equal, or world is an outflow (emanation) from God. God is no longer transcendent, sovereign, holy.

Distinctions of finite - infinite, good-evil break down.
  - f. creation ex nihilo
    - no process; nothing → everything ‘instantly’
    - ‘nothing’ is not ‘something’.

## 2 Models of God as Creator

- 2.1 \*Emanation
- a. theologians of early Church.
  - b. influence of Neoplatonist images - light from the sun, heat from fire, water from spring.
  - c. rejection of construction or artisan models as crude.
  - d. analogies are deficient
    - physical emanation is involuntary
    - models are impersonal
    - tends to confuse creature and Creator.
  - e. proper use is intra-trinitarian, e.g. “light from light” of Nicene Creed.
- 2.2 Construction
- a. biblical model - e.g. Gen 2:7; Ps. 19:1 ‘the work of his hands’; Ps 127:1; Jer 18:1-11; Rom 9:21, God as potter.
  - b. God as master craftsman - plan, will, design, skill, beauty and order of world, e.g. Proverbs 8.
  - c. deficiencies
    - if literalised it is crude and physical.
    - implies pre-existent matter.

- product is sub-personal.
- 2.3 Generation.
- a. act of giving life to another.
  - b. God described as being like a “father” or “mother” to Israel.
  - c. this model is deliberately restrained in the Old Testament.
  - d. model points primarily to love and care, not procreation.
- 2.4 Soul and body
- a. God to world as soul to body.
  - b. expresses intimacy and reciprocity.
  - c. deficiency - relationship God has with world is gracious, unnecessary, asymmetrical.
- 2.5 Artistic expression
- a. creation as a work of art, expressing the handiwork and creativity of God.
  - b. examples from Christian experience e.g. Jonathan Edwards. God and creation are each beautiful in the way that musical harmony is beautiful (following the community of the trinity).
  - c. advantages
    - personal, world as God’s good pleasure (Gen 1:31)
    - open ended
    - emphasises self-expression of God.
    - non coercive of materials used.
  - d. deficiencies - most artistry is dependent on pre-existing matter.
- 2.6. There are no adequate analogies to creation
- a. once for all, unrepeated.
  - b. no pre-existent material; even mental concepts of the artist.
  - c. infinite qualitative difference between Creator and created.
3. Implications of the Doctrine of Creation
1. Distinction between Creator and creature
    - a. against all forms of monism or pantheism
      - God is transcendent
      - ‘infinite qualitative difference’, ‘wholly other’.
    - b. creatures are real, discrete entities
      - no fusion with the infinite divine life, separate existence is not illusory.

- c. 'critical world affirming spirituality';
    - Augustine, Calvin
    - opposition to ascetic spiritualities which are grounded in Hellenistic spirit-matter dualism (world-rejecting) e.g. Manichees, elements of medieval monasticism.
2. God is Sovereign over the world
    - a. as author of creation God has authority to order that which belongs to him.
    - b. as Creator God has sovereign power over creatures.
    - c. miracles are possible, God's 'unusual acts'.
    - d. humans are responsible to God for stewardship or vice-regency over the world.
  3. Creation is good
    - a. God made everything 'good' (Gen.1:10, 18, 21, 25, 31).
    - b. evil is not ultimate or original - dualism is rejected.
    - c. the origin of evil, and responsibility for it, lies in the free choice of angels and men.
    - d. the present state of creation is not by God's will, design or good pleasure (this raises the possibility of redemption).
    - e. if created things are not essentially evil then a real Incarnation is possible.
    - f. miraculous acts of God cannot be against nature, only against uniformitarian ideas of nature.
    - g. human and individual history has meaning - God has a goal for creation.
  4. Human beings have a special place in creation
    - a. humanity was created by God - not by some evil being, nor as the chance product of nature.
    - b. being created in the 'image of God' human beings have a special destiny in relation to God. God has created people with the intention of fellowship.
  5. Creation can be redeemed
    - a. God is not the creature nor distant from the creature but internal to it cf. Acts 17:28.
    - b. as internally present to the creature as the cause of its being God has the power to restore it to its true nature.
    - c. since humanity is made for God it can be saved by God. Redemption is salvation or re-creation, not de-formation i.e. God is not an intruder on human freedom or destiny.
    - d. grace is not alien nor an absolutely new beginning but the restoration or perfection of human nature (healing, not replacement).

#### 4. God's Presence in the World

##### 1. The Monarchical Model

- a. God to world as King to subjects.
- b. sovereign lordship of God over creatures and history.
- c. sovereign guidance and control in providence and redemption.
- d. if overstressed can point to transcendence without immanence, control without compassion. Need for 'family' metaphors.

##### 2. The Deist Model

- a. God to the world as a watchmaker to a watch - endowed with the ability to run itself. The better the Engineer the less the need for divine intervention.
- b. emphasises intelligent design and order.
- c. makes God distant and the world independent - an actual denial of the metaphysical claims of the Christian doctrine of creation i.e. things cannot exist in and of themselves.
- d. lacks any eschatological goal; the story of Christ and redemption implies an incompetent deity.

##### [3. The neo-Thomist model

- a. God is the cause not of something that is but of being-primary causation.
- b. there is no intermediary between God and creatures. The power of creatures comes immediately from God.
- c. God is the creative essence of everything which exists - he is closer to us than we are to ourselves for he alone is wholly present to every part of our being: 'the life of our life', 'more inward than our innermost and higher than our highest' (Augustine).
- d. God is united to the creature creatively in a way which exceeds anything possible in dualist or pantheistic systems.
- e. God gives to creatures the power to bring about their own real effects - secondary causation.
- f. God upholds and works through all secondary causes, as joiner through saw or musician through violin.
- g. that which may be properly predicated of creatures e.g. love, mercy, kindness, can be said to owe its origin to God.
- h. that which cannot be properly predicated of creatures i.e. evil must be due to a failure of the secondary cause to receive truly from the primary cause (God).]

##### [4.\*Process Thought

- a. God and the world correlate - they cannot be thought of apart: 'panentheism'.
- b. God is to the world as the soul is to the body - the source of its order and its highest expression.
- c. emphasises mutuality, creativity, 'sympathetic influence'.
- d. denies creatio ex nihilo as a metaphysical impossibility.
- e. rejects classical theism.]

## 5. Existentialism

- a. found in various forms, but rejects traditional metaphysical approach e.g. Paul Tillich - God is not a being but the ‘ground of being’, ‘God does not exist’.
- b. God’s presence in the world cannot be spoken of objectively - this is mythology.
- c. God known through symbols (Tillich) or Kerygma (Bultmann) - not directly.
- d. presence of God is impact on inner subjective or existential experience.
- e. God’s action is restricted to ‘existentialist private performance’, no acts of God in history e.g. the resurrection is the new hope of the disciples (Bultmann).

## 6. Dialogical Personalism

- a. various approaches - Buber, Brunner, Barth.
- b. God as a personal ‘Thou’ immediately confronts me in a relationship.
- c. divine-human encounter which cannot be defined or captured (dialectical).
- d. in its more existentialist forms it overlooks history, in neo-orthodoxy history is incorporated into the dialogue as a special ‘saving history’.

## 5. Creation and Ecology.

- a. nature is created by God and so is good (Gen 1:31).
- b. created in the image of God, humanity is to rule nature as God rules it (Gen 1:26) i.e. with “fatherly” care cf. Matt 5:45; Acts 14:17; 17:25.
- c. this stewardship, enacted through work (Gen 2:15), is a responsibility before God, and cannot imply a fundamental distortion but careful management.
- d. this means a priestly exercise. “As the priest offers the animal without blemish on the altar, so we are to offer all the creation with which we have to do ... to God the Father.” (C. Gunton). (This will be through Jesus and by the Spirit.)
- e. the Fall (Gen 3:5) leads to a crisis in humanity’s relationship with the earth i.e. toil, and exploitation through fear (Gen 3:17). The earth is now difficult to live in (Gen 3:17; Rom 8:20).
- f. naturalism leads to either false mastery without limits or a return to nature worship (idolatry of self or idolatry of nature).
- g. the Christian hope is a new world order (Rom 8:21; Rev 21:1,4; 22:1-3) effected by the power of the cross (Eph 1:10).
- h. this is incompatible with both selfish escapism and selfish materialism. Gospel values take us beyond self-concern to a genuine care for “all things.”

## 6. Creation and Science.

Question posed by developments in modern science from the time of the Enlightenment (Galileo). In the nineteenth century this focussed on Darwin’s theory of evolution. This century the debate has moved to cosmology.

Approaches to the subject.

1. Continuity between science and theology.
  - a. Protestant Liberalism since the Enlightenment.

- b. reinterpretation of doctrine in terms consistent with secular knowledge, e.g. “day” as geological era, “gap theory”.
  - c. examples: Laplace, cosmology, and deism;  
Uniformitarianism and Noah’s flood;  
Process theology and panentheism;  
Bultmann, myth and miracle.
  - d. raises questions of biblical authority and misreads the nature of scientific theory (as inerrant).
2. Opposition between theology and science
- a. conservative American evangelicalism, “scientific creationism.”
  - b. biblical accounts are scientifically valid with respect to origins, and therefore encounter rival theories.
  - c. makes assumptions about the purpose of the bible and scientific accuracy.
  - d. criticised for:
    - (i) ignoring scientific data.
    - (ii) resort to miracle “God of the gaps.”
    - (iii) attempts to discredit data summarily.

N.B. Mutual triumphalism.

3. Distinctiveness of theology and science.
- a. lengthy history - Tertullian, Augustine, Bacon, Galileo (“heavens”), Calvin, neo-orthodoxy (Barth etc.)
  - b. separate spheres of competence, theological events cannot be interpreted by natural sciences. (Sound of a vacuum cleaner cf. an organ (Barth).) Scientists not to act like theologians, and vice versa.
  - c. theology asks “Why?”, science asks “How?” (Gilkey). A priori questions (theology) rather than a posteriori experiences (Rahner). Distinct epistemologies. Distinct “language games” (Wittgenstein). Data, empirical evidence, (secondary) causes, probabilities. Symbols, images, metaphors, primary causes.
  - d. tends to ignore the historical relationships between theology and science.
  - e. can open the door to scientific triumphalism e.g. P. Davies.
  - f. excludes scientific cf. historical, linguistic data, as an hermeneutical source.
4. Interaction of theology and science.
- a. logical considerations - the languages of science and theology cannot be completely exclusive if they are about the same world.
  - b. world views considerations - modern science could have only developed in a Judaeo - Christian environment that, on the basis of a doctrine of creation.
    - (i) treated the world as objectively real.
    - (ii) considered entities to be contingent not divine.
    - (iii) treated the world as inherently rational.
    - (iv) viewed the universe as a coherent whole.

- c. historical considerations to do with the origin and growth of science.
  - (i) elimination of myth from nature.
  - (ii) conviction of laws of nature (Job 28:26; Prov 8:29)
  - (iii) encouragement of the experimental method in contrast to Hellenistic influences in theology and culture (Reformed thought cf. 1 Thess 5:21; Rom 12:2; Ps 34:8).
  - (iv) appropriation of a mandate to alter the earth for human benefit (Gen 1:26; Ps 8; Bacon)
  - (v) ‘thinking God’s thoughts after Him’ (Kepler) and for his glory (Pss. 8,19,50).

- d. science as part of the priesthood of creation:

“science is a religious duty while man as scientist can be spoken of as *the priest of creation*, whose task it is to interpret the books of nature, to understand the universe in its wonderful structures and harmonies, and to bring it all into orderly articulation, so that it fills its proper end as the vast theatre of glory in which the Creator is worshipped and praised. Nature itself is dumb, but it is man’s part to bring it to word, to be its mouth through which the whole universe give voice to the glory and majesty of the living God.” (T.F. Torrance)

## 7. Preservation

(This is often incorporated under the doctrine of providence)

### 1. Unacceptable Approaches to Preservation

- a. Deism
  - separates God from creation, implies creatures can have their essence in themselves.
- b. Pantheism
  - no doctrine of preservation, world is eternal, self-subsisting, identical with God.
- c. continuous creation
  - world is perpetually (instantly) falling out of existence and being recreated by God e.g. Jonathon Edwards
  - creation is not preserved, how is God faithful, responsibility and judgement are arbitrary.

### 2. Preservation as Maintenance or Sustenance

- a. since God did not act on anything to create, and there is no intermediary between God and creatures - creation must be a relation of absolute dependence of the creative on the Creator.
- b. the creature does not pre-exist or exist outside the relation, it is the content of the relation.
- c. creation is the basis for all other relations.
- d. God cannot give creatures as creatures or secondary causes the power to be other than dependent on him.

- e. preservation must be creation continued - God holding in being by his creative power what he has brought into being.
- f. creation and preservation are not sharply divided in the Bible but viewed as the one act of God e.g. Psalm 104; 139:13-16; Job 38:12, 31 ff. cf. Ps. 145:15; Neh. 9:6; Acts 17:28; Col. 1:17; Heb. 1:3.

## 8. Creation, Preservation and Christology

### 1. Cosmic Christology.

- a. all things were made through Christ  
John 1:3; 1 Cor 8:6; Col 1:16; Heb 1:2.
- b. all things hold together in Christ  
Col 1:17; Heb 1:3.
- c. everything will come together in Christ  
Eph 1:10, 18; Col 1:20; Revelation.
- d. all things were made for Christ.  
Col 1:16.
- e. as the First and the Last (Rev 1:17; 2:8) Christ sets the framework in which the whole of creation is to be understood.

### 2. Jesus as Lord of Creation.

- a. The Gospels.
  - Jesus' nature miracles, e.g. Mark 4:41; 8:27; are signs of the re-establishment of God's reign upon the earth.
  - these acts, as acts of his humanity, restore the dominion over creation given to humanity in the beginning (Gen 1:26ff; 2:15; 1 Cor 15:25-27).
  - as resurrected, Jesus has authority over all created things (Matt 28:18).
- b. The New Testament letters
  - Jesus shares the reign of God over everything which opposes his rule Eph 1:19-22; Col 1:15; 1 Cor 15:25-27.
  - this is the major theme to do with the Lamb in the book of Revelation.

### 3. Creation, Christ and covenant.

- a. "Creation is the External Basis of the Covenant." "The Covenant is the Internal Basis of Creation." (K. Barth). Through covenant God realises and reveals his creatational purpose, that he will be our God and we will be his people.
- b. Jesus is the content of the covenant: Isa 42:6; 49:8; Matt 26:28.

### 4. Creation, Christ and trinity.

- a. Christ can never be separated from his relation to the Father in the power of the Spirit.
- b. a trinitarian grasp of creation means:
  - (i) creation is a free act of God, God is not bound to create nor bound to creation.

- (ii) creation is based on a personal relation of love.
- (iii) if creation involves the Spirit, e.g. Gen 1:2; Ps 104:30, then it has a goal
- c. creation finds its rationale within the Godhead.
  - (i) creation is the gift of the Father to the Son. “Everything that the Father gives me will come to me...” (John 6:37)
  - (ii) creation is the gift of the Son to the Father. 1 Cor 15:25-27; Heb 2:5-18.
  - (iii) creation then is “the theatre of glory of God.” It is the place and process in which the love of the Father for the Son may find expression through the Spirit in creatures for his eternal praise and honour.

The goal of all creation, and so of all theology, is the joy of worship.  
 (Gen 2:2-8; n.b. Eden means “delight”; Job 38:4ff; Ps 150; John 17:4-5; Heb 12:18-24; Rev 4:11; 5:11-14; 7:10-15; 14:6-7 etc.)

## **14. Sovereignty and Providence**

### 1. Unacceptable Views of Sovereignty and Providence

#### 1.\*Deism

- a. providence identified with the laws of nature.
- b. makes providence ‘genial’ (mild benevolence).
- c. de-personalises God, substitutes nature for God; leads inevitably to atheism or ‘nature-worship’.

#### 2.\*Fatalism

- a. the ultimate principle behind the universe is responsible for everything e.g. Islam, Marxism, astrological determinism.
- b. God becomes responsible for evil, is either ‘beyond good and evil’ or capricious.
- c. God is depersonalised, exists in a mechanical relation to the world.

#### 3.\*Process Thought

- a. God’s work in creation and humanity is limited to persuasion.
- b. God ‘does his best’ - limited by the conditions of the world and human freedom
  - what God wills is much less than he is able to accomplish.
- c. denies the sovereign government of God.

#### 4.\*Existentialism

- a. restrict providence to the human order - personal influence on the interior thought and feelings.
- b. denial of God’s rule in history e.g. Tillich - miracle would be a fracture in the structure of being, God split within himself (dualism).
- c. restricts God to human subjectivity.

### 2. The Meaning of Providence

#### 1. Use of the Term

- a. Latin: providentia = foresight, prescience, provision.
- b. developed theological use:
  - (i) God foresees all events
  - (ii) God controls all events
  - (iii) God cares for his creatures
  - (iv) God has a plan for his creatures
- c. includes - preservation, history, ‘general’ and ‘special’ providence, (prayer), miracle.

## 2. The Scope of Providence

- a. Scripture:
  - (i) universe - Ps.103:19; Dan. 4:35; Eph. 1:11
  - (ii) physical world - Job 37:5, 10; Ps.104:14, 135:6; Matt. 5:45
  - (iii) brute creation - Ps.104:21, 28; Matt. 6:26, 10:29
  - (iv) nations - Job 12:23; Ps.22:28, 66:7; Acts 17:26
  - (v) birth and life - 1 Sam. 16:1; Ps.139:16; Prov 21:1; Is. 45:5
  - (vi) success and failure - Ps.75:6, 7; Luke 1:52
  - (vii) minor details - Prov. 16:33; Matt. 10:30
  - (viii) protection of the righteous - Ps.4:8, 5:12, 63:8, 121:3; Rom. 8:28
  - (ix) supplying the needs of God’s people - Gen. 22:8, 14; Deut. 8:3; Phil 4:19
  - (x) answers to prayer - 1 Sam. 1:19; Isa. 20:5, 6; 2 Chron. 33:13; Ps.65:2; Matt. 7:7; Luke 18:7, 8
  - (xi) exposure and punishment of wicked - Ps.7:12, 13; 11:6.
- b. General Providence
  - God’s control of universe as a whole
  - ‘common grace’, goodness to all (Matt. 5:45).
- c. Special Providence
  - particular providence in the life of the children of God e.g. answers to prayer, miracles, protection e.g. Gen. 45:5; 50:25.

## 3. Providence as Government

- a. universal rule of God as King - Ps. 22:28, 29; 103:17-19; Dan. 4:34, 35; 1 Tim. 6:15.
- b. God’s rule is good - directed to the purpose of his glory and so the highest good of his creatures.
- c. God’s rule as Creator - King is adapted to the nature of the creatures he has made and governs
  - works through physical laws, moral influences, properties of the mind, direct action of the Holy Spirit

- d. the government of God cannot be equated with any human government, institution or movement i.e. Church, nation or program.

#### 4. Providence as Concurrence

- a. Latin concurrus = running together with (creatures)
- b. scriptural base - Gen. 45:5; Ex. 4: 11-12; Josh. 11:6; Prov. 21:1; Ezr. 6:22; Phil. 2: 12-13.
- c. 'paradox of double agency'
  - errors to be avoided:
    - (i) God's power in the creature is general and unspecific
    - (ii) God does part of the work and the creature does part (synergism)
    - (iii) God and the creature are coordinate - this places primary and secondary causes on the same level, e.g. the Holy Spirit as the efficient cause of Scripture and the human authors as instrumental cause.
  - matters to be affirmed
    - (i) the creature is created to receive the power of God
    - (ii) the creature is not overcome but empowered by God to do its work
    - (iii) God does not stand outside the creature's will, but is its inmost cause, causing it to will without violating its freedom because it (God's will) is the condition of the freedom of the creature
    - (iv) God does not make any person do anything, he makes the person-in-their-doing.]
- d. God is not the efficient cause of sin. He gives to the creature the power to choose, the creature freely chooses to one effect. Sin arises out of the creatures deviation from the moral will of God, through the abuse of the power God gives to choose.

#### 3. Sovereignty, Providence and Christ.

"The sovereignty of God is not that of an abstraction or impersonal force but the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus himself is at the heart of the sovereignty. Because he and the Father are *the same in substance (homousios)* there cannot be in the sovereignty of God any un-Christlikeness at all. It is holy, wise and powerful, gracious, loving and merciful. Furthermore, not only is the sovereignty marked by the eternal qualities of the Son, it is also enriched by his earthly experience. He stands in the midst of the throne as the Lamb who was slain. Nothing we can say of the divine sovereignty may contradict this. Foreordination, election, government, reprobation, judgement, must all be consonant with the way God has defined himself in Christ." (D. McLeod)

## **15. Theodicies : The Problem of Evil**

### 1. Introduction to the Problem

1. Greek: theodike = justification of God.
  2. God is omnipotent (1)
  - God is good (2)
- ∴ evil should not exist (3)
- evil exists ∴ either (1) or (2) is false
- or      God is the origin of all things (1)
- evil is a thing (2)
- ∴ God is the origin of evil. (3)

### 3. Types of evil

- a. Metaphysical evil - existence or nature of evil as such
- b. moral evil - personal i.e. sin, wickedness, cruelty, etc.
- c. physical evil - pain and suffering
- d. a satisfactory theodicy needs to deal with all forms of evil.

## **2.\* Unacceptable Solutions**

### 1. Atheism

- a. God does not exist
- b. this eliminates the need for a theodicy, but
- c. the problem of suffering and despair remains existentially.

### 2. Finitism

- a. God is not ultimate
  - dualism: two equal and opposite powers, good and evil, e.g. Zoroastrianism, Manichaeism
  - finitism: God is finite in power, works with the “given” of the universe
  - process thought: God acts in a persuasive manner, but is metaphysically limited.
- b. these solutions absolve ‘God’ of responsibility for evil, but provide no assurance that in the end good must triumph over evil.

### 3. Evil is an illusion

- a. various forms of pantheism
  - Hinduism, Spinoza
  - there is only one substance, everything is an expression of it.
- b. evil is an epistemological confusion
  - Christian Science, New Age
  - evil, sickness, death are unreal, have their source in misperception or unbelief.

- c. the problem of evil is resolved in ‘the One’ - God and the world, finite and infinite, good and evil are not ultimately real but distinctions falsely introduced by our distorted thinking. Ultimate reality is beyond the personal, beyond good and evil.
- d. God is radically redefined i.e. not biblical.
- e. the existential problem remains i.e. people still suffer and die.
- f. if the illusion of evil is an evil thing then evil is real.

#### 4. Voluntarism

- a. via moderna - Duns Scotus, William of Ockham.
- b. God’s will was entirely free and unconstrained - the will of God is the only determinant of what is good and what is evil e.g. God could have decided torture was good.
- c. this separates God’s will from his character and makes divine and human goodness an arbitrary matter.

#### 5. Protest Theodicy

- a. O.T. theme
  - why do faithful suffer and godless prosper?
  - why is Israel handed over to the Gentiles?
- b. ‘protest’
  - part of the faithful, trusting response of God’s people to the ambiguities of present existence and God’s presence and purpose in the world.
- c. Eli Weisel. *The Night* (1969), ‘Where is God? ... He is hanging there on the gallows?’

### 3. Proposed Christian Solutions

#### 1. Irenaean Theodicies

- a. Irenaeus
  - man made in the image of God, but not yet brought into the maturity of a free and responsible agent in the finite likeness of God as revealed in Christ.
  - growth towards maturity depends upon living in a sphere where responsible and informed decisions need to be made, that is a world like our own with good and evil.
- b. not fully developed in Irenaeus, tended to be favoured by Greek fathers i.e. no doctrine of original sin.
- c. ‘vale of soul making’ (Keats) - spiritual growth depends upon an encounter with evil.
- d. John Hick. *Evil and the God of Love*. (1966).
  - no possible character development in a world without real choices between good and evil
  - a paradise would make good and evil meaningless

- freedom depends on the ability to choose evil, in the undeveloped state humans exist in this world
  - progression in moral development in the presence of the love of God in the future life
  - Christians believe in a future good great enough to justify the necessary existence of evil on the way to it.
- e. positively - God matures us in the context of suffering  
 negatively - couldn't God have made a less evil world
- much evil e.g. earthquakes, does not seem to maximise opportunity for growth
  - makes evil necessary to the plan of God i.e. tends to justify evil.
  - tends to "quietism"

## 2. Classical Christian Theism (Augustine - Aquinas)

### Augustine

- a. evil originates in the misuse of finite freedom
  - anti-Manichaeism
  - influence of neo-Platonism.
- b. every created thing is good, but as finite possesses the potential to become evil.
- c. the loss of the goodness of created things is called: 'evil'
  - evil is a corruption of good.
- d. God is absolute good and cannot be the cause of the falling away from the highest good (himself) which we call 'evil'.
- e. the voluntary misuse of finite human freedom is the origin of evil.
- f. freedom is the first cause of evil, and it is meaningless to ask what is the first cause of the first cause.
- g. pride - Satanic and human is the motive of evil, considering one's (supposed) finite good more important than the infinite good of the Creator.

### Aquinas

- a. evil is a privation (lacking) of a good a thing ought to have.
- b. evil has no essence of its own, it arises from a thing losing a perfection given to it by God (sheer evil is impossible).
- c. human beings cannot be totally evil, this would be for humans to cease to be human.
- d. 'sin can be called a being and an action only in the sense that something is missing (disordered). And this missing element comes from a created cause, i.e. the free will in its departure from order to the First Agent who is God. Accordingly this defect is not ascribed to God as its cause, but to the free will, just as the limp in a cripple comes from his deformity and not from his power to move even though this power enables him to limp'.

### [3. Karl Barth

- a. rejected traditional Reformed approach
  - based on natural theology, Stoicism.
- b. rejected a systematic methodology
  - inappropriate to apply general philosophical principles about God's omnipotence and goodness.
- c. seeks to apply his Christological concentration to the question of the origin of evil
  - everything is created for Jesus Christ and his death and resurrection
  - the negative side of creation, that which God does not will, must somehow stand under God's original determination in Christ.
- d. the origin of evil is to be found in das Nichtige
  - a mysterious power of 'nothingness' which is an alien factor that opposes God, and his creatures
  - it has its origin in what God did not will in creation
  - it is a 'reality' of irreconcilable evil which God yet controls
  - it takes various forms, the most important concrete form being sin.
- e. Genesis 1:2    - speaks of what God did not will or choose, the negation of God's grace is chaos  
1:3    - the darkness is the darkness left behind, it exists now in the hostile Nichtige.
- f. Nichtige threatens to reduce all things to nothingness, but has been fully and finally overcome in the death and resurrection of Christ. This ultimate triumph of grace will be universally revealed at Christ's return.
- g. criticisms
  - Nichtige is a naively mythological and philosophical construction, contrary to Barth's own stated method
  - couldn't God have created a good world without the threat of rejected evil
  - the inevitability of das Nichtige seems to reduce the power and goodness of God.]

### 4. Henri Blocher

- a. autonomous free-will defence treats the Creator-creature relationship like other relationships, where space (physical or psychological) is needed to be free. In the case of God it is his closest presence which gives freedom (Ps 104:29; Acts 17:25, 28).
- b. to treat sin as a "real possibility" in the Garden of Eden, like other possibilities, is to give it an illegitimate continuity with God's good created order.
- c. we cannot extrapolate from God's purpose to allow sin now, to his purpose in allowing sin in the beginning.

- d. once evil enters the world it is permissively decreed by God.
  - (i) it can bring glory to God as the object of just and good punishment  
(Lev 10:3; Ps 76:10; Ezek 38:16; Rom 9:22-23; 11:32 cf. 1 Sam 2:25)
  - (ii) God can will not to act, so evil increases as a consequence of wrath  
(Rom 1:24,26,28; 2 Thess 2:10).
  - (iii) God never takes pleasure in afflicting humans (Lam 3:33; Ezek 18:32; 33:11). He does not act from the heart.
- e. evil is an illegitimate and opaque reality which can not be understood, only fought. This is the way of the cross.

#### 5. P. T. Forsyth

- a. *The Justification of God.* 1917.
  - b. WW1 the manifest folly of believing in inevitable human progress and upward evolution.
  - c. evolutionary theodicies of the nineteenth century based on false view of human nature, history and a beneficent, tender, attractive, lovely God.
  - d. Christian faith did not originate in the order of the world but in its greatest war and sharpest crisis - in Christ's cross.
  - e. 'the only possible theodicy is an adequate atonement' 'the destruction of guilt and the taking away of the sin of the world'.
  - f. Christ in his cross reveals the holy love of God - his hatred of sin, his judgement upon it, his reconciliation of the world.
  - g. God's justification of man by his saving participation in human evil is at the same time God's justification of himself in relation to that evil.
  - h. the final supernatural redemption of the world in Christ will show that the first creation was for the second. The good of all creation will glorify a holy God.
  - i. a practical, not a theoretical solution:  
"These questions (concerning evil) are quite unanswerable...we can but fall back on...faith . And that seems to suggest a sermon rather than a discussion. Yet when God came to deal with the position practically and finally it was by the folly of preaching. He did not put thought on a new line, but the thinker in a new life..." (Forsyth 1917:139-140).
- 'It is not really an answer to a riddle but a victory in a battle ... We do not see the answer; we trust the Answerer, and measure by Him. We do not gain the victory; we are united with the Victor'.

#### 6. Liberation Theology

- a. context is different from traditional Western theodicies
  - God is identified with the suffering and oppression of the poor
  - suffering of the poor is the suffering of God.
- b. God struggles with the poor against injustice and oppression.
- c. Christ's cross and resurrection witness to the present struggle against evil and God's final victory over suffering.

#### 4. An Incarnational Theodicy

1. Starting Point.
  - a. natural theology
    - works from our situation in the world to God.
  - b. revealed theology
    - works from God to the world.
2. Human judgement upon God.
  - a. the problem is anthropocentric.
    - generated by a contradiction between our ideas of how God should be and the way we experience the world. (cf. Job)
    - suffering and death raise the question of hopelessness and futility.
    - the conclusion is drawn: ‘God is not gracious!’
  - b. the question is asked as a judgement upon ‘God’ ie. the God who is held by angry people to be neglectful, vengeful, punishing, biased.
  - c. only if we are first liberated from the terror of the question in its moral dimension, and to our faithlessness, could it ever be satisfactorily answered.
  - d. need humbly to admit the poverty of our knowledge (1 Cor 13:12) and that all theology is “broken thought.” (K. Barth)
3. The problem of guilt.
  - a. the Fall changes humanity’s knowledge of God .
    - Gen 2-3
    - knowledge of God is replaced by the knowledge of good and evil.
    - God is at the start of a chain of circumstances which lead to suffering:  
“the woman whom you gave to be with me.” (Gen 3:12)
  - b. the context of humanity’s revised image of God is idolatry.
    - Rom 1:18-32.  
“they did not honour him as God...they exchanged the truth of God for a lie...”
  - c. God is judged to be evil.
    - the conscience (comes to) excuse oneself and accuse God cf. Rom 2:15.
    - If God were good (ie. “like me”) he would judge evil and reward good.  
God is a moral failure.
4. The need for a theodicy.
  - a. a theodicy must transform the conscience to recognise
    - God as morally trustworthy, and so an object of faith.
    - God as good, and so repentance about God’s character.
    - God as holy, opposed to all evil.

- b. a theodicy must lead to union with God.
  - presence rather than separation.
  - seeing things as God does.

5. The incarnation.

- a. the O.T. bears witness to God's empathy with human sufferings (Gen 6:6; Ps 103:13)
- b. the Word becoming flesh (John 1:14) is God's entry into the arena of suffering.
- c. Jesus is God's voluntary embracing of the full range of human suffering.
  - temptation (Heb 4:15), sorrow (John 11:35), hunger (John 4:31), thirst (John 19:28), betrayal (Matt 26:46), torture (Matt 26:26), death (Matt 26:50)
- d. Jesus' ministry is directed towards removing human ills of all kinds.  
(healing, delivering, reconciliation)

6. The death and resurrection of Jesus.

- a. the cross is the revelation of the righteousness of God (Rom 3:21-26), as it:
  - reveals God's faithfulness to his creation.
  - exposes the deception of Satan and the rebellion of humanity.
  - sets people free from guilt.
- b. the victim and the judge are one.  
ie. God is at work in the cross  
(Isa 52:13ff; Acts 2:23; 4:28; Rom 3:25; 2 Cor 5:19 etc)  
[ The problem posed is not that of a theodicy: How can God will this or permit this in the world which He has created good? It is a matter of the humiliation and dishonouring of God himself, of the question which makes any question of a theodicy a complete anticlimax. (Barth).]
- c. the instrumentality of God's judgement is the (free) will of human beings.  
(Acts 2:23; 4:27)
- d. this supreme act of evil is the paradigm case for all God's treatment of all evil.
  - it is rooted in human decision as rebellion against God himself and his gracious purposes.
  - it is not outside of God's control.
  - it is totally opposed and punished by God's holiness.
- e. it is our responsibility which God has taken upon himself on the cross.  
(2 Cor 5:21; 1 Pet 2:24)
- f. the resurrection of Christ for us reveals the defeat of God's (and our) final enemy, death (1 Cor 15:26)
- g. no excuse remains

7. The gospel as a theodicy.
  - a. the gospel is God's saving power because it reveals God's righteousness (Rom 1:16-17)
  - b. the gospel is the good news of what God has done for all humanity in Christ. (1 Cor 15:3-4)
  - c. this makes faith and repentance possible. (Rom 1:17)
8. The Last Judgement.
  - a. this is the moral vindication of God on a universal scale.
  - b. the judgement at the end of time is the objective application of the gospel preached in history.
  - c. God will be justified and those who have not believed the gospel will be condemned.
9. The New Creation
  - a. the resurrection of Jesus is the anticipation of the eschatological transformation.
  - b. the final transformation contains an element of compensation for the sufferings and deficiencies of the present world. (Matt 5:3ff)
  - c. in the intention of God, creation was always with a view to the covenant, participation in the fellowship of the eternal life of God.
  - d. "Only in the light of the eschatological consummation is the verdict justified that...the Creator pronounced... 'it was very good'. (Gen 1:31)." (Pannenberg)

## **16. The Doctrine of Humanity**

### 1. The Image of God.

#### 1. The Biblical Framework

1. Creation in the image of God. Gen 1:26-31.  
n.b. ‘likeness’ in Gen 1:26 explains that ‘image’ does not mean identity.
2. A property unique to human beings.
3. More than other creatures, but still a creature. ‘Man has sprung from God and the dust.’ (J.P. Curran)
4. The image of God remains after the fall. Gen 5:1-3; 9:5-6; 1 Cor 11:7; James 3:9.
5. The image is corrupted through idolatry. Exod. 20:4; 34:17; Rom 1:18-32.
6. Christ is the perfect image of God. Col 1:15; Rom 8:29; 2 Cor 4:4; Heb 1:3.
7. The New Testament discusses the image of God in terms of transformation into Christ-likeness. Rom 8:29; 2 Cor 3:18 - 4:11.

#### 2.\*Inadequate views of the Image of God.

##### 1. The Body

Anthropomorphites, Mormons. Being in the image of God does involve our bodies, but God himself is bodiless, e.g. John 4:24.

##### 2. The mind

Augustine, Boethius etc. To focus on the mental aspect of what distinguishes humanity from the beasts is too narrow and inadequately personal.

##### 3. The soul

A reflection of Greek dualism, where the soul is the real and religious dimension of humanity. The idea of a higher part of human constitution is false, cf. Romans 12:1.

##### 4. Male - and - Female

Barth argues that Genesis 1:27b ‘male and female’ explains 1:27a ‘image of God.’ This means that human beings are social, not solitary. “Man” means “man and woman” who in the union constitute the basic unit of humanity. This is an intra-relational structure particular expressed in the “one-flesh” act of marriage, whereby through procreation the essential social nature of being in the image of God is transmitted.

The covenant partnership of marriage exhibits the covenant partnership between God and humanity. That this is dependent upon a plurality or bi-polarity in humanity (male/female) reflects the inner plurality of God as trinity: “let us make...” Both within God and within humanity an “I” and a “thou” confront each other.

Whilst this view has much to commend it, it is too narrow. For example, the relevant later texts in Genesis do not take up the male-female theme. Even if we keep in mind the male/female dynamic includes all gender different relationships, e.g., mother to son, the tendency is to reduce it to marriage. Also, this position tends to be too focussed on the human aspects of the image.

## 5. Dominion

The basic text of Genesis 1:26 is immediately followed by: “let them have dominion.” It may be that the text of Genesis 1 and 2 fills out the meaning of dominion in terms of humans as priests of creation enabling it to praise its maker. (See earlier notes on creation)

Certainly, to rule the earth as God’s vice-regents is part of what it means to be in covenant partnership with the Lord. This is a theme taken up at length in Psalm 8. It is not clear however whether this is the image or a product of being in the image.

## 3. Christ as the Image of God.

1. “anthropology should be based on Christology and not on the reverse... in our exposition of the doctrine of man we must always look in the first instance at the nature of man as it confronts us in the person of Jesus and only secondarily - asking and answering from this place of light - at the nature of man as that of every man and all other men.” (Barth)

2. Barth’s position seems to be the most adequate because:

- (i) the New Testament emphasises this (see above)
- (ii) if, as sinful, we have lost the knowledge of God, and so of ourselves (see Rom 1-3), we need a revelation from outside sinful humanity to restore the image of God.
- (iii) as God the Word made flesh (John 1:14), Christ is both the image and the reality of God. He is not so much the site of revelation as the content of revelation.

[“...the infinite gap between the ‘image’ which is God’s creative wisdom and the ‘image’ which is created humanity is bridged, both images which stamps and image which is stamped.”

(J.D.F. Dunn)

3. Christ as the image of God gathers up into himself all the dynamic relational aspects of the positions reviewed above. He restores us to perfect filial (sonship) union with God the Father. He shows us, as brother, how to love our fellow humanity. He is the true husband of the eternal bride (Eph 5:25-32; Rev 19:6-8.) His acts and life reveal what it is to have dominion over the earth in the Kingdom of God. His perfected priesthood opens it up for us to be kings and priests on the earth (Rom 5:17; 1 Pet 2:9; Rev 1:6 etc.)

4. To be in the image of God is to live life God (Matt 5:48; Luke 6:36; Eph 4:32; Col 3:13; 1 Pet 1:15-16) and like Christ (Eph 5:2; 1 John 3:2-3). A basic framework is set by certain texts.

1 John 4:8 = Matt 22:37-39; Ex 20:8-10; 20:11; Gen 1:26-Eph 4:24.

NB. Phil 2:6-11 where the image of God involves servanthood.

5. If Christ is the fullness of the image of God, what it means to be so created can only be revealed eschatologically. Adam, in which we have all shared, is a “type” or “pattern” of Jesus (Rom 5:21-21; 1 Cor 15:22; 45-49). Only when Christ appears, “face to face”, shall we realise in full measure what it means to be in his image (1 Cor 13:12; Col 3:4; 1 John 3:1-2).
6. The essential difference introduced by the coming of Jesus is that humanity has been taken into God. Since the incarnation, “for one who is ‘in Christ’ ... his human nature... exists not just alongside of the Creator, but in such a way that his human being is anchored in the very being of God.

The breath taking import of all this ... is that our human nature has been taken up and in Jesus to the top and summit of being, and that with him and in him man is located in the very centre of all things!” (T.F. Torrance cf. Col 3:1-4).

## 2. The Constitution of Humanity: What Makes Up People?

1. Introduction
  - a. This is a subject of considerable debate.
  - b. The most radical position, is that there is only one part or dimension to human existence, the body. This is called “monism” and is unacceptable as a Christian doctrine because it leads to a denial of life after death.
  - c. Another view is that we are composed of 2 essential parts: body and soul. This is a view held by many Christians and is called “dichotomism”.
  - d. A third position is that there are 3 aspects to human life: body, soul and spirit. This popular view is called “trichotomy”.
  - e. A final position stresses the unity or essential indivisibility of human life in the image of God, this is called “holism”.
2. Arguments for a Dichotomy
  - a. The creation story in Genesis 2: 7 pictures God animating the earth – based body of Adam through the in – breathing of a soul.
  - b. Scriptures which teach that the whole person is made up of “body” plus “soul” (Matt 10:28; 1 Cor 5:3; 3 John 2). A human is therefore material and immaterial, outer and inner.
  - c. Many scriptures make it clear that “soul” and “spirit” can be used interchangeably (compare Gen 35: 18 and Eccl 12:7; Gen 41: 8 and Ps 42: 6; Matt 20:28 and 27:50; Luke 1:46 and 47; John 12:27 and 13:21)
3. Arguments for a Trichotomy
  - a. There are texts which use a three - fold description of human life: body, soul and spirit ( 1 Thess 5:23; Heb 4:12)
  - b. The “soul” is the seat of the personality: mind, will and emotions. The “spirit” is the part of a person which deals with God or knows God (1 Cor 2: 11; Rom 8:10), this is the result of being born again.

- c. The Bible teaches that at death the “spirit” of a person goes to God (Luke 8:55; Matt 27:50; James 2:27). This refers to a life principle distinct from the soul.
4. Arguments for Holism
- a. The use of the terms “soul” and “spirit” interchangeably is evidence that the biblical writers did not think in terms of “parts” of a person. For example, a “soul” can depart the body at death (Luke 12:20).
  - b. The Bible is not trying to describe some sort of human essence, but piles up terms which dynamically describe human life. See, for example, Matthew 22: 37. Terms like “soul” and “spirit” are references to the activities of whole persons viewed from different angles, not different portions within an individual.
  - c. It is the whole person which is in the image of God and who relates to God, not some special inner sphere. **Adam** became a “living soul”.
  - d. Regeneration means that the whole person is now alive to God (Eph 2: 5; Rom 6: 11).
  - e. Within this framework, the “heart” represents the total orientation of a person (Prov 4:23; 23:26).

### 3. The Origin of the Individual Soul

#### 1. Introduction

- a. This has been a subject of considerable disagreement amongst theologians.
- b. The question arises on the assumption that either the trichotomist or dichotomist position is correct. At some point in the history of the development of the individual an immaterial “soul/ spirit” needs to be infused into a material body.

#### 2. The Pre – existence of Souls

- a. Individual souls are eternal, at some point they enter into space and time and animate bodies. This may happen only once, or numerous times, as in reincarnation.
- b. This view has been held by the ancient Greek philosopher Plato, Eastern religions, the New Age Movement and Mormonism.
- c. In this thinking the soul **is** the person.
- d. In practice this often leads to a devaluation of the body and an attempt to escape the corrupting influences of the world.
- e. This view is incompatible with Christianity because it denies the role of God the creator. It finds no support in scripture.

#### 3. Creationism

- a. Each human soul comes into existence by means of a direct creative act of God.
- b. The biblical argument for this position appeal to texts which attribute the origin of the individual to God (Num 16: 42, Ps 127: 3; Isa 42: 5; Zech 12: 1; Heb 12: 9).

- c. The main objection to this view is that it seems to make God the direct creator of evil (persons).

#### 4. Traducianism

- a. This doctrine states that the soul as well as the body is inherited from parents at the time of conception.
- b. Biblical support is found in the idea that organisms have power to reproduce “after their kinds” (Gen 1: 24). Being in the image of God means we have power to reproduce our own likeness (Gen 5: 3). Additionally, the Bible speaks as if the descendants are “in” the ancestor (Heb 7: 10). This position can explain the transmission of original sin from Adam (Rom 5:12; 1 Cor 15:22).
- c. Objections to traducianism include the assertion that the soul cannot be divided, so inheritance is impossible, and the implication that Jesus must have inherited a sinful human soul.

#### 5. Holism

- a. Since this view denies that humans are a composition of essential different parts, it does not address the question of the soul in the above manner.
- b. Some holistic theologians emphasise that the person emerges over a period of time as the foetus grows in the womb.
- c. Others emphasise the mysterious nature of the process as described in scripture (Ps 139: 6), concluding that any attempt to explain how people emerge goes beyond what God has revealed.

#### 6. Conclusion

- a. The lack of direct biblical material on this subject means we should not be dogmatic in drawing conclusions.
- b. The subject however cannot be ignored, as the time of the “origin of the soul” has important implications for abortion and birth control.

## **17. Sources of Our Knowledge of God**

### **1. Scripture**

#### **1. Canon**

1. Authoritative texts recognised as normative for the faith and conduct of the Christian community.
2. Canonical Scriptures - limits to what is accepted as authoritative.
3. R.Catholic (Greek Orthodox) versus Protestant theology on limits of the canon.
- 4.\* R. Catholic

a. Bible of the early Church and the patristic period was the Septuagint ie. wider than the Hebrew canon.

b. use in Vulgate (Latin)

#### **5. Reformers (following Jerome)**

a. limits of canon as in Hebrew Bible  
(Jammia 96 AD)

b. 'apocryphal' or 'deuterocanonical' books not used in NT.  
c. doctrinal issues, eg. prayers for dead (2 Maccabees)

#### **6.\* Council of Trent (1546) - 'apocrypha' included in OT canon.**

#### **7. Reformers**

a. some saw apocrypha as edifying eg. Anglicanism.  
b. none accepted it as a source of doctrine.

#### **8. Church and Canon**

a. Catholic theology, Church has authority to define canon.  
b. Protestantism, Church recognises authority of scripture. The reformers kept the limits of the canon open in principle, since the canon was a church decision. In practice, the books of the Bible impressed themselves on the church.  
c. Church and Bible organically related.

#### **9. Christ and Canon**

“The canon is ‘Christography’ - a collection of writings that, in various ways, lead to Christ, the wisdom and truth of God.”. (K.J. Vanhoozer)

“What does not teach Christ is not apostolic, even though Peter or Paul teach it; again, what preaches Christ is apostolic even though Judas, Annas, Pilate, and Herod do it.” (Luther)

“Christ is the Lord of Scripture.” (Luther)

### **2. Old and New Testaments**

1. Hebrew Bible : Torah - law, prophets, and writings.
2. Christian division : 'Old' and 'New' Testaments.
3. Division is theological, not chronological or cultural. The coming of Christ relativises the previous covenant.

4. How to relate to OT ?
  - a. principles and ideas endure eg. nature of God; religious practices eg. sacrifices, are temporary.
  - b. moral and ceremonial law.
5. Theological approaches
  - a.\* Rejection of OT
    - (i) Marcion, Gnostics
    - (ii) 2 'gods', Demiurge - OT, origin of evil, creator, law, harsh.
    - (iii) God and Father of Jesus - NT, love, deliverance from Demiurge, grace, salvation
    - (iv) Marcion's canon restricted
  - b.\* Luther
    - (i) law-grace dualism
    - (ii) OT, justification by works (Judaism), NT, justification by faith (grace)
    - (iii) Luther's approach to the canon/some liberals
  - c.\* 'canon within a canon'
  - d. Continuity but distinction
 

Calvin - similarity

    - (i) immutability of the divine will
      - God cannot contradict himself in action or intention.
    - (ii) witness to Christ
      - OT does this 'from a distance and darkly'
      - NT does this more distinctly
    - (iii) 'same signs and sacraments'
      - point to the same grace of God (both lead to Christ)

The two testaments are identical in terms of their substance and content.  
Difference is chronological.

(Fulfilment, not contradiction.)

Calvin - differences (mode of administration)

- (i) Differences in clarity
  - OT, heavenly inheritance is exhibited under temporal blessings eg. Canaan, material prosperity.
  - NT, this world as a type of heaven eg. Gal.4:1

("The Old Testament may be likened to a chamber richly furnished but dimly lighted: the introduction of light brings into it nothing which was not in it before; but it brings out into clearer view much of what is in it but was only dimly or not at all perceived before. The mystery of the Trinity is not revealed in the Old Testament; but the mystery of the Trinity underlies the Old Testament revelation, and here and there almost comes into view. Thus the

Old Testament revelation of God is not corrected by the fuller revelation which follows it, but is only perfected, extended and enlarged.”)

(B.B. Warfield)

(ii) Differences in imagery

- OT, Christ is typified under ceremonies, figures of speech, visual images ie.'shadow', 'foretaste'
- NT, Christ presented directly and fully ie. substance, reality.

(iii) Difference in law and gospel, letter and spirit

- former are literal, deadly, temporary
  - latter are spiritual, quickening, eternal
- Law unable to change human nature.

Gospel transforms human nature and its ability to respond to God's law.

NB. Fulfilment, not opposition

(iv) Difference in emotions evolved

- OT, law brings fear, trembling, bondage of conscience
- NT, gospel brings liberty and joy

(v) Differences in scope - OT, Israel

- NT, all people, calling of the Gentiles

### 3. The Word of God

#### 1. Jesus Christ is the Word of God made flesh (John 1:14)

- a. the essential Word of God.
- b. the self-communication in history of God's nature, will, purposes.
- c. Barth: 'Revelation does not differ from the person of Jesus Christ'.
- d. "Its centre and its peak is Jesus Christ. In that sense, it is closed. But it is spread out in time and space by the action of the Holy Spirit."

(Y. Congar)

#### 2. The gospel as the Word of God

- a. the proclamation of what God has done and revealed in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.
- b. the event of God speaking to us, demanding a response.

#### 3. The Bible as the Word of God

- a. telling the story of the preparation for the coming of Jesus, his life, death and resurrection, the implications of this for believers.
- b. witness to revelation, sets before us Jesus Christ.
- c. the authority of the Bible is that it is the medium of divine speech.
- d. the Word of God cannot be identified with the text of the Bible, but with God's speaking as an act of judgement in and through the Bible.

4. Narrative theology (theology as story)

1. Origins and history

- a. Middle Ages, Protestant scholasticism - theology as systematic presentation of revealed truths. Revelation as true propositions.
- b. Enlightenment rationalism - general principles which could be established by reason, history at best supportive. Deductive approach. (Both a. and b. emphasise ideas.)
- c. Rudolf Bultmann (1884 - 1976) - 'demythologisation', Christian existentialism Π 'death of God' movement. Meaning of Jesus' life contained solely in the proclamation, not external reality of history
- d. Propositional (extrinsic) and existential (subjective) approaches to revelation seemed at a dead end.
- e. Influences since the 1940's.
  - (i) H. Richard Niebuhr – revelation comes through history, this is recorded in the narrative of the Bible.
  - (ii) K. Barth – scripture is the story of God in Jesus Christ. This is concrete not abstract, theological not philosophical, story rather than theory.
  - (iii) Biblical Theology movement – the theology of the Bible is an interpretation of God's saving acts.

2. Features of narrative theology

a. Primacy of narrative in Scripture

- (i) scope, diversity eg. OT histories, Gospels, parables
  - (ii) creeds exist in narrative form (Apostles', Nicene)
  - (iii) to have faith in Jesus is to believe that the details of his history have saving importance.
- b. Avoids the abstraction of much of theology. Invites us to reflect upon a story - people, events etc, not just ideas. Appeal to imagination, realism, personal involvement.
- c. God has made his story interact with our story in the history of Jesus. It is this collision of stories which leads to conversion. Story of the bible provides the framework for identity of Christian and church.
- d. Ethics are set out primarily in narrative form. The Gospel set out a pattern of life and behaviour, in Jesus, appropriate to all Christian believers. Christian ethics is not adherence to a set of principles but the effect of being encountered by God and being transformed by his grace.
- e. Narrative effectively conveys the tension between the limited knowledge of human beings in the story and the omniscience of God who is beyond the story (eg. Job.)

### 3. Limitations of narrative theology

- a. Why should the Christian narrative be regarded as authoritative, or the only authoritative narrative?
  - relativizing of religious traditions
  - need to appeal to authority and self-sufficiency of Scripture ie. circular argument
- b. Danger of forgetting that the human story is judged by God, and is only resolved eschatologically. The gospel of Christ is never captured or finds adequate expression in the culture of the community of God's people.
- c. How can the truth of a narrative be established apart from the historical considerations neglected by narrative theology.

Postmodernism denies any given interpretation of a text is true.  
Narrative theology cannot deal with this objection.

### 5. Methods of Biblical Interpretation

#### [1. Historical approaches.

(see Appendix 1)]

#### 2. The theology of Bible reading.

- a. God is self-communicative.
  - it is in the very nature of God to communicate himself in his Word and Work.
  - everything God does is revelatory.
  - the centre of this revelation is Jesus, who links us directly to the Father.
- b. God's self-communication is a free, sovereign, gracious act of grace.
  - not a response to human initiative
  - not an object (or science) which can be mastered.
  - 'He is the Lord of the wording of his Word'  
(Barth)
- c. God's self-communication is purposeful.
  - it is directed to the knowledge of God.
  - it is realised through the person and work of the Holy Spirit.
  - God is always "for us"
  - God's Word is effective.
- d. If God as Word is as described above, then
  - the world of the Bible is not 'historically distant' from us.
  - our interpretation of the Bible is dependent upon the presence and activity of Jesus.
- e. Bible reading occurs in the context of a relationship established by God in Jesus Christ.
  - even the best methods cannot possess what God gives in his promises.

- it is primarily moral/spiritual rather than intellectual.
  - it occurs in faith, submission and expectation to God.
  - we are stripped of our own efforts to make the text say what we want it to.
  - we 'listen' to God in the text.
  - "It is not a Word that we can hear by our clear-sightedness or master by our reason, but one that we can hear only through judgment of the very humanity in which it is clothed and to which it is addressed and therefore only through crucifixion and repentance."
- (T.F. Torrance)

## 6. Theories of the inspiration of scripture

### 1. Inspiration in general

- a. Relates to authority of Scripture, source of its authority
- b. Relates to revelation, authors are inspired to record what is revealed
- c. 2 Timothy 3 : 16 - 17 - only verse which speaks of inspiration of Scripture  
theopneustos : 'God-breathed', 'expired'
- d. Relates to function ie. 'useful for teaching....'
- e. Not a theory of inspiration but
  - (i) origin in God
  - (ii) result of this is words
    - the focus is not on the writer but the product

### 2. Theories of inspiration

- a.\* Patristic period:
  - (i) Philo, Apologists
  - (ii) writers of Bible passive instruments, Holy Spirit blew through authors like wind through flute.
- b.\* Medieval:
  - (i) Council of Trent
  - (ii) Bible is given by 'dictation'
  - (iii) authors as instruments or secondary causes
- c. Calvin:
  - (i) RC Church placed authority external to Scripture in the testimony of the magisterium to it.
  - (ii) Anabaptists placed authority external to Scripture in the inner subjective revelation of the Spirit.
  - (iii) Calvin, Spirit inspired Scripture.
    - authority immediately from God
  - (iv) 'Inner witness of Holy Spirit' to truth of Holy Scripture as authored by God.

- (v) Scripture as 'spectacles' through which we see God's work or 'mirror' reflecting God's purposes.
  - (vi) Bible not direct revelation (not God)
  - (vii) No issues of historical reliability, factual inerrancy; this would make history the source of our knowledge of biblical authority.
  - (viii) Doctrine of accommodation ie. non-literalistic or fundamental.
- d.\* Liberalism
- (i) JG Herder : Spirit of Hebrew Poetry (1782 - 1783)
  - (ii) Emphasis on the humanity of the Bible
  - (iii) Authors as religiously inspired, like the case with artistic inspiration
  - (iv) Words of the Bible are not inspired by God as such
  - (v) Non-inspiring thoughts are discarded
- e. Old Princeton school
- (i) Supernaturalist position versus naturalism of liberalism, Bible a supernatural book.
  - (ii) Benjamin B Warfield (1851 - 1921); verbal inspiration, every words of Scripture inspired by God.
  - (iii) Incarnation paralleled by inscripturation, living Word cf written Word, sinlessness of Christ cf perfection of Bible.
  - (iv) Not dictation, human authors not overridden, but their words are the words of God and so perfectly infallible.
  - (v) Basis of fundamentalist doctrine of Bible as revelation.
  - (vi) parallels the doctrine of transubstantiation.
- f. Subjective elements
- (i) Augustus H Strong (1836 - 1921)
  - (ii) Reader's perception of scripture 'inspired'
  - (iii) Objective authority of bible cannot be recognised apart from the work of the Spirit in the Christian and the community of faith
- g. Neo-orthodoxy
- (i) Barth, unable to specify how God's Spirit is present in Scripture
  - (ii) Scripture is God's Word not as a property of itself but by his free decision and miracle repeated again and again to speak to us through it (Bible as witness)
  - (iii) Bible functions as a sacrament, Christ is present in it but can't be equated with it.

## 2. Reason

### 1. Reason and Revelation : Three Models

1.\*Theology is a rational discipline

- a. Scholasticism eg. Anselm, Aquinas.
- b. Revelation as propositional, truth of which is demonstrable by reason, e.g proofs for existence of God.
- c. Reason builds on and extends revelation.

2.\*Theology is the republication of the insights of reason.

- a. Enlightenment - Germany and England, rationalism.
- b. Every aspect of faith can be deduced from reason.
- c. Reason takes priority over revelation and judges it.

3.\*Reason is the only source of our knowledge of God.

- a. 'Enlightenment rationalism'.
- b. Elements in Christianity incompatible with reason are to be rejected.

### 2.\* Deism

#### 1. Latin : deus = God

- a. Belief in existence of a supreme being, source of all reality and ground of value, but doesn't intervene in natural or historical processes by providence, revelation or saving acts.
- b. Contrast to 'theism' which doesn't deny divine involvement.
- c. Refers to a general approach rather than to a specific set of doctrines.
- d. A stage in the modernising, secularising and universalising of belief in God.

#### 2. English Deism

##### a. John Locke : Essay Concerning Human Understanding (1690)

- (i) not a deist, but approach leads to deism.
- (ii) reason leads to the conclusion of the existence of an eternal, omniscient and omnipotent being.
- (iii) attributes of God are those moral and rational qualities suited to deity, projected to infinity.
- (iv) revelation an alternate method of reaching these conclusions.

##### b. Lord Herbert of Cherbury (c.1583 - 1648), John Toland (1670 - 1722); Matthew Tindal : Christianity as Old as Creation (1730), subtitle : The Gospel a Republication of the Religion of Nature

- (i) Bible compares unfavourably with the clarity, content and style of 'natural revelation' ie. rational argument.
- (ii) rational truths about God : justice, reason, wisdom, are universally knowable.
- (iii) Christianity is limited by historical access to what is made known in Christ.

- (iv) Christianity neither adds to nor takes away from natural revelation, its purpose is to free from superstition.

### 3. Non-English Deism

- a. Germany - HS Reimarus (1694 - 1768), GE Lessing (1729 - 1781)
- b. France - Voltaire (1694 - 1778), Rousseau (1712 - 1778)
- c. America - Benjamin Franklin (1706 - 1790), Thomas Jefferson (1743 - 1826), George Washington (1732 - 1799), Thomas Paine (1737 - 1809).

### 3.\* Enlightenment Rationalism

#### 1. Sufficiency of Reason

- a. Exclusive reliance upon reason, no need for revelation.
- b. Humanity is in the process of 'enlightenment' or coming 'of age', need to take courage in one's own reason free from all external direction eg. Tradition.
- c. Autonomy of the individual.

#### 2. Criticism of Christianity

- a. Any truth can be established independently by the use of reason, subsequently it may be recognised in the Bible.
- b. Whatever cannot first be established by universal reason cannot be true eg. Trinity, Incarnation, miracles, inspiration of Bible.

#### 3. Example : the Person of Christ

- a. Thomas Jefferson - Jesus taught simple and rational truths about God.
- b. Immanuel Kant -
  - Jesus taught the highest form of natural religion
  - where conscience and reason do not agree with the teaching of Christ, it is to be rejected.

### 4. Criticisms of Enlightenment Rationalism

#### 1. Immediacy

- a. Enlightenment confidence based on conviction of an 'immediately given' reality which does not need interpretation.
- b. Innate ideas - Descartes  
sense-data - Locke  
moral obligation - Kant
- c. These self evident principles are free from interpretation and the basis for deducing a system of reality.

#### 2. Pluralism

- a. Enlightenment thinkers unable to agree on which are the self-evident first principles of reason, experience or morality.
- b. Lack of historical, cultural , sociological awareness.
- c. Plurality of images of reality eg. non-Euclidean geometry, relativity in physics.
- d. No privileged vantage point outside of history, culture etc., therefore no universal rationality.

## 5. Some Theological Conclusions

1. Human reason is adequate to certain tasks and is presently fulfilling them. Science and technology may be cited as representative of efficacious reason.
2. Human reason is finite. Our reason stands in contrast to the divine intellect with its omniscience. Consequently reason by itself can never disclose all Christian truth.
3. Human reason is affected by our sinfulness. Scripture (Rom. 1:20-23) tells us how sin corrupted human minds. As a consequence, humans have turned to idolatry and immorality.
4. Reason becomes an instrument of a perverted will which seeks to hide from God rather than find him.

(Pss 14:2-5; 53:1-3; Rom 3:11)

“The devil’s bride, *ratio* (reason), comes in and thinks she is clever.” (Luther)

5. This is especially true when “God” is the subject matter of reason.
6. The process of becoming saved involves reason but is not completed by it. The recognition that one is lost and needs to place one’s faith in Jesus Christ as the sole source of salvation is a reasonable one. But salvation does not occur until a person then actually exercises his will and believes in Christ.
7. The conversion of the will from unbelief to faith is made possible only by God’s grace.
8. One of the goals of the Christian life is the renewing of the mind (Rom 12:2).

(W. Corduan)

## 3. Tradition

### 1. General Concepts

1. Latin : traditio = what is handed down
2. Meaning
  - a. Process which involves reflection, assessment, transformation, transmission.
  - b. Term is neutral eg 1 Cor.11:2; 15:3 - apostolic tradition; Mark 7:13; Col .2:8 - sinful human tradition.

### 2. A Single Source Theory of Tradition

1. Context of heresy, eg. Irenaeus versus Gnostics - an authorised way of interpreting Scripture.
2. Theology is based on Scripture, 'tradition' refers to a traditional way of interpreting Scripture.
3. Reformers - infant baptism retained as a tradition consistent with Scripture.
4. Bible generates its own tradition in every generation.
5. Creeds - summary of gospel, rule of faith.
6. Councils and confessions - not binding.

### 3.\* A Dual Source Theory of Tradition

#### 1. Council of Trent

- a. Response to Protestant sola Scriptura.
- b. Tradition going back to apostles providentially preserved to supplement Bible.
- c. Bible and Church, 2 sources of authority.
- d. Infallible interpreter of infallible book, Church therefore on par with Scripture.

#### 2. Vatican II - not 2 sources but 1 (God), 2 streams from the source.

### 4.\* Rejection of Tradition

#### 1. Minimisation of tradition - Montanism (second century): appeal to immediate inspiration; a catalyst to Catholic appeal to apostolic canon, apostolic creed, apostolic episcopate.

#### 2. Radical Reformation

- a. Thomas Muntzer, Caspar Schwenkfeld, Sebastian Frank, 'Zwickau prophets', c.f. Quakers.
- b. Holy Spirit immediately illuminates the meaning of Scripture to the individual, no valid history of interpretation.
- c. Rejection of infant baptism, clerical orders, Trinity, deity of Christ etc.

#### 3. Enlightenment

- a. Belief in universal progress - coming 'of age'.
- b. Emancipation from the religious, superstitious and political traditions of the past.
- c. Individual autonomy

#### 5. Conclusion

"When the Reformers spoke of *sola Scriptura* they meant the Bible illuminated by the Spirit in the matrix of the church. *Sola Scriptura* is not *nuda Scriptura* (the bare Scripture). It means the Bible is our primary authority, not our only authority" (D. Bloesch)

#### 4. Theology and worship: The Importance of Liturgical tradition

##### 1. Liturgy : Greek leitourgia = public service, written texts for Church services

##### 2. Lex orandi, lex credendi

- a. Way of belief follows the way of prayer
- b. Interaction of worship and faith/theology
- c. This is explicit in the theological method of the Church fathers and Eastern Orthodoxy

##### 3. Examples

- a. Gnosticism - matter inherently evil, dualism  
Irenaeus - Christian sacraments at command of Christ use bread, wine, water.
- b. Arianism - Christ the supreme creature  
Athanasius - Christian worship of Christ would be idolatrous.

- c. Pneumatomachians - denial of deity of Spirit
- Basil of Caesarea - joining of the Spirit with the Father and Son in worship.

4. Geoffrey Wainwright : Doxology (1980)

- a. Belief and doctrine begin and end in worship and prayer
- b. Intellectual elements (theology) introduced into liturgy from earlier times, not just emotive
- c. Liturgy and theology are organically related

5. Aidan Kavanagh : On Liturgical Theology(1984)

- a. Primary theology - worship
- b. Secondary theology - theological reflection on the God worshipped.

5. Religious Experience

1.General

1. Latin: experiencia

- a. ‘that which arises out of travelling through life’
- b. ‘an accumulated body of knowledge, arising through first-hand encounter with life’

2. Acquired meaning

- a. ‘a state of mind or feeling produced by environmental influences’
- b. Links inner-subjective world with outer-objective reality
- c. William James : The Varieties of Religious Experience (1902)
- d. Religion not just about ideas but the interpretation and transformation of the inner life of the individual.

2. Historical attitudes to the place of experience in theology

1. Classical Reformed and Evangelical thought

- a. Avoids a dichotomy between the subjective and objective.
- b. Luther
  - (i) “When I had realised this I felt myself absolutely born again. The gates of paradise had been flung open and I had entered. There and then the whole of Scripture took on another look to me.”
  - (ii) “This is the reason why our theology is certain: it snatches us away from ourselves, so that we do not depend on our own strength, conscience, experience, person or works but depend on that which is outside ourselves, that is, on the promise and truth of God, which cannot deceive”.

- c. Calvin
  - (i) “recognition of him (God) consists more in living experience than in vain and high-flown speculation”.
  - “nothing is achieved unless we begin from the inner disposition of the heart”
  - “he must have his seat in our hearts within, so that we are unfeignedly joined to him, and with true affection. That is the way for us to be made partakers of God’s Spirit.”
  - (ii) The incarnate and risen Word only comes to us clothed in the verbal Word of gospel and Scripture.
    - “This then is the true knowledge of Christ, if we receive him as he is offered by the Father, namely clothed with his gospel.... Christ has no commerce with us, nor we with him apart from Scripture.”
- d. Pietism (18th century)
  - (i) Emphasis on the religion of the heart
  - (ii) Reaction to post-Reformation dead orthodoxy
- e. The Evangelical revival (1730-1790)
  - (i) Wesley influenced by Moravian pietism. Conversion 1738 as “the heart strangely warmed” (“an assurance was given me that he had taken away my sins, even mine...”).  
Revelation by the Spirit through the Word.
  - (ii) Jonathan Edwards : Treatise Concerning Religious Affections (1746)
  - (iii) Charles Simeon (1759-1836)  
Revelation in the Word through the Spirit. The Spirit subjectively enlightens the Scripture.
- f. P.T. Forsyth (1848-1921)
 

It is not the fact of our experience but the fact which we experience that shapes and determines Christian faith.

“A real authority is indeed within experience, but it is not the authority of experience, it is an authority for experience, it is an authority experienced.”

The authority of Christ is “active only in experience, and especially the corporate experience of a Church.”

cf Rom 9:1, the Spirit of Christ working in the conscience.

“(in) the experience of prayer...deep answers deep. God becomes the living truth of our most memorable and shaping experience, not its object only but its essence.”
- g. Twentieth century Evangelicalism
 

This is subject to a polarisation

  - (i) M. Lloyd-Jones, J.I. Packer, F. Schaeffer etc. Warn of a replacement of the objectivity of Scripture by inward and personal experience.

- (ii) Pentecostals, Charismatics and (some) Methodists seem to place experience in a primary position.

## 2.\*Protestant Liberalism

- a. F.D.E. Schleiermacher (1768-1834)

His criterion for theology is not conformity to the doctrine of the New Testament but to the experience recorded in the New Testament. The essence of piety is “the consciousness of being absolutely dependent on, which is the same thing, of being in relation with God.”

He also stressed the corporate nature of Christian experience. “The living word in a community and the religious stirrings of a community have a far higher power than the written letter.”

- b. Nineteenth century German Protestantism

Albert Ritschl (1822-1889) departed from Schleiermacher’s stress on feelings and emotion. Salvation can be experienced only in a living community morally united through love for God and one another.

Adolf von Harnack (1851-1930) : “the gospel is the knowledge and recognition of God as the Father, the certainty of redemption, humility and joy in God, energy and brotherly love....”

## 3. Existentialism : A Philosophy of Human Experience

1. A method rather than a school of thought

- a. Rejection of Enlightenment rationalism

- (i) reality is not conceptual eg. Plato, Descartes, Spinoza, Hegel  
(ii) reality is not material eg. Empiricism.

- b. Human beings cannot be treated as things-in-themselves like non-human beings. Rejection of objectivism in philosophy and appropriation of methods of natural science to understand humans.

- c. No isolated human existence, the meaning of human life can only be known from within, 'Truth is Subjectivity'.

Subjective awareness only known by participation.

- d. Dominant school in Western philosophy and theology, 1938 - 1968.

2. Origins

- a. Soren Kierkegaard (1813 - 1855)

- (i) opposition to synthesis of Lutheranism and Hegelianism  
(ii) opposition to nominal Christianity  
(iii) infinite gulf between God and humanity  
(iv) human existence finds its meaning in making choices, these decide what we will be.  
(v) only through inward quality of choice does a person 'truly become a self'.

- b.\* Martin Heidegger (1888 - 1976) Being and Time (1927)
- (i) man a mixture of Being (Dasein) and Not-Being, purposeful and non-purposeful existence
  - (ii) authentic being is the choice to opt for choice, inauthentic being means to be ruled by convention
  - (iii) all situations in life are possibilities for authentic being
  - (iv) we are thrown into existence, into a factual state, which limits these possibilities (falleness)
  - (v) death is the ultimate limit and so the ultimate possibility to achieve authentic being

### 3.\*Existential theology

- a. Rudolf Bultmann (1884 - 1976) - NT theologian
- b. Heidegger is expressing in secular and existential categories the central message of the NT
- c. Strip NT of its mythological structure incomprehensible to modern people and remythologise using Heidegger's categories.
- d. NT 'sin', Heidegger 'inauthentic existence' - unbelieving, unredeemed, acceptance of the average, typical, 'worldly', refusal to recognise God-dependence, attempts to self-justify by moral action or material prosperity.  
NT 'faith' Heidegger 'authentic existence' - believing, redeemed, trust solely in God, recognise God alone is sufficient, abandon all hope of self-justification, accept justification as a free gift, face inevitability of death - death and resurrection of Jesus becomes our victory through faith. New self is formed in response to the Kerygma.

### 4. Continuity with the Christian Tradition

- a. Bible - concern with human experience eg. Psalms.
- b. Augustine - theme of Confessions.
- c. Luther - 'experience makes a theologian'.
- d. Pietism - emphasis on inwardness.

### 3. Experience and Theology : Two Models

#### 1.\*Experience as a Foundational Resource

- a. Universal religious experience common to all humanity
- b. 'Core experience of the transcendent' - no clear, definite revelation of the divine
- c. Pluralist approach to religion - differences in doctrine are second order reflections on a common experience, whether or not this is identified as 'religious'
- d. Paul Tillich : The Courage to Be (1952), David Tracy, John Hick.

## 2. Feuerbach's Critique of Experience - Based Theologies

- a. Liberal tradition
  - (i) turn to find centre of theology in the knowing subject
  - (ii) anthropology the key to a universal theology eg. Schleiermacher : 'feeling of absolute dependence'
- b. Ludwig Feuerbach : Essence of Christianity (1841)
  - (i) naturalistic interpretation of religion
  - (ii) 'God' created in man's image
  - (iii) religious 'feeling' is self-intoxication, self-awareness
  - (iv) 'God' a projection of our own experiences

*"Consciousness of God is human self-consciousness; knowledge of God is human self-knowledge.* By the God you know the human, and conversely, by the human, you know the God. The two are one. What God is to a person that too is the spirit, the soul; and what the spirit, the soul, are to a person, that is the God. God is the revealed and explicit inner self of a human being. Religion is the ceremonial unveiling of the hidden treasures of humanity, the confession of its innermost thoughts, and the open recognition of its secrets of love."

"The gods are...the desires of men transformed into real beings; a god is a human yearning for happiness satisfied in the human imagination.

- (v) influence on Marx

## 3. Post-liberalism critique of liberalism

- a. George Lindbeck : The Nature of Doctrine (1984)
- b. 'experiential-expressive' theory of doctrine, religion as public manifestation of pre-linguistic forms of consciousness, attitude, feeling. Experience precedes religious language, which is symbolic
- c. plurality of religions have a common source in a shared experience of God
- d. difficult to specify what the common core experience is, theory is untestable
- e. theistic eg. Christianity, and non-theistic eg. Buddhism, do not seem organically related
- f. leads to agnosticism, not pluralism

## 4. Movement away from experience based theology

- a. Barth, 'otherness' of God, divine-human encounter
- b. Pannenberg, Christology objectively grounded in the history of Jesus of Nazareth.
- c. Moltmann, centre of theology is the cross

## 5. Experience requires interpretation

- a. Experience is not self-interpreting but ambiguous - vague, contradictory
- b. No knowledge of God apart from faith.
- c. Theology provides the interpretative framework for making sense of experience
- d. Examples
  - (i) Augustine
    - lack of human fulfilment, quest for something 'beyond'.
    - human beings made in the image of God, goal is to know God, frustrated because of sin.
  - (ii) Luther
    - disciples on Good Friday, God seemed to be absent
    - God was present in a hidden manner
    - faithfulness of God revealed in resurrection
    - unreliability of our experience
  - (iii) CS Lewis
    - human desire never seems achievable, no final satisfaction in finite objects of desire
    - created things only mediate the joy of knowing God.

## 4. The Trinity and Christian Experience

- 1. The recurring pendulum swing from models of faith and authority which emphasise the subjective to those which stress the objective is mostly due to a deficiency in trinitarian Christology.
- 2. It is “not my faith or my decision and conversion, my dying and rising which washes away my sins. It is Christ’s vicarious Baptism for us in blood on the cross, his death in which we, by grace, participate through water and the Spirit.” (J.B. Torrance)
- 3. My experience is only authentic and valuable to the degree that it participates through the Spirit in Jesus’ relationship with the Father. Jesus’ relationship with the Father is the central theme of the Bible, it is this which the Spirit most earnestly desires to witness to us and it is in focussing upon Christ that we are delivered from feeding on our own subjective experiences.

## SOME CONCLUSIONS IN RELATION TO SOURCES AND METHODS

“I propose a *unilateral* authority - divine revelation - but one communicated through various means. I see divine revelation received through Scripture and tradition and elucidated by reason and experience. Revelation does not so much proceed out of Scripture and tradition as descend into these earthen vessels. It is not based on reason or experience, but it employs reason and experience in making itself credible and effectual....Revelation might be likened to an electric current that lights up the earthen vessels that stand in its path, but these vessels have no power of their own to produce light” (D. Bloesch).

## Some issues in theology

### 1. The Nature of Theological Language

#### 1. The problem of religious language

- a. how can an infinite, transcendent being be accurately spoken of using language from the finite, sensible and material world?
- b. problem of meaning precedes the question of truth (something which is meaningless can't be true)

#### 2. Way of negation (via negationis)

- a. unqualified use of ordinary speech is a form of verbal idolatry e.g. "God is love"
- b. language describes what God 'is not' e.g. 'incorporeal' = not having a body, infinite = not finite.
- c. leads to agnosticism

#### 3. Way of perfection (via eminentiae)

- a. attempt to go beyond negative theology
- b. positive characteristics of finite beings are stripped of their limits and raised (conceptually) to an infinite level e.g. wisdom

#### 4. Principle of analogy

- a. univocal language i.e identity, is rejected - 'God is love' would mean God loves as we do. This is idolatrous; for God's love is infinite and perfect.
- b. equivocal language i.e non-identity -  
'God is love' would mean that God's love is completely unlike our love. This is agnostic. It amounts to a denial of creation.
- c. language about God must relate that God is both like and unlike ordinary objects - the language must be analogous
- [d. the principle of analogy is based on the (ontological) concept of the 'analogy of being' (analogia entis). There is a point of continuity, or likeness, between God and the world due to the fact that God created the world, the cause-effect relationship makes possible the dual application of terms.]
- e. not 'God-in-himself', but God as he is in relation to creatures
- [f. types of analogy
  - (i) metaphysical - apply to God literally, e.g. "God is good."
  - (ii) metaphorical - apply to God metaphorically, e.g. "God is a rock."]
- g. primary example: 'God is our Father'
  - (i) similarity to human fathers: source of life, cares, authority
  - (ii) dissimilarity to human fathers: not human, not material, no divine 'mother', eternal Father (Trinity)
- h. other biblical analogies: God as spouse, shepherd; Christ as lion, lamb, cornerstone; Spirit as fire, living water, finger, anointing, cloud etc.

## 5. Limits of analogical discourse

- a. when does the analogy break down? How does one identify the limit of similarity?
- b. eg. Jesus as a ransom (Mark 10:45; 1 Timothy 2:6.) 'Ransom' implies payment to someone to induce liberation eg. Slaves, hostages
- c. captive to sin (Romans 8:21; Hebrews 2:15) , price paid is the life of Jesus (1Cor.6:20, 7:23) ie. 'redemption'
- d. to whom was the ransom paid?

## 6. Problems with analogy?

- a. can lead to confusion about how to think of God. But, God is different from us, e.g. 1 Cor 1:25.
- b. requires a certain metaphysical position, like that of Thomas Aquinas. This is not necessarily the case, as biblical language shows.
- c. analogical theory of language is a mistaken attempt to try and understand the inner being of God, while the Bible and Christian discourse focus on God's acts. This may be largely true, but seems to ignore the task of theology as a reflective enterprise, e.g. as in the development of trinitarian doctrine.

## 7. Models of Discourse

- a. Ian T Ramsey (1965)
- b. models or analogies interact with one another so as to both illuminate and modify each other
- c. a picture emerges of God and salvation which is both comprehensive and defined. Eg notion of God's authority, Bible teaches that God is King, Father, Good Shepherd - the role is complete, compassionate, personal.

## 8. The 'analogy of faith'

- a. Barth rejects the 'analogy of being' as a natural point of contact between the world and God
- b. the grace of God miraculously makes possible a human capacity to meaningfully speak of him, not on the plane of philosophical discourse but in the sphere of relationship based on grace and known through faith.
- c. the relationships within God establish the Creator - creature relationship.

“The correspondence and similarity of the two relationships consists in the fact of that the eternal love in which God as the Father loves the Son, and as the Son loves the Father, and in which God as the Father is loved by the Son and the Son by the Father, is also the love which is addressed by God to man.”  
(Barth)

## 9. Analogy and Christology

- a. Helmut Thielicke posits the 'Word made flesh' as the basic model for understanding analogy.
- b. the starting point for this is the anthropomorphisms of the Old Testament where:
  - 1. God is not like sinful humanity (Num 23:29; 1 Sam 15:29; Hos 11:9)
  - 2. God is what humans should be (Hos 2:13-22; 6:4; 11:8 etc)
- c. the incarnation is a sovereign divine initiative where God makes himself known in the world but is not trapped within it. He remains in it by a constant condescension of grace and humiliation.
- d. analogies are given in the divine order of things, but like the parables of Jesus only harden human hearts (Matt 13:13-15) apart from revelation of the Spirit.
- e. analogies are not a bridge to God, as in natural theology, we do not, for example, know what sort of "father" God is. Cf. the prodigal son.

## 10. Metaphor

- a. a way of speaking about one thing in terms which are suggestive of another. 'a matter of teaching an old word new tricks' (Nelson Goodman)
- b. includes, but not identical with, analogy
- c. metaphor incorporates an element of surprise
  - 1. God is wise
  - 2. God is a lion
- d. metaphors highlight dissimilarity as well as similarity eg. If 'God our Father' is a metaphor it implies significant differences between God's Fatherhood and human fatherhood
- e. metaphors are open-ended, can't be captured by equivalent literal expressions, new levels of meaning
- f. metaphors are surprising, evocative, call forth response and commitment eg. 'God as light' - illumination, purity, glorification, holiness, manifestation. Cf. art and poetry.
- g. symbolic language as a whole helps us avoid the illusion that words are adequate to describe God.

## **EPISODES IN THE HISTORY OF THEOLOGY.**

### 1. The Patristic Period c.100 - 451

#### 1.1 Clarification of Terms

1. patristic - Latin : pater = 'father'
2. Patristics - theological study of 'the fathers' (patres)
3. patristic period - closing of the NT writings (c.100) to the Council of Chalcedon (451) (or, to c.800 ie. the early scholastics)
4. Patrology - 'study of the fathers'

#### 1.2 Geographical and Cultural Considerations

1. Gentile rather than Jewish
2. Greek rather than Hebrew
3. Hellenistic-philosophical rather than Biblical - non speculative viz. Gradual development of systematic theology.

Centres of Theological Debate. (McGrath, 6)

1. Alexandria
  - a. scholarly, exact, Platonic tradition
  - b. 'Alexandrian' theology of Incarnation and Trinity, biblical interpretation
  - c. Clement, Origen, Athanasius, Cyril etc.
2. Antioch
  - a. practical, historical
  - b. 'Antiochene' theology of Incarnation and biblical interpretation
  - c. 'Cappadocian fathers' on the Trinity
  - d. Theophilus, Nestorius etc
3. Western North Africa
  - a. legal, precise, Latin
  - b. 'Western' theology
  - c. Tertullian, Cyprian, Augustine etc.

#### 1.3 Overview of Issues and Periods

1. The Identity of Christianity
  - a. questions of continuity
  - b. relation to Jewish law
  - c. interpretation and authority of O.T.  
e.g. Gnosticism, Ebionism

2. Apologetic Theology (c. 120 - 250)
    - a. encounter with classical culture
    - b. first systematic treatment of doctrinal issues
    - c. use of philosophical categories e.g. Logos concept of Stoicism
    - d. influence of Hellenistic doctrine of God e.g. absolute immutability
    - f. theology in a survival context

Apologists - Justin Martyr, Athenagoras, Theophilus, Hermias, Tatian  
 Others - Irenaeus, Tertullian, Origen
  3. Consolidation of Orthodoxy (312 - 451)
    - a. conversion of Constantine (312)
    - b. public/political status of Christian theology
    - c. creedal statements = faith of the Church
    - d. person of Christ, status of Spirit, Trinity

Setting of boundaries for ongoing theological discussion
- 1.4 Difficulties with Patristics
1. Relevance
 

e.g. Quartodeciman controversy
  2. Intelligibility
 

e.g. requires some familiarity with Greek philosophy, especially Aristotle and the Platonic tradition.

NB Greek thought 'sanctified' became Christian thought.
  3. Diversity
 

gradual emergence of uniformity in vocabulary and consensus in doctrine
  4. Polarity
 

East (Greek) and West (Latin)

speculative and formal
- 1.5 Key Theologians
1. Justin Martyr (c.100 - 165)
    - a. 1 and 2 Apology, Dialogue with Trypho
    - b. 'Christians before Christ' etc
    - c. Christianity as the fulfilment of classical philosophy
  2. Irenaeus of Lyons (c.130 - c.200)
    - a. refutation of Gnosticism (Against all Heresies)
    - b. bridge between early Greek and Latin theology
    - c. role of apostolic succession (continuity of truth)
    - d. identity of 'New' Testament as Scripture
  3. Tertullian (c.160 - c.225)

- a. Apology
  - b. Against Marcion - unity of Scripture, Trinity
  - c. Against Praxeas - foundations of Trinitarian theology
  - d. father of Latin theology      - numerous terms  
- legal flavour
4. Origen (c.185 - c.254)
- a. biblical works - commentaries, Hexapla, allegory
  - b. apologetic works - Against Celsus
  - c. systematic work - First Principles (God, world, freedom, Scriptures); first such attempt
  - d. subordination of Son to Father (graded Trinity)
  - e. universal salvation (apocatastasis)  
'Platonism for the masses' (Lane)
5. Athanasius (c.296 - c.373)
- a. Arian controversy
  - b. On the Incarnation ---> homousios
    - only God can save
    - avoidance of idolatry
  - c. canon of Scripture
  - d. Life of Antony
6. Augustine (354 - 430)
- a. doctrine of universal (catholic) and invisible Church (Donatist controversy)
  - b. doctrines of Fall, predestination, grace (Pelagian controversy)
  - c. doctrine of Trinity
  - d. apology for Christianity in response to the fall of Rome (On the City of God)  
Blueprint for western medieval theology  
Most influential of all Christian thinkers

## 1.6 Key Theological Developments

### 1. Fixing of the Canon

(canon = rule, reference point)

- a. What is 'scripture'?
- b. sequence - Gospels, Acts, Paulines, 1 Peter, James accepted in order.
- c. 'extra-canonical' - 1 Clement, Shepherd of Hermas, Didache

- d. doubtful - 2 Peter, 2 and 3 John, Jude, Hebrews, Revelation eg. sin after baptism (Hebrews)
  - chiliasm - Montanism (Revelation)
- e. 367 Athanasius - 27 books of NT
- f. criteria - apostolicity or association with apostle
  - universal acceptance
  - 'orthodox' in relation to accepted writings
  - quality of inspiration
- g. recognition rather than authorisation
  - Church 'acknowledges, conserves, receives'

## 2. The Role of Tradition

- a. Gnosticism - new or secret knowledge open to initiated
- b. Irenaeus, Tertullian
  - 'rule of faith', apostolic tradition formally distinct from Scripture
  - expression in canonical books
- c. continuity of the teaching and preaching office of the Church (bishops) with the apostles
- d. Tradition - that which had been handed down as the content of the apostolic faith
- e. appeal to earlier fathers, liturgy, creeds.

## 3. The Fixing of the Ecumenical Creeds

- a. 'ecumenical' - Greek oikoumene = 'whole inhabited world'
  - ie. universal not sectarian
- b. 'creed' - Latin credo = 'I believe'
- c. statement of faith summarising beliefs common to all Christians
- d. origin - short statements of faith made at baptism
- e. form - trinitarian, form differed in local details
- f. Apostles' Creed - c200, Old Roman Creed, Western emphases
- g. Nicene Creed (Niceno - Constantinopolitan) - 381, Council of Constantinople, orthodox confession versus Arianism, 'We believe', became used in public Worship.

## 4. The Two-Natures Doctrine (Christology)

### 1. Conclusions.

- a. clarification of the status of Jesus in relation to the being of the Father
  - homoousios
  - 'one being'
  - consubstantial
- b. confirmation at an intellectual level of the centrality of Christ to salvation

- c. led to formulation of classical Trinitarian doctrine
2. Events Leading to Consensus.
    1. Schools
      1. Alexandria
        - a. John 1:14
        - b. 'Logos - flesh' Christology
        - c. emphasis on deity
      2. Antioch
        - a. 'Word-man' Christology
        - b. emphasis on humanity
        - c. practical e.g. moral example
    2. Debates
      1. Arianism
        - a. Arius (c.250 - c.336)
        - b. 'there was a then when he was not'
        - c. created being, a lesser 'God'
      2. Reply - Athanasius - the redeemer must be God
      3. Apollinarianism
        - a. Appollinarius (c.310 - c.390)
        - b. versus Arians, Jesus not fully human
        - c. human soul replaced by Logos
      4. Reply
        - a. Gregory of Nazianzus (c.330 - c.395)
        - b. 'that which is not assumed is not healed'
    3. Councils
      1. Nicea 325 - convoked by Constantine
        - homoousios
      2. Chalcedon 451 - relationship between the 2 natures
    4. The Doctrine of the Trinity
      - a. unity of Father-Son established at Nicea
      - b. deity of Spirit settled later - Athanasius, Basil of Caesarea
      - c. later developments focussed on inner life of the Trinity

- Eastern position - Cappadocian fathers
  - Basil of Caesarea (c.330 - 379)
  - Gregory of Nazianzen (c.329 - 389),  
Gregory of Nyssa (c.330 - 395)
- begin with a reflection on the Christian experience of the 3 Persons
- Western position - Augustine
  - began with the unity of God

## 5. The Doctrine of the Church

- a. Donatist schism
  - N. Africa
  - exclusion of the traditores
  - rejection of the leadership of the Catholic Church
- b. Augustine
  - universal versus sectarian cf. E. Troeltsch
  - state support for orthodoxy
  - Church a 'mixed body', true Church is invisible to us, but boundaries lie within the Catholic Church
  - validity of ministry does not derive from personal holiness but the holiness of Christ.

## 6. The Doctrine of Grace

- a.\* Pelagianism
  - concerned at moral laxity in Roman church.
  - rejected Augustine's prayer: "Give what you command and command what you choose."
  - emphasis on human ability and responsibility.
  - sin of Adam has only social implications.
  - OT Law plus moral example of Christ.
  - salvation given to those who make proper use of their natural powers.
  - sinlessness possible.
  - God does not command what we cannot do.
- b. Augustinian theology of grace
  - operating grace, brings to salvation
  - co-operating grace, works with converted will
  - gift of perseverance
  - doctrine of the 'Fall' (Gen 3)
  - loss of power to resist sin
  - all fallen, lost, subject to death 'in Adam'
  - salvation entirely of grace

- grace given only to the elect
  - predestination of elect to eternal life
- c. Council of Carthage (418)
- Pelagianism condemned
  - primacy of grace over merit
- 2 The Middle Ages and the Renaissance c.1050 - c.1500
- 2.1 Geographical, Political and Cultural Considerations
- fall of Rome 410
  - the 'Dark Ages'
  - survival and insecurity
  - theological reflection shifted to W Europe

3 major power groupings

1. Byzantine Empire - Greek
  - Constantinople
  - Eastern fathers eg. Athanasius, Cappadocians, John of Damascus, Gregory Palamas

Increasingly isolated from the Western Church due to political (Crusades) and ecclesiastical rivalry (Pope).

Filioque clause.

'Great schism' 1054

Fall of Constantinople 1453
2. Western Europe - Latin
  - Rome
  - Western fathers eg. Ambrose, Hilary of Poitiers, Jerome, Augustine

Development of the great medieval universities eg. Paris, Oxford, and cathedral towns. Monasteries as centres of learning and spirituality eg. Chartres, Rheims, Bec. (NW Europe)

Dominance of theology eg. 'philosophy as the handmaid of theology'.

3. Muslim Caliphate- E and S Mediterranean
  - spread throughout Byzantium, into E. Europe and Spain.

Western - medieval theology effectively separated from Eastern - Byzantine.

## 2.2 Terms and Movements

1. The Middle Ages
  - a. term coined by Renaissance writers to convey an impression of an interim between two high points of culture and learning the classical world and the Renaissance
  - b. 'medieval' - relating to the Middle Ages
  - c. Eleventh century revival of learning

France 'the Sorbonne'

synthesis of intellectual questions

d. 1100 - 1300 dominance of University of Paris and French monastic houses late Middle Ages - Germany, low Countries, England

e. Peter Lombard

- Four Books of Sentences (1147 - 1151)

- compilation of quotations from the Bible and the fathers arranged topically

- attempt to establish the truth on the basis of existing authorities

- became the standard text for theology students until the Reformation

- promoted Augustinianism

- recognised as orthodox, Fourth Lateran Council 1215

- Commentaries on the Sentences

- cf. Torah → Mishnah → Talmud

## 2. The Renaissance

a. literary and artistic revival of fourteenth and fifteenth centuries

b. focussed on N.Italy

• scholasticism concentrated elsewhere

• remnants of antiquity

• exodus of Greek scholars from Byzantium

## 3. Scholasticism (c.1200 - c.1500)

### 1. General features.

a. Latin schola from Greek schole = discussion, school

b. tradition of philosophical and theological study of Middle Ages, grouped in different schools of thought, 'schoolmen'

c. rational justification and systematic presentation of Christian beliefs

d. attempts to refine, distinguish and elaborate into a total theological system

e. advances in relation of faith and reason etc.

f. great diversity in relation to 'living faith'.

g. method shifted from 'way of discovery' e.g. Augustine's Confessions, to 'way of exposition', e.g. Aquinas Summa Theologiae. Experience was no longer a primary basis for theological reflection.

### [2. Types of Schools

a. Realism and nominalism

• c.1200 - c.1350 realism dominates

• c.1350 - c.1500 nominalism dominates

• origins in translation of references to Aristotle's works universals eg. humanity, whiteness

• particulars eg. Plato, Aristotle, white stone

- realism - universals are real and necessary, particulars are contingent
  - particulars come and go, they are temporary manifestations of lasting general and abstract categories, e.g. the idea of a tree and the reality of a particular pine tree do not exist on the same level.
- nominalism
  - universals do not exist (nominal), particulars are real
  - the concept of the world, including categories, names, principles, virtues etc., are generated by the human imagination and projected upon a reality that consists only of particular and concrete things, e.g. the idea of a tree arises out of our experience of particular trees.
- 'realist' schools
  - 'Thomism' (Thomas Aquinas)
  - 'Scotism' (Duns Scotus)
  - 'old way'
- 'nominalist' schools
  - 'modern way' (William of Ockham, Gabriel Biel)
  - 'modern Augustinian school'

The implications of this seemingly abstract medieval debate are enormous. On the one hand, the nominalist position denies a real hierarchy of values: one thing is more virtuous/just/beautiful than another. There are just things without a final point of reference (this is so once absolute ideas are removed from the mind of God). Moral confusion, e.g. deep ecology, is inevitable. The nominalist view makes notions like that of original sin and an objective atonement almost incomprehensible to individualistic Western minds.

On the other hand, universals, when transferred to the mind of God, crowd out a trinitarian and Christological doctrine of creation. The personal connection between God and creatures mediated by the Logos is cut. An ecological crisis was inevitable.]

b.\*Via moderna ('the modern way')

- fourteenth and fifteenth centuries
  - philosophical nominalism ('realistic conceptualists')
  - William of Ockham, Pierre d'Ailly, Robert Holcot, Gabriel Biel
  - N.European universities - Paris, Heidelberg, Erfurt
  - justification- semi Pelagian position
    - sinner turns by unaided free will to love God above all else, this merits the generosity of God's grace according to mercy
    - in a 'state of grace' good works meant acceptance as a debt due to man, according to justice.
  - Biel's doctrines were taught to Luther
- c. The modern Augustinian school
- reaction to the via moderna at Oxford
  - Thomas Bradwardine, The Case of God Against the Pelagians (c.1344)

- Augustinian position on election, grace, justification
- John Wycliffe (c.1330 - 1384)
- Gregory of Rimini (d.1358) (Paris)
  - nominalist in philosophy
  - Augustinian in theology
  - no resources within human nature in the order of salvation
  - transmission of ideas through the Augustinian order
  - precursor to Luther?

#### 4. Humanism

##### 1. General Features

- a. generally 'religious', concerned with the renewal of Christianity
  - b. revival of classical scholarship - promotion of contemporary written and spoken eloquence
  - c. literary rather than philosophical
  - d. heterogeneous - Platonic, Aristotelian, atheist, theist, occult, republican, monarchist etc.
  - e. a cultural programme more concerned with expression than content.  
N.European Humanism (late fifteenth - early sixteenth century)
  - Transmission of the ideals of the Italian Renaissance by study, foreign correspondence, printing.
- 2 ideals
- (1) written and spoken eloquence
  - (2) 'Christianity being born again'

##### 2. Swiss Humanism

- a. universities of Vienna, Basel
- b. concerned with morality rather than doctrine
- c. background to the beginning of a (non-Augustinian) Swiss Reformation (Zwingli)

##### 3. French Humanism

- a. universities of Bourges, Orleans
- b. revision of philosophy of law
- c. return to original texts and languages of commentaries
- d. background to Calvin's approach to Scripture (historico-grammatical exegesis)

#### 4. English Humanism

- a. university of Oxford
- b. discussion of European Reformers (1520's)

### 2.3 Key Theologians

#### 1. Anselm of Canterbury (c.1033 - 1109)

- a. first great medieval theologian
- b. 'faith seeking understanding' (Augustine) the content of the Christian faith can be demonstrated rationally
- c. 'ontological argument' for the existence of God (c.1079) (Proslogion)
- d. Why God became Man (1090's)
  - explanation of the necessity of the Incarnation
  - first 'theory' of the atonement
  - infinite debt owed by the sinner to God if he is to be honoured
- ie. satisfaction for offence (God suffers infinite indignity).
  - God cannot simply forgive, this would dissolve all moral order n.b. justice, not victory
  - no amount of return to God could leave him in debt to man ie. forgiveness
  - only God is capable of offering a satisfaction worthy of his injured honour
  - only man can justly offer satisfaction for man's sin
  - therefore satisfaction must be given by a God-man
- e. use of reason, logic, scope of work paved the way for scholasticism

#### 2. Thomas Aquinas (c.1225 - 1274)

- a. Dominican order
- b. University of Paris
- c. Summa contra Gentiles - arguments in favour of Christianity for use with Jews and Muslims. Provoked by new translations of Aristotle being used by Muslims and others in Europe, e.g. no grace, immortal soul, creation.
- d. Summa Theologiae (1266 - 1273) (2 mill. words)
  - 'Five Ways'
  - The intellect climbs up a ladder leading from the world to God
  - principle of analogy
  - faith and reason
  - transubstantiation
- e. various other biblical and philosophical works
- f. 'baptised Aristotle' ('the philosopher'). Reasoned that any truth in philosophy must be compatible with Christianity.
- g. greatest and most influential of the schoolmen (1879 Leo xiii)

### [3.\*Duns Scotus (c.1265 - 1308)

- a. universities of Cambridge, Oxford, Paris
  - b. 'subtle doctor' ('dunce')
  - c. Commentaries of the Sentences
  - d. rejected Augustine's (Bonaventure, Henry of Ghent) theory of knowledge ie. 'illuminationism'
    - God the Word places in the human mind the knowledge of ideas which exist externally in God himself
    - proper object of the human intellect is not God himself (illuminationism) nor the essence of material things (Aristotle - Aquinas) but 'being as being' (God or world)
  - e. Aquinas - God's intellect (reason) informs his will of what is possible and best. eg. rewards a 'good' action.
- Scotus - God's freedom is absolute, will as primary ('voluntarism') eg. wills to regard an action, thus it is 'good'.
- f. God could have willed a very different universe, therefore the role of reason (explanation) in theology is very limited.
  - g. scholastics before Scotus - Mary freed from the taint of sin (macula) after her conception.

Scotus - it is more perfect to preserve someone from original sin than to liberate someone from it.

- the perfect redeemer (probably) redeemed Mary in this way
- 'immaculate conception'.]

### [4. William of Ockham (c.1285 - 1347)

- a. consolidated the teaching of Duns Scotus.
- b. 'Ockham's Razor' (principle of parsimony/simplicity) - entities should not be multiplied beyond necessity eg. God justifies the soul directly, no need for a 'created habit of grace' (substance).
- c. universals are unnecessary hypothesis - only a logical category, no other reality ( --> individualism). Particulars are known by sense experience.
- d. God is apprehended not by reason (Aquinas) nor illumination (Bonaventure) but by faith alone.
- e. reason studies nature, faith receives revelation (in Scripture - tradition). God's freedom means that planets may not move in circular motion, we need to look to see. ( ---> science).
- f. conciliarism
- g. semi-Pelagianism - God will save those who do their best.

(The Scotist tradition so emphasises the freedom of God's will that he cannot be the source of rationality. For example, God could have ordered his absolute power in such a way that the death of Christ not have infinite value. When God's will is arbitrary the basis of rationality moves to the human mind. In the end each individual person becomes the source of rationality.)]

5. Erasmus of Rotterdam (c.1469 - 1536)
  - a. most important of Renaissance humanists.
  - b. satirical works - attacked the excesses of the Western Church  
eg. immorality, simony, scholasticism.
  - c. Handbook of the Christian Soldier (Enchiridion)
    - directed to educated laity.
    - extremely popular.
    - sought peaceful reform by return to fathers and Scripture by the whole Church.
    - practical philosophy of Christ as supreme moral teacher.
    - importance of personal piety.
    - anti-clerical eg. confession.
  - d. first printed edition of the Greek NT (1516)
    - provided scholars with direct access to the text.
  - e. edited numerous patristic works - unlike the Sentences these provided access to theologians (especially Augustine) in context.
  - f. The Freedom of the Will (1524) - opposed Luther's doctrine of the bondage of the will.
  - g. moderate position swept aside in the tide of the Reformation and Counter-reformation.

## 2.4 Key Theological Developments

### 1. Scholasticism

1. The Consolidation of the Patristic Heritage
  - a. Augustine (Latin)
  - b. Sentences
2. The Role of Reason in Theology
  - a. search for tools to accomplish the scholastic task.
    - 'theory of method'.
    - philosophical categories.
  - b. Anselm - 'faith seeking understanding'
    - 'I believe, in order that I may understand'

ie. priority of faith, reasonableness of faith

Anselm - Christian theology can be demonstrated on the basis of reason alone.

- c. eleventh and twelfth centuries - philosophy to demonstrate the reasonableness of faith and defend it against critics
  - systematic exploration and arrangement of articles of faith
  - d. c.1270 - availability of texts of Aristotle
  - e. apologetic use of Aristotelian presuppositions (Aquinas) e.g cause.
  - f. late medieval writers - concern over the limitations of using a pagan philosopher eg. 'righteousness of God' in terms of distributive justice (what is due) rather than grace.
- NB. Limited knowledge of Hebrew
3. The Development of Theological Systems 'cathedrals of the mind' (Gilson)  
eg. Summa Theologiae
  4. The Development of Sacramental Theology
    - a. number of sacraments had not been decided (2,6,7,12).
    - b. Peter Lombard (Sentences) - seven as perfect number.
    - c. delineation of definition, identity and number of sacraments Council of Florence (1439).
      - 1. baptism - regeneration, creates spiritual life
      - 2. confirmation - strengthens spiritual life
      - 3. eucharist - nurtures spiritual life
      - 4. penance - restores to spiritual life
      - 5. extreme unction - heals the soul
      - 6. holy orders - makes the clergy
      - 7. matrimony - God's blessing on marital union
      - d. related Church, individual, salvation, society.
  5. The Development of the Theology of Grace
    - a. attempt to consolidate Augustine's unsystematic teaching
    - b. grace as a power, conveyed primarily through the sacraments
    - c. Aquinas - operative grace for conversion
      - cooperative grace subsequently
    - d. later medievals - emphasis on cooperation
      - grace merited
  - 6.\* The Role of Mary in Salvation
    - a. devotion to Mary
    - b. immaculate conception
    - c. status as 'co-redemptrix' ie. a figure of redemption
  7. Humanism

1. Returning Directly to the Sources
  - a. application of textual and philological techniques to the accuracy of the Latin Vulgate
  - b. Complutensian Polyglot Bible (1520) - texts in Hebrew, Greek, Aramaic, Latin
  - c. undermining of the 'scriptural base' of scholasticism
2. Critique of the Vulgate
  - a. textual revision undermined church practices and beliefs
  - b. Eph.5 : 31 - 32 Vulgate : marriage as sacramentum  
 Greek : mysterion (mystery)
  - c. Matt. 4 : 17 Vulgate : 'do penance' - outward restitution  
 Greek : 'repent' - inner attitude
  - d. Luke 1 : 28 Vulgate : 'full of grace' (gratia plena)  
 (reservoir of grace)  
 Greek : 'favoured one'

## 2.5 Byzantine Theology

1. Byzantine Empire: 330-1453.  
 After the fall of Constantinople the centre of Eastern Orthodox theology moved to Russia.
2. Theological Method.
  - a. centrality of prayer, worship and mystical experience.
  - b. non-rationalistic
  - c. negative theology (apophaticism). God is known by spiritual illumination (hesychasm).
  - d. non speculative - the orthodox faith is the faith of the fathers of the Church.
3. Theological Issues.
  - a. icons - vehicles or representations of the incarnate Christ.
    - n.b. no statues allowed. (3 dimensional)
  - b. Father as sole source of deity - denial of the filioque clause (see later).
  - c. salvation as deification - transformation into the divine likeness.
  - d. union with God by means of "Divine Energies", no contact with his ineffable unseen essence.
  - e. importance of the sacramental life.

### **3. The Reformation and Post Reformation Periods**

c.1500 - c.1700

#### **3.1 Introduction**

1. 'Reformation' - W. European movement concerned with the moral, theological and institutional reform of the Church.
2. c.1517 - 1525 focus on Martin Luther, University of Wittenberg N.E. Germany
3. early 1520's Swiss Reformation - Huldrych Zwingli, Zurich
4. 1540's on, influence of John Calvin in Geneva
5. Reformation emphases diverse eg. England
6. Counter-reformation - RC Church response to Reformers Council of Trent (1545)
7. impact of Reformation soon became world-wide

#### **3.2 Clarification of Terms**

1. 'Magisterial Reformation' - the Lutheran and Reformed churches enjoyed the support of secular authorities, such as princes, magistrates, city councils. The main Reformers expected the state to enforce discipline, suppress heresy, maintain order
    - the 'radical Reformers' (Anabaptists) denied the authorities any such rights.
  2. 'Protestant' - Diet of Speyer (Feb.1529) voted to end the toleration of Lutheranism in Germany
    - April 1529, 6 princes and 14 cities made a 'Protestatio' defending freedom of conscience and the rights of religious minorities
    - from this time supporters of the Reformation were known as 'Protestants'
  3. 'Evangelical' - a term used by Reformers (eg. Luther) to describe their movement as grounded in the gospel.
1. The Lutheran Reformation
    - a. corruption of the medieval church eg. sale of indulgences
    - b. reform within the academic faculty at University of Wittenberg
    - c. posting of the Ninety-five Theses (31 October 1517)
      - movement became public
    - d. 1521 - condemned for false doctrine at Diet of Worms; "Here I stand, I cannot do otherwise.."
      - protected at Wartburg Castle
      - translation of Bible into German
    - e. 1522 - return to Wittenberg to restore order
      - Reformation takes on political and social dimensions
    - f. strong alliance with state powers eg. Peasants' Revolt, most conservative of European Reformers

- g. Lutheran Reformation limited to German territories and Scandinavia
2. The Calvinist Reformation
- a. 'Calvinism' - religious ideas of the Reformed church
    - late sixteenth and seventeenth century
    - Reformed theology, going beyond Calvin
  - b. 'Reformed' - churches of this name, theologians (eg. Beza, Perkins, Owen, Edwards, Hodge), or church documents (eg. Heidelberg Catechism, Synod of Dort) whose teaching is based upon the writings of Calvin
  - c. early Swiss Reformation - Zurich, Berne, Basel
    - Zwingli, Bullinger
  - d. focus upon reforming the morality and worship of the church along biblical lines
  - e. 1550's - Swiss Reformation centred upon Genevan republic and the writing and polity of Calvin
  - f. Calvinist theology proved more politically adaptable than Lutheranism.  
Its systematic form had wider appeal intellectually eg. John Knox (Presbyterianism), Puritanism (England and North America).
3. The Radical Reformation
- a. early 1520's - disquiet with Zwingli's reforms in Zurich eg. Conrad Grebel; later, Menno Simons
  - b. rejection of infant baptism as unscriptural - Church consists of freely committed believers. "Anabaptist" = 'rebaptizes' (effusion etc)
  - c. rejection of authority of magistrate in the church. Only weapon is excommunication.
  - d. Jesus prohibited violence. Christians cannot exercise civil authority or take up arms.
  - e. Common ownership of property, rejection of usury
  - f. Hence : 'left wing of Reformation' 'radical Reformation'  
eg. Thomas Munzer, Zwickau prophets
  - g. opposed and persecuted by all other major groups
4. The Catholic Reformation
- a. Council of Trent (1545 - 1563) - ecumenical council to deal with the definition of RC doctrine in opposition to Protestantism, and the introduction of disciplinary forms in the RC Church.
  - b. clerical abuse ie. simony, absenteeism, pluralism, violation of celibacy vows, no longer tolerated
  - c. emphasis upon spiritual discipline, pastoral care, religious education, missionary activity
  - d. clarified essential doctrines - role of tradition, sacraments, justification, transubstantiation, eucharistic sacrifice etc.
  - e. renewal of old religious orders, formation of new orders eg. Society of Jesus
  - f. revitalised spirituality, especially in Spain and Italy.  
eg. John of the Cross, Teresa of Avila

### 3.3 Key Theologians

1. Martin Luther (1483 - 1546)
  - a. professor of biblical studies, University of Wittenberg (1512)
  - b. personal unease of conscience, dissatisfaction with the via moderna, 'conversion' experience 1515 (?), centrality of justification by faith.
  - c. 1517 - Ninety Five Theses
  - d. 1519 - Leipzig Disputation
  - e. 1520 - Appeal to the Christian Nobility of the German Nation German princes to initiate the reformation of the Church eg. tributes to Rome, celibacy, pilgrimages, masses for dead, religious order.
    - The Babylonian Captivity of the Church

gospel imprisoned by the clerical - hierarchical system of the medieval Church as an institution. Called for communion in both kinds, denied transubstantiation, sacrifice of the Mass. Only two sacraments.
    - The Freedom of a Christian Man

explored the implications of the doctrine of justification by faith for the Christian life. Freedom not obligation to do good works. Good works the fruit of righteousness.
  - f. established the central Reformation principles
    - sola Scriptura
    - sola gratia
    - sola fide
    - solus Christus
  - g. justification in terms of imputed rather than imparted righteousness.
  - h. opposed the "theology of glory" based on God's powerful and visible works in creation. God can only be known as he chooses to reveal himself, in the shame, suffering and death of Jesus. Christian theology is a "theology of the cross."
  - i. unconcerned with externals: 'I simply taught, preached, and wrote God's Word; otherwise I did nothing.' The preaching of the word was the reformation.
  - j. creative but not systematic, most of his work is disputational (Rome, Zwingli, Anabaptists)
- 2 Huldrych Zwingli (1484 - 1531)
  - a. parish priest and preacher, with a background in humanism
  - b. 1519 - took up a programme of reform in Zurich
    - reforms in morality and liturgy (concerned with externals).
    - eucharist as a memorial
  - c. more rationalist than Luther, less biblical than Calvin
  - d. less important theologically
3. John Calvin (1509 - 1564)
  - a. exposed to both scholastic and humanist influences in early life

- b. 'second-generation' Reformer - need for order in evangelical theology, explanation and defense
- c. Institutes of the Christian Religion (1536, 1559)
  - theological source book to be used in conjunction with the Bible and his commentaries
- d. 4 books
  - 1. God as Creator, sovereignty
  - 2. Human need for redemption, Christ the mediator
  - 3. Appropriation of redemption
  - 4. Church government and society
- e. centre of Calvin's theology is the glory of God, not soteriology (Luther) nor predestination (Calvinism)
- f. Geneva Academy (1559) - training of Reformed pastors and missionaries
- g. concerned with the forms of worship: "When I first came to this church, I found almost nothing in it. There was preaching and that was all. They would look out for idols it is true, and they burned them. But there was no reformation. Everything was in disorder."

### 3.4 Key Theological Developments

1. The Sources of Theology
  - a. sola Scriptura : sole, necessary and sufficient source of Christian theology
  - b. revelation of the Spirit does not go beyond God's Word in Scripture ie. opposed to RC magisterium and Anabaptists
  - c. centrality of the Bible rather than the sacraments as the means of grace; especially public preaching. Much reformation scholarship is biblical theology eg. commentaries, Calvin's Institutes.
  - d. rejection of doctrines which contradict the plain meaning of Scripture  
eg. sacrifice of the Mass.  
that which cannot be proven from Scripture cannot be held as binding for salvation eg. confession to a priest
  - e. private interpretation - not individualism, but in the context of the community faithful to the apostolic tradition
2. The Doctrine of Grace
  - a. Luther - Church had become Pelagian, Pharisaical, legalistic
  - b. 'How can I find a gracious God?' - sola fide.  
Faith is the means to accept the merits of Christ.
  - c. Works of the law are obstacles to justification.  
God accepts a person on account of Christ, and so accepts their works.
  - d. Calvin - lifted discussion of grace to God's eternal purpose in Christ.  
ie. predestination.  
'Unconditional election' means unmerited favour.
3. The Doctrine of the Sacraments
  - a. two sacraments 'of the gospel', not seven ie. baptism, Lord's Supper

- b. sacraments as outward and visible signs of the inward and invisible grace of God.  
(Form of the Word)
- c. sacraments form faith by pointing to promise ie. death and resurrection of Christ for us
- d. differences in sacramental theology

Luther : real presence consubstantiation

Zwingli : memorial ('bare sign')

Calvin : Christ present in Spirit

#### 4. The Doctrine of the Church

- a. Luther - concentration on doctrine of grace
- b. Church is visible, institutional, constituted by preaching of the Word (gospel)
- c. Calvin - marks of true Church
  - (i) gospel truly preached
  - (ii) sacraments rightly administered
- d. visible Church - discernible marks
  - institution
  - ministry (pastor, elder, deacon)
- invisible Church - fellowship of saints, elect
  - object of faith and hope
- e. Church as context of sanctification of the elect

#### 3.5 The Post Reformation Movement : Confessionalism and Scholasticism

##### 1. General features.

- a. Lutheran theology - attempts to clarify and justify its position against RC Church, Augsburg Confession (1530)
  - 'strict Lutheranism', debates over the theology of Melanchthon, Formula of Concord (1577) defines what is Lutheran orthodoxy
- b. Lutheran theologians sought to consolidate their position by increasingly systematic and detailed presentations
- c. 1560's on - three way contest, especially in Germany, between Lutheranism, R.Catholic Church, Reformed
  - new developments in the Thomist tradition
  - Calvinism responds in like manner, emphasis on predestination as defining truth
- d. 1559 (death of Calvin) - 1622 - 'period of orthodoxy'
  - Protestant scholasticism
- e. movement away from a biblical and Christocentric theology to philosophical systems based on first principles.

Use of Aristotle, Stoics etc.

- f. faith becomes right belief in a series of correct propositions.

Movement away from soteriology (eg. Calvin and predestination) to metaphysical questions eg. order of the divine decrees.

- g. increasingly rationalistic, attempts to produce complete systematic explanations (“a frozen waterfall - mighty shapes of movement, but no movement.” E. Brunner).

N.B. English Reformation was largely exempt from these problems.

## 2. Major Theologians

1. Theodore Beza (1519 - 1605) - Calvin's successor at Geneva

- defence and expansion of Calvin
- systematic, coherent, use of Aristotle

2. Roberto Bellarmine (1542 - 1621)- Jesuit and Thomist scholar

- sought to answer Protestantism by reasoned argument

3. Johann Gerhard (1582 - 1637) - Lutheran

- Theological Commonplaces  
(1610 - 1622)

- ordered, use of Aristotle

Other Issues : Puritanism

: covenant theology

## 3.6 Pietism

1. Latin pietas = 'piety', godliness

2. Philipp Jakob Spener (1635 - 1705)

- Pious Wishes (1675)

- response to dead orthodoxy, nominal Christianity in Germany, indifference of wealthy to social suffering, loss of personal devotion
- 'life, not doctrine', 'faith, not facts', encouraged personal faith, Bible study, holiness of life, ministry of all Christians

3. Nickolaus Ludwig Graf von Zinzendorf (1700 - 1760)

- Moravian Brethren, Herrnhut

- 'religion of the heart', 'a living faith', 'feeling'

- influence on F.D.E. Schleiermacher, John Wesley

4. John Wesley (1703 - 1791)

- visit to Herrnhut (1738)

- conversion (1738)

- Evangelical revival

(Pietism's emphases became exaggerated in the United States: emotionalism, faith-activism, anti-intellectualism, individualism, sectarianism.)

## **4 The Modern Period c.1700 - the Present**

### **4.1 Introduction**

- a. Christianity on a global scale
- b. Innovative theology dominated by German-language scholars  
eg. Schleiermacher, Ritschl, Barth, Bultmann, Moltmann, Pannenberg.
- c. Increasing dominance of English-language theology c.1975
- d. Third World and indigenous contributions eg. liberation theology
- e. 'modernity' - not a period as such but an outlook (modo = just now)
  - confidence in human self-sufficiency
  - exemplified by 'The Enlightenment'

### **4.2 The Enlightenment**

#### **1. General features**

It is impossible to understand the nature of modern theology without an appreciation of the radical changes in the climate of Western intellectual culture in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Often this is called the "Age of Reason" or the "Enlightenment". The Enlightenment may be seen as the fruit of the new approaches to knowledge, including religious knowledge, which began with the Renaissance of the late fourteenth century. Enlightenment thinking was dominated by four principles:

- a. Reason: as the proper tool and final authority for determining issues.
- b. Nature: in the "book of nature" all may read the laws of God. What is "natural" is what is right.
- c. Progress: the present is generally considered to be an improvement on the past. As reason unveils nature human society moves to a better future.
- d. Autonomy: rejection of external authority. In the light of contemporary knowledge tradition is found wanting. The use of personal reason is paramount.

Whereas the late medieval and Reformation debates were held within an assumption of the truth of Christianity the Enlightenment challenged all assumptions. This meant an inevitable movement away from the tenets of revealed and historical religion (Scripture and tradition) to natural religion , or Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone (Kant). This presented the greatest challenge to Christian theology in its history.

It is important to appreciate the religious environment that paved the way for the Enlightenment. The pioneer of modern philosophy, Rene Descartes, set himself the project of bringing peace to Europe through rationality, moving beyond the religious conflicts and wars of this time.

As the seventeenth century saw Europe devastated by conflicts between disputing churches each claiming the revelation of God, it became clear that no solution could be reached within traditional Christianity. A teaching common to all humanity was needed. This had to be natural theology based on reason, and compatible with what is emerging in the realm of science.

In practice, the Hellenistic thought categories which had persisted in Christian theology, such as God's timelessness, immutability and simplicity, progressively pushed out the relational and trinitarian God of the Gospel. The general was favoured over the particular.

## 2. Enlightenment Streams

### 1. Science:

- a. Galileo Galilei (1564 - 1642) rejection of Aristotle, experience the source of knowledge, the world can be described mathematically.
- b. Francis Bacon (1561 - 1626) - science as a means to rule nature, primacy of the experimental method, rejection of received opinions.
- c. Isaac Newton (1642 - 1727) - the universe as an orderly machine whose movements followed observable laws.

### 2. Historical Criticism

A method of distinguishing the true from the false in historical accounts. The critical historian does not think in terms of authorities but of sources and a distinction is made between what the sources reported and what actually happened. No witness to a past event is beyond suspicion . Applied to the Bible this meant that the history of Israel and the life of Jesus were often re-interpreted in terms of prevailing concepts as to what is natural or "normal".

### [3.\* Philosophy

- a. Rene Descartes (1596-1650).

Rationalism - the mind is the source of truth.

- b. John Locke (1632-1704)

Empiricism - all knowledge is based on sensation or reflection on such experience.

- c. Deism

A theological alternative to orthodoxy based on empiricism.

Rejection of special revelation. All religions must conform to the reasonableness of natural religion.

- d. David Hume (1711-1776)

Carried empiricism to its logical conclusion. Nothing can be known which is not experienced.

- e. Immanuel Kant (1724-1804)

Widely recognised as the most important of modern philosophers. Sought an explanation of human knowing beyond the limitations of rationalism and empiricism.

Critique of Pure Reason (1781) All the data of knowledge have an empirical origin but are organised into an orderly form by the structure of the mind.

Kant's arguments spelled the end of rationalistic religion in its philosophical form.  
The mind cannot grapple with the questions which lie beyond its grasp.]

### 4. Reasons why the Enlightenment especially influenced Protestantism

- a. lack of centralised authoritarian structures eg. The Index
- b. the reforming nature of Protestantism
- c. the Protestant tendency to individualism
- d. Protestant theology, especially in Germany, was concentrated in the universities which were centres for the new learning.

- e. The majority of innovative secular thinkers were found in the countries of N.W. Europe where there was greater tolerance than in traditional Roman Catholic or Orthodox states
- f. The impact of the Enlightenment on Protestantism was relative and varied in time across nations. In Germany Pietism preceded the Enlightenment, so that Enlightenment influences tended to reshape the character of (liberal) Protestantism. In France the state Church supported the ancient regime which was overthrown at the French Revolution. Intellectuals tended to favour the wholesale rejection of Christianity. In England much of the destructive influences of the Enlightenment were swept away by the evangelical revival of the eighteenth century. Major influences from Germany would impact English speaking Protestantism about a century later.

[5.\* The Enlightenment critique of Christian theology : a general overview

- a. Christianity the most reasonable of all religions e.g. John Locke,  
Reasonableness of Christianity (1695)  
(Adam)

Revelation is reasonable. But salvation is interpreted morally, the biblical narrative does not contribute, the trinity is ignored.

- b. Christianity a re-publication of natural religion. e.g. W. Tindal, Christianity as Old as Creation (1730)

'Revelation' confirms the dictates of reason. The will of God is identical with the laws of creation.

- c. Christian revelation subject to the criticism of reason.  
e.g. French philosophes such as Voltaire (1694 - 1778)

6.\* The Enlightenment critique of Christian theology : specific issues

1. Miracles

David Hume : Essay on Miracles (1748) - human testimony cannot overthrow what we know from the regularities of history (radical empiricism)

cf. Reimarus, GE Lessing, Denis Diderot

- eye 'witness' error is more probable than a resurrection.

2. Revelation

GE Lessing (1729 - 1781) : 'Accidental truths of history can never become proof of necessary truths of reason ... the ugly great ditch .... I can never get across ....'

History eg. resurrection, cannot convey a necessary, timeless metaphysical truth, accessible only to the universal use of reason.

3. Original Sin

Incompatible with the optimism of the time concerning human ability and development.

Historical criticism of its' origin in Augustine.

4. Theodicy

Incompatibility of classical attributes of God - omnipotence and benevolence - with the existence of evil and suffering, e.g. Lisbon earthquake.

5. Historical Criticism

Sources in the Bible. Internal contradiction.

6. The Identity and Significance of Jesus.

Search for the genuine 'Jesus of History', a great and simple moral teacher. Stripped of superstitions and supernatural elements. eg. H.S. Reimarus (1694 - 1768)]

4.3 Theological Movements since the Enlightenment

1. Romanticism

- a. c.1790 - 1850 W Europe eg. Schlegel, Wordsworth, Novalis.
- b. A reaction to Enlightenment rationalism. Rejection of formalism and containment in art, ideas and notions of man.
- c. Organic relation of man and nature; primacy of the perceiver - imagination, feeling, reception of the infinite.
- d. Aesthetic dimensions of Catholicism captured the imagination of Romantics (F.R. de Chateaubriant)
- e.\*F.D.E. Schleiermacher (1768 - 1834)
  - The Christian Faith (1821)
  - apologetic for Christianity against its critics
  - influence of Pietism, Romanticism, Kant
  - centre of religion is not reason nor morality but human experience
  - religious 'feeling' or 'piety' : 'the consciousness of being absolutely dependent, or, which is the same thing, of being in relation with God'.
  - father of 'liberal theology'.

2.\* Marxism

- a. Karl Marx (1818 - 1883)
- b. dialectical materialism - basic reality is material
- c. belief systems are constructions to deal with the reality of socio-economic situations.
- d. alienation is a feature of developed (capitalist) societies
  - workers are alienated from the product of their labour
  - the owners of capital control the economic conditions to their own advantage (distribution of wealth)
- e. at a certain stage the inbuilt tensions in the unjust economic order lead to a revolt by the working class and a classless common-wealth
- f. religion is a projection of human aspirations onto an idealised world.
- g. As the 'opiate of the people' (Lenin) it blinds them to the reality of their alienation and serves the interests of the ruling class (status quo).
- h. When the consciousness of the oppressed classes is aroused they will throw off religious superstition.

- i. The altered material conditions of the communist state will remove any need for the wish-fulfilment upon which religion is based.
- 3.\* Liberal Protestantism
- a. 2 senses - a theological movement c.1800 - 1914 which dominated European Protestant theology, especially in Germany.
    - an ongoing liberal perspective in Christian theology
      - (includes eg. liberal Catholics)
  - b. usually set in opposition to conservatism or Fundamentalism
  - c. emerged out of a distinctive cultural context in W.Europe. Seeks to relate Christ and culture in a positive way.
  - d. Kant : Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone (1793)
    - primacy of reason and morality
    - autonomy of the individual (state, Church)
  - e. Schleiermacher - attempt to popularise Christianity in categories comprehensible and acceptable to his contemporaries ie. reinterpretation
    - abandonment of doctrines based on mistaken assumptions eg. original sin.
  - f. Albrecht Ritschl (1822 - 1889)
    - religion a matter of 'value-judgements', not metaphysics (fact)
    - the Kingdom of God involves the moral unification of humanity through love
    - to know God is to know we are supremely loved
    - sin is selfishness, denial of neighbourly love
    - Jesus the highest expression of human love for God and others
    - inseparability of the goals of religion and culture
  - g. "A God without wrath brought man without sin into a kingdom without judgement through the ministration of a Christ without a cross." (R. Niebuhr)
  - h. Liberal Protestantism in its classic form collapsed when World War I undermined optimism in the progressive evolution of human culture and essential human goodness. Since the impact of W.W.I was less in the U.S.A. liberalism persisted there with more strength.
  - i. liberalism - continues spirit of the above
    - (i) receptive to contemporary science, arts, humanities, 'truth' wherever it is found eg. other religions
      - Paul Tillich (1886 - 1965) - 'method of correlation'
      - David Tracy - dialogue between gospel and culture.
    - (ii) use of historical critical method
      - Bible as a human document
      - Rudolf Bultmann (1884 - 1976)
    - (iii) ethical implications of Christianity

Christian moral vision instead of dogma  
collective solutions to human problems  
Walter Rauschenbusch (1861 - 1918) 'social gospel'

j. Criticisms of liberalism by:

- |                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| (i) neo-orthodoxy  | - denial of divine transcendence                    |
|                    | - denial of authority of Word of God                |
|                    | - 'culture Protestantism'                           |
| (ii) conservatives | - intellectualism                                   |
|                    | - denial of authority of Bible                      |
| (iii) generally    | - notion of universal religious experience is vague |
|                    | - experience is culturally interpreted              |

[4.\* Modernism

a. 2 uses - a loose term for radical critics of traditional Christianity in non RC churches

- a school of RC theologians c.1890 - 1910

b. Catholic modernism

(i) acceptance of the critical view of the Bible

Bible as a historical work with inconsistencies

(ii) rejection of the intellectualism of scholasticism

Maurice Blondel (1861 - 1949) - insufficiency of philosophy, internal dimension of human experience (Immanence) which opened people up to revelation

(Henri Bergson (1859 - 1941) primacy of intuition).

--->dogmas not externally imposed, but known practically in the inner experience of living them out

(iii) unfolding of the meaning of history in its process, not in its origins

- differed from history of dogma school (Adolf von Harnack)
- different from RC Church on status of tradition

No changeless 'essence' of Christianity. ("Kernel" cf. "husk")

Whether or not Jesus founded a church was unimportant

c. Modernist Catholic Theologians

(i) Alfred Loisy (1857 - 1940)- The Gospel and the Church (1902)

- dynamic epistemology, truth as contextual and thereby changeable
- development of doctrine in scripture
- church as necessary historical extension of the gospel (versus von Harnack)
- work prohibited by RC Church 1903

- (ii) George Tyrrell (1861 - 1909) - Anglo Irish
    - Christianity at the Crossroads (1909)
    - 'quest for the historical Jesus' : 'the reflection of a Liberal Protestant face seen at the bottom of a deep well'
    - Christianity the germ of a universal religion
  - d. Pope Pius X publicly condemned Modernist views in 1907. Modernists were made to recant or removed from the RC Church.
  - Vatican II (1962 - 1965) marked the end of the anti-Modernist period.
  - e. British Protestant Modernists
    - Modern Churchmen's Union (1928)
    - Hastings Rashdall (1858 - 1924), moral theory of the atonement more appealing to the modern mind than theories of substitution and sacrifice
      - declined in the period between the World Wars. (Fascism, depression)
  - f. American Protestant Modernism
    - self conscious opposition to Fundamentalism
    - decline in confidence in the 1930's]
5. Neo-Orthodoxy
- a. Karl Barth (1886 - 1968)
 

"The ship was threatening to run aground; the moment was at hand to turn the rudder an angle of exactly 180 degrees."
  - b. Return to the centrality of the Scriptures and the teaching of the Reformers, but cast in a new mould - hence 'neo-Orthodoxy'
  - c. Dialectical theology - Romerbrief (1919) This "landed like a bombshell in the playground of the theologians."
    - God as 'wholly other', 'infinite qualitative difference', emphasis on difference or discontinuity between God and man (Kierkegaard)
    - radical rejection of Liberal Protestantism
  - d. Church Dogmatics (1936 - 1969)
    - 6 million words (incomplete)
    - most influential theological work of the twentieth century
    - 'theology of the Word of God', task of theology is to ensure the Church faithfully proclaims the self-communication of God's Word in Jesus Christ as revealed to us in Holy Scripture
    - 3 fold form of the Word of God: revealed (Jesus), written and preached. The last two are witnesses.

- complete rejection of natural theology and the use of general philosophical categories
  - theology is not a response to what is perceived to be the human situation but to the Word of God
  - radically Christo-centric
- e. Criticisms
- (i) neglect of God's immanence (closeness)
  - (ii) appeal to revelation is circular ie. fideistic
  - (iii) no medium for dialogue with non-Christians or other religions
6. Roman Catholicism.
1. First Vatican Council (1869 - 1870)
    - a. primacy of the Pope.
    - b. infallibility of the Pope.
  2. Second Vatican Council (1962 - 1965)
    - a. affirmed Vatican 1 on papal infallibility.
    - b. principle of episcopal collegiality (bishops).
    - c. church as a whole is the people of God.
    - d. tradition and scripture as 2 streams from one source.
    - e. encouragement of Bible reading.
    - f. liturgy in the vernacular instead of Latin.
    - g. other Christians as “separated brethren”.
7. Eastern Orthodoxy.
- Most of the centres of Orthodoxy suffered repression, either under Islam or communism.  
Renewal of eastern Christian writing in the last twenty years or so.
8. Feminism
- a. 1971 Germaine Greer : The Female Eunuch
    - Start of modern feminist movement
  - b. general aim is to seek equality for women in modern society by the removal of all prejudices, stereotypes, unjust legislation and so on.
  - c. A diverse movement
    - (i) Christianity is inherently patriarchal - God the Father, a male Saviour etc. “Since God is male, the male is God.” (Mary Daly) It must be abandoned eg. Mary Daly, Daphne Hampson, Carol Christ. Sometimes advocate a return to, or modification of, ancient goddess religions
    - (ii) mainstream liberal feminism - seeks to reclaim the place of women in the biblical tradition and the history of the Church. Not however a focus on 'feminine' themes but a revision of the whole of Christian theology according to the standard of the experience of womanhood eg. Rosemary Radford Ruether, E.S. Fiorenza. “One must defeat the bible as patriarchal authority by using the Bible as liberator.” (Mary Ann Tolbert)

- (iii) 'loyalist' feminists - a small minority who seek to remain within the mainstream Christian tradition but to free it of cultural bias. eg. Elaine Storkey

## Some Major Issues

### 1. The Maleness of God

- a. Male pronouns- 'God/ess, 'Godself'
- b. God as Father - metaphor rather than analogy
  - 'Father and Mother', 'Motherly Father'
  - 'Creator, Redeemer, Sanctifier'

### 2. The Person of Christ

- a. Jesus maleness              - patriarchal tradition, manhood is normative, womanhood derivative.

Aristotle - woman less human than man cf. Tertullian, Augustine,

Aquinas - Jesus had to be a male (full human being)

- only a man can fully image God, provide the appropriate analogy              for the Father or Christ eg. male priesthood

Jesus maleness is contingent not necessary (cf. Jewish); meaning of gender is socially constructed. The Christian community constitutes a new humanity. 'The fatherhood of God has nothing to do with maleness but with patterns of relationality revealed and realised in Jesus'. (C. Gunton)

### 3. The Nature of Sin

- a. Patriarchal emphasis - pride, ambition, power, dominance.
- b. Women's experience - lack of power, opportunity, self-esteem.
- c. Community patterns of sharing.

### 9. Liberation Theology

- a. 1968 R Catholic bishops of S America, Medellin Columbia

Need for change, Church must begin to side with the poor

- b. RC theologians - Gustavo Gutierrez, Jose Miranda, Leonardo Boff, Jose Sobrino

Protestant - Jose Miguez Bonino

- c. theology must be contextual

- a new way of doing theology

- the poor cf. middle-class academics are the authentic theological source for understanding Christian truth and practice

- d. scripture is read from the viewpoint of the oppressed - a narrative of liberation eg. Exodus, prophets and social justice, Jesus' good news for the poor

- e. God's preferential option for the poor is the basis of theology and mission

- f. theology is 'a critical reflection on Christian praxis in the light of the word of God' (Gutierrez). Action (political, social, pastoral) precedes reflection as its necessary

precondition. Commitment to God's project for the poor is the basis of a true knowledge of God. Scripture guides practice.

## 10. Black Theology

- a. emerged amongst N American blacks in the 1960's and 70's
- b. concerned with the liberation of black people from white oppression
- c. Stages
  - (i) 1960's - civil rights movement
    - Martin Luther King Jr
    - recognition of a history of struggle in black churches
    - Joseph Washington, Black Religion (1964) : distinctive black Christianity, but due to segregation - therefore no real black Churches or theology
    - 'black power' movement, refusal of black Christian leadership to denounce this as unChristian, start of a black theology of liberation
    - Albert Cleage, Black Messiah (1969) : black Jews, black Madonna etc
    - 'Black Manifesto', National Committee of Black Churchmen (1969) - explicit commitment to a theology of liberation.
  - (ii) 1970 - 1977
    - focus on seminaries and theological issues
    - James Cone (1970), A Black Theology of Liberation. 'God is black' i.e. identified with oppressed. The gospel is black power. About black liberation from white oppression. Jesus only experienced as a liberator by whites when they become black. Later works - greater appeal to black history and experience (cf. Barthian categories)
  - (iii) 1977 on
    - increasing dialogue with liberation movements in South Africa, Latin America, Asia
    - black feminist theology
    - return of focus to black churches

## 11. Evangelicalism

- a. variety of uses of 'evangelical'
  - Protestant cf. Catholic
  - Lutheran cf. Reformed
  - 'low church' cf. 'high church'
  - non-denominational, worldwide approach to Christian spirituality and practice centred upon the authority of the Bible
- b. types of evangelicalism in the twentieth century
  - 'old evangelicals' : conversion, mass evangelism, Bible study, personal holiness eg. Billy Graham
  - 'new evangelicals' : post WW II, moved away from individualist and separatist tendencies (Fundamentalism), rational defence of the Christian faith, social issues eg. Carl F Henry, Gordon H Clark.

- 'justice and peace evangelicals' : mid 1970's on, committed to Christian community, social justice, international peace eg. Jim Wallis, Ronald Sider.
- c. doctrinal emphases
  - authority and sufficiency of Scripture
  - substitutionary death of Christ as the means of salvation
  - need for personal conversion
  - importance of evangelism
- d. ecclesiology and means of grace
  - no single theory of church government
  - Bible rather than sacraments as primary means of grace, therefore differences tolerated
  - gospel rather than Church as vehicle of salvation, therefore differing ecclesiologies tolerated
- e. a cross-denominational movement with its own ecumenical dimensions.

## 12 Fundamentalism

- a. use of 'fundamentalism'
  - The Fundamentals (1910 - 1915), tracts of an anti-liberal sort written by scholarly evangelicals eg. BB Warfield, RA Torrey, WH Griffith-Thomas
  - militantly anti-modernist (white) evangelicals
- b. history of fundamentalism
  - 1920's and 30's, development of fundamentalist seminaries and splinter denominations in US eg. Westminster
  - 1930's, crystallisation around the dispensational pre-millennial eschatology of the Schofield Reference Bible
  - increasingly effective use of mass media
  - 1940's and 50's, rejection of the 'spirit of inclusivism' represented by Billy Graham
  - 1970's on, 'neo-fundamentalism' eg. Jerry Falwell and the Moral Majority, Pat Robertson, John McArthur Jr.
- c. features of fundamentalism which distinguish it from evangelicalism
  - counter-culture movement defined by its opposition to secularism eg. response to movies, lipstick, long hair, dances ...
  - anti-intellectual, appeal to Bible as only source of authority eg. Creation Science, no works of significance in philosophy of religion
  - narrow view of biblical inerrancy and infallibility, no use for higher criticism
  - defines the boundaries of Christian truth by doctrines not essential to salvation eg. 'rapture'
  - extreme individualism.

## 13. Epilogue to Modernity.

### 1. The problem of individualism

- a. essentially foreign to the pre-industrial world.

“Our society is an arch of stones joined together which would break down if each did not support the other.”

(Seneca)

- b. forces conspiring to produce the modern self-consciousness

- (i) renaissance confidence (14<sup>th</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup> century)
- (ii) personal interpretation of the Bible (16<sup>th</sup> century)
- (iii) dominance of epistemology in philosophy (17<sup>th</sup> century on) Descartes cogito ergo sum; Kant “dare to think for yourself”
- (iv) political liberty (18<sup>th</sup> century on e.g. French Revolution)
- (v) rise in living standards
- (vi) self set against the world (subject-object dualism) or self versus self. (psychoanalysis etc.)

- c. the social contract: I choose to relate to others in order to meet my needs (physical, emotional, sexual, financial).

## 2. The anti-Christ character of Post-Christianity

- a. humanism - secularises the biblical pre-eminence of the human race  
(Ps 8:4-8)
- b. historicism - secularises the biblical emphasis on history (history is decided by large scale laws of development, not by God, e.g. Hegel, Marx).
- c. politicisation - secularises the message of the kingdom of God (Marxism)
- d. secularisation - an imitation of the desacralisation of the world achieved by Christianity (animism, polytheism, occult) cf. Gal 4:3,9; Col 2:8.
- e. revolution - secularises the new creation.

(Blocher, H. 1994 Evil and the Cross Leicester: I.V.P.)

## 14. Postmodernism

### 1. The term “Postmodern”

- a. Transition from one age to another cf. medieval to modern.
- b. A general socio-cultural development at all levels (popular, intellectual), not just a movement within society.

2. Illustrations of “World View” shift

Brady Bunch to Simpsons; Star Trek to Star Trek: The Next Generation; Young Talent Time to MTV.

3. Features of the post modern phenomenon

- a. pessimism rather than optimism (progress)
- b. cooperation rather than conquest of nature (“green”, suspicion of technology)
- c. non-rational rather than rational forms of knowing (New Age mysticism)
- d. search for ‘wholeness’ rather than autonomy (independence)
- e. interest in community (network not hierarchy)
- f. relativism and pluralism rather than objective truth (absolutes)
- g. primacy of choice (rather than what is chosen)

4. Factors feeding post modernism

- a. collapse of grand visions e.g. communism.
- b. rapid social change e.g. feminism.
- c. large scale and insoluble crises - Third World debt and poverty, environmental degradation, unemployment, AIDS.
- d. growth of cities.
- e. influence of the media.
- f. post-modern ideology.
- g. electronic information explosion

5. Post-modern preferences

<u>Modern</u>	<u>Post Modern</u>
content	technique
substance	style
words	images
action	spectacle
exposition	entertainment
truth	feeling
conviction	sentiment
absolutes	relative

6. Post modern moods

- a. alienation from the past (no sense of continuity with history)
- b. aimlessness (no clear goals greater than self)
- c. suspicion / disbelief (cynicism)
- d. search for the transcendent (drugs, sex, rock ‘n’ roll)
- e. victimisation ( I am like this because this was done to me)
- f. personalisation (my story rather than our story)

- g. pragmatism (what ‘works’)
7. Anthropology
- a. the self is ‘minimal’ or multiphasic. (no real self, or multiple selves)
  - b. modern humanist understanding of self-constructed and self-centred ego is itself a construct.
  - c. the self as an object does not exist but is under constant construction by cultural influences e.g. by self-help groups, psychotherapy, image consultants, fitness centres.
  - d. selves are consumed. (capitalism, consumerism)
- [8. Epistemology
- 1. Some illustrations.
    - a. the mind is not ‘the mirror of nature’ cf. pin hole camera
    - b. the three umpires
  - 2. Hermeneutics and philosophy of language
    - a. no necessary connection between a sign (word) and that which it signifies (object)
    - b. language can only self-refer, no mediation of being (reality) as such cf. ancient elephant cosmology.
    - c. language as a constantly changing chain of signifiers
    - d. no one reading or final meaning of a text is possible
    - e. no way to get “behind” language to authenticate a meaning, object, reading. (No transcendental signifier).
  - 3. Theory of reality.
    - a. non realist rather than realist - no access to “things”, truth is a convention (non-essentialist)
    - b. non-representationist - words can’t present what is not available
    - c. coherence theory - internal consistency of meaning systems
    - d. pragmatism - truth for us cf. in itself
    - e. metanarratives are legitimising myths e.g. science depends on the myth of progress and the value of increasing knowledge.]
  - 4. A hermeneutics of *agape*
    - a. disregarding the intention of authors of texts is imperialistic and narcissistic.
    - b. *eros* re-fashions reality to its convenience.
    - c. *agape* allows others to speak what they have to say.

## 9. Influence upon theology

### 1. Biblical Interpretation

- a. rejection of the historico-grammatical and historicocritical methods of interpretation.
- b. impossibility of standing outside our cultural - linguistic situation and entering into the consciousness of ancient writers
- c. no 'authorised' or 'legitimate' meaning of text
- d. awareness of the repressive function of 'authorised' interpretations of the Bible e.g. to foster male, white, capitalist values.

### 2. Systematic theology

- a. impossibility of 'systematisation'
- b. polyvalent approaches to questions of truth and meaning

## 15. Postliberalism

- a. c.1980 - rejection of liberal world view from a position outside of traditional conservatism. (E.g. "young foggies.")
- b. narrative theology eg. Hans Frei, philosophical resources eg. Alasdair MacIntyre.
- c. denial of a universal unmediated religious experience common to all humanity denial of universal rationality.
- d. anti-foundational
  - no universal foundation of knowledge communitarian
  - priority of community values, experiences, language
  - historicist
  - traditions of historically developing communities shape thoughts, experiences, values
- e. eg. George Lindbeck, Nature of Doctrine (1984)
  - 'cognitive-propositional' approaches to doctrine are pre-modern, e.g. Roman Catholic, Fundamentalism
  - 'experiential-expressive' approaches ignore human diversity and the medium of culture in transmitting thought and experience, (liberalism)
  - 'cultural-linguistic' approach, doctrine reflects a specific historical religious tradition, interiorisation of its ideas and values. Tradition rests on a historically mediated set of ideas, expressed particularly by narrative.
- f. systematic theology
  - descriptive cf. creative
  - exploration of normative foundations of Christian faith mediated through the scriptural narrative of Jesus
  - truth relates to fidelity to the doctrinal traditions of the Christian faith

- Christian theology is intrasystemic cf. public or universal criteria
  - g. Christian ethics
    - eg. Stanley Hauerwas
    - rejection of Enlightenment quest for universal set of moral ideals
    - Christian ethics identifies the moral vision of the historical community of the church, and helps its members to live faithfully to this vision
    - ethics is thus intrasystemic to a specific community and tradition.
16. Theologies of the Developing World.
1. missionary context – issues of other religions.
  2. criticism of the Europeanisation of the gospel.
  3. search for appropriate cultural paradigms for the communication of the gospel.

## **APPENDIX 1: A history of biblical interpretation.**

### **1. The Patristic Period**

- a.     Alexandrian school
  - Philo (c.30 BC - c.45 AD)
  - allegory, hidden and deeper meaning
  - history of use in the interpretation of Homer
  - synthesis of religion and philosophy
  - allegory provides spiritual reasons why literal commands (Mosaic law) should be kept
  - Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Didymus the Blind (second and third century)
  - meaning of Holy Spirit is always clear, therefore difficult parts of Bible are incentives to pass beyond the literal sense
  - whole of Bible to be interpreted allegorically
  - three fold sense : literal, moral, mystical or allegorical corresponds to three parts of man : body, soul, spirit
  - consensus developed about images eg. Jerusalem is the church
- b.     Antiochene school
  - late fourth and fifth century, Diodore of Tarsus,
  - Theodore of Mopsuestia, John Chrysostom
  - rejected allegorical interpretation
  - focus on human factor, historical context, literal sense
  - OT prophecy primarily in terms of its historical situation, relatively few relate to Christ
  - grammatico-historical interpretation
- c.     Western Church
  - fourth and fifth centuries
  - Hilary of Poitiers; Ambrose of Milan, (combination of Eastern schools) 'natural' sense, 'moral' sense, 'rational' or theological' sense
  - Jerome, use of linguistic, archaeological and historical notes
  - Augustine, deficient in original languages, where interpretation is in doubt the regula fidei of the Church decides
  - 2 fold sense : 'literal - fleshly - historical', 'allegorical - mystical - spiritual'; text could have both meanings
  - free use of allegory, especially in making sense of the OT eg. 'spiritual' interpretation: Adam -

Christ, Eve - Church, Noah's ark - cross, door of ark - Christ's pierced side, Jerusalem -heaven.

- 'The New is in the old concealed, the Old is in the New revealed'; this type of exegesis established the unity of the Bible.

## 2. The Medieval Period

- a. Bible a book of mysteries, known only through Vulgate
  - b. 'The Church to teach and the Bible to prove'
  - c. No new hermeneutical principles
- Quadriga - 4 fold sense of Scripture
- (i) 'literal' - meaning of text at face value
  - (ii) 'allegorical' - applied to obscure passages, or where literal meaning was unacceptable
    - statements of doctrine, what Christians believe
  - (iii) 'tropological' or 'moral' sense
    - ethical guidance
    - how Christians should live
  - (iv) 'anagogical' - defined the grounds of the Christian hope, point to the New Jerusalem
- e. Nicolas of Lyra (c.1270 - 1340)
    - criticised use of allegory, mystical sense being 'allowed to choke the literal'
    - literal sense must be established first, non-literal can only confirm in the case of doctrine

## 3. The Reformation

- a. Luther- only Reformer to use Quadriga
  - other 3 senses dependent upon the literal
  - 8 senses of scripture, each of the 4 senses above can be historical' or 'prophetic'
  - mere historical sense of OT 'killing letter'
  - prophetic-spiritual sense, 'life-giving spirit' eg. Mt Zion (McGrath, p. 208)
- b. Erasmus
  - emphasis on original languages
  - distinction 'letter' and 'spirit'
  - words of text as shell to kernel or real meaning, surface cf. deeper meaning
- c. Zwingli
  - 'natural sense', but not identical to 'literal sense'
  - use of humanist scholarship, figures of speech eg. alloiosis, synecdoche, catechresis eg. 'this is my body'
  - natural sense, 'this signifies my body'; Genesis 22, Abraham as type of God, Isaac of Christ
- d. Calvin - moved away from the 'literal-spiritual' distinction

- accepted typological principle, but not Luther's 'Christ in all the Scripture'

### 3. The Modern Period

- a. post-Enlightenment biblical studies
- b. dominance of the historical - critical method ie. attempt to discover the past 'as it actually happened', rather than how it was reported in the sources.
- c. rational
  - HS Reimarus (1694 - 1768)
  - radical criticism of the Bible,  
Apology for Rational Worshippers (1774 - 1778)
  - deistic, natural religion, universal truths of reason
  - rejection of all supernatural elements, miracles, revelation; conscious fraud, innumerable contradictions
  - influence declined with loss of confidence in Enlightenment principles
- d. historical
  - FC Baur (1792 - 1860)
  - application of Hegelianism to explanation of Christian origins (Tubingen school)
  - Petrine party (thesis), Pauline party (antithesis), Catholic Church(synthesis)
  - denial of supernatural elements, apostolic authorship etc
  - influence declined with waning of Hegelian view of history.
- e. Sociological approach
  - late nineteenth century on
  - Christianity as example of wider category of religion
  - ethnological approach eg. Sir James Frazer : The Golden Bough (1890 - 1915)
- f. Literary approach
  - use of variety of disciplines eg. textual criticism, to understand the Bible as literature.
  - focus is on literary categories rather than historicity eg. narrative theology.

## **APPENDIX 2: God in Process thought.**

1. Dynamic aspect of reality
  - a. Heraclitus - becoming rather than being
  - b. Hegel - universal history
  - c. Philosophy of evolution - Herbert Spencer, Henri Bergson
  - d. 'New physics' - Einstein, Heisenberg
2. AN Whitehead (1861 - 1947): Process and Reality (1929)
  - a. New form of natural theology in opposition to classical theme
  - b. Emphasis is on existence as dynamic rather than static ('essence', 'substance'), reality is a process
  - c. Basic building blocks of reality are 'actual entities' - these range from God to the least existing thing
  - d. 'Actual entities' develop creatively, in 'perishing' their character combines with others to make new 'actual occasions'
  - e. God is distinguished from all other 'actual entities' in that he is imperishable
  - f. God is the source or logically prior condition and goal of all other actual entities
  - g. God guides the creative world process not by causation or coercion but by persuasion - providing actual entities with the highest principles of creativity
  - h. As an actual entity God develops along with the world - he is subjected to the same metaphysical principles of process, as such he is 'a fellow sufferer who understands'
  - i. God cannot override the free choice of humans, nor control directly events in the natural world. This forms the basis of a process theodicy.
  - j. God is not ultimate, metaphysical principles are. God is only relatively transcendent - creation, miracles etc. are impossible.
  - k. Process theologians : Charles Hartshorne, John Cobb, Schubert Ogden
    - God made more personal than in Whitehead's scheme
    - God's superiority is that he surpasses all other actual entities, as perfect as possible

## **APPENDIX 3: Historical development of the doctrine of the Trinity.**

### **1. Heretical sources**

- a. development of the doctrine of the Trinity is a history of the Logos concept of Christianity.
- b. formalisation of the classical doctrine forced upon the Church in order to protect the proclamation of the gospel ie. God's work in Christ.
- c. Logos doctrine in Apologists -
  - borrowed elements from Stoics
  - attempt to communicate person of Christ to outsiders
  - mind of God seems to be less than Person of God, tends to subordinationism.
- d. Dynamic Monarchianism
  - single source, sole rule or sovereignty
  - Theodotus c.190, adoptionism - the Spirit or Christ came upon Jesus at baptism so that he was dynamised to become the Son of God and do his works. Jesus remained simply 'mere man'.
  - Paul of Samosata (c.200-c.275), the Logos is not a Person but God's commandment and ordinance. God ordered and accomplished what he willed through the man Jesus ie. by the indwelling Logos.
- e. Modalistic Monarchianism
  - Noetus, Praxeas in second century, Sabellius in third century
  - defended the unity of God against tritheism
  - Sabellius, huiopater ('soffather'), identification of Father and Son, patripassianism
  - Father, Son, Spirit are not distinct entities but successive revelations of aspects or modes of the one God.
    - (i) The one God revealed in the manner of creator and law-giver: 'Father'
    - (ii) The one God revealed in the manner of the Saviour, Jesus Christ: 'Son'
    - (iii) The one God revealed in the manner of the sanctifier and giver of eternal life: 'Spirit'
  - 'Son' cannot offer himself to 'Father' (himself)
  - real incarnation is impossible, 'God' would be human, must deny mediatorship of 'Son'.

## 2. Western Orthodoxy

### a. Irenaeus

- ‘economic’ approach; oikonomia = ‘way in which one’s affairs are ordered’, plan of action
- ‘economy of salvation’ - way in which God has ordered his work in history for the salvation of humanity  
(‘economic’ Trinity - God as he works Trinitarianly as Father, Son and Spirit in the history of salvation: Creator, Redeemer, Sanctifier cf. ‘immanent’ or ‘essential’ Trinity - God as he is in himself)
- concerned with the explanation of the history of salvation and the experience of redemption in Christ
- successive acts of God, progressive development of God’s plan e.g. covenants - Adam, Noah, Moses, Christ
- each Person of Godhead responsible for aspect of economy of salvation: Father - creation, Son - redemption, Spirit - renewal
- ‘two hands of God’, Father (God) shapes his economy through his ‘two hands’ of Spirit and Son. Sometimes equated with Wisdom or Word.
- answer to Gnosticism, Marcion.

### b. Tertullian

- (i) terms
  - trinites = tri-unity
    - persona = translation of Greek hypostasis = what makes something itself in relation to others. In Tertullian denotes a role played in the economy of salvation. The one God acts in a three-fold manner.
    - substantia = substance or essence, that which makes a thing to be what it is, essential nature. The basis of the unity of the Trinity is found in their common share in the ‘substance’ ie. that which they have in common. N.B. ‘Persons’ and ‘substance’ are not temporally divisible.
- (ii) theology
  - three Persons are distinct but not divided
  - Persons united by common substance
  - different Persons but not separate or independent
  - coordination of the Persons in their actions in history without loss of unity
  - monarch rules of his ‘substance’ (influence, reputation, property) by (legal) persons
  - the monarch, God the Father, rules via the Persons of the Son and Spirit. If God is really to rule he must do so by those who share his substance - therefore, Father is King, Son is King in a second way, Spirit is King in a third way
  - ‘economy of monarchy’ within God

- God is God in history and his presence with us, therefore he is eternally Trinity.

### 3. Eastern development

#### a. Origen

- influence of neo-Platonism; unknowable Father, mediating Son, Spirit relates to realm of spirits
- Son and Spirit knowable, therefore less than Father (graded hierarchy)
- subordination of Son to Father
- Son is begotten, yet seems to be ‘eternal generation’

#### b. Arius

- ‘left wing’ of Origenism
- Son begotten (in time) and created by Father
- Spirit also a creature, made by Father and Son
- if Father is unknowable God, then Son and Spirit must be changeable and so not God

#### c. Athanasius

- what is begotten shares the nature of what begets
- hence Father and Son (later, Spirit) are homoousios (‘of the same substance’)
- not equation of Father and Son (Sabellius) which would be monoousios
- Father, Son distinct, same nature ie. God, unity in God.

#### d. Cappadocian Fathers

- late fourth century, Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nazianzen, Gregory of Nyssa
- begin with the Persons, rather than with the Father then trying to fit Son and Spirit into Godhead, or with the unity
- treating Father, Son, Spirit separately raises questions of nature of distinction between persons and how they are united
- relations are what distinguish Father, Son, Spirit; Son is ‘begotten’ of the Father, Spirit ‘proceeds’ from the Father N.B. these are eternal and dynamic relations of origin
- all three Persons are uncreate
- God is one object in and from himself, three objects to himself
- tendency to tritheism.

### 4. Later formulations

#### a. Western theology: Augustine

- does not start with the Father or the Persons but with the unity of God ie. divine essence
- relation of Persons in terms of fellowship rather than origin
- makes divine substance the highest ontological principle.

- (i) relations within the Trinity do not affect the divine substance, God, for example, is not Father with respect to substance.
  - (ii) God therefore can have no “real relationship” with creation.
  - (iii) Since the essence of God is to be alone (aseity), the way we can know the trinity is by reflection on the image of God which is our rational nature. By turning inward to memory, understanding and will, the self comes to know itself and God.
  - (iv) The individualistic and introverted approach has had a profound effect on Western psychology, anthropology, soteriology, politics, history etc.
- b. Eastern theology: John of Damascus (c.675 - c749)
- application of the incarnational doctrine of the communication of natures (ie. in the one Person of Jesus Christ the properties of the 2 natures interpenetrate) to the Trinity
  - perichoresis (Greek), circumcessio (Latin), ‘mutual interpenetration’ (English)
  - each Person has available to it and is contained by the properties of the other Person (does not include the distinguishing personal properties discussed by the Capadocians)
  - ‘community of being’; equality of eternity, power, wisdom, love etc.
  - ‘appropriation’, follows on from perichoretic unity of the Godhead
  - attributes which belong to the whole Godhead are pre-eminently assigned to one Person
  - this should be based on Scripture
  - e.g. Augustine: Unity - Father, equality - Son, connection - Spirit; Aquinas: power, wisdom, goodness, Calvin: origin, wisdom, virtue
  - another method, based on Rom.11:36, distinguishes on the basis of prepositions ie. from whom - Father, through whom - Son, in whom - Spirit
  - this can also be applied to the outward acts of the Trinity. Even though each Person is involved in creation, redemption and sanctification it is ‘appropriate’ to think of creation as the work of the Father, redemption of the Son and sanctification of the Spirit.

## APPENDIX 4: The *Filioque* clause

- 1 Niceno - Constantinopolitan Creed
  - a. Nicea - 325: ‘we believe in the Holy Spirit’
  - b. Niceno - Constantinopolitan - 385 ‘... who proceeds from the Father’
  - c. Latin versions of the creed (by ninth century) - ‘qui ex Patre Filioque procedit’ (who proceeds from the Father and the Son)
  - d. doctrine of double procession of the Spirit - major differences between Eastern and Western theologies of the Trinity, Great Schism (1054).
2. Eastern position
  - a. Earlier fathers
    - Athanasius : God’s ‘energies’ in the world not equivalent to his eternal being
    - because Spirit is in the Father he is from the Father
    - concentrates on incarnate Logos as ground for Christian reception of Spirit
  - b. Basil of Caesarea
    - limits concern to economy
    - ‘from’ the Father, ‘through’ the Son, ‘in’ the Spirit
    - no inner - trinitarian relation equivalent to ‘generation’
  - c. Gregory Nazianzen
    - use of John 15:26, ‘procession’ is the equivalent of ‘generation’ as the distinct character of the Spirit
    - ‘The three have one nature - God. And the union is the Father, from whom and to whom the order of Persons runs its course ...’
  - d. Gregory of Nyssa
    - Father is source and origin
    - Son and Spirit are of (ek) the Father (“out of”, not “from”)
    - no filioque, the Son mediates the external works of the Trinity
    - eternal origination and economic mediation are distinguished, the inner Trinity is a mystery.
  - e. Later Eastern emphases
    - impossible to distinguish procession and generation (versus Western rationalism)
    - the whole being of Spirit and Son is from the Father alone
    - filioque confuses ‘energies’ of God with his eternal being.

### 3. Western position

- a. Tertullian
  - pre-creation reception of portion of Father's substance by the Spirit through the Son.
- b. Ambrose
  - teaches a double procession, but not explicitly eternal.
- c. Hilary of Poitiers
  - no difference between economic and immanent Trinity
  - Spirit proceeds from both Father and Son
- d. Augustine
  - begins with the one God rather than Father (or Persons)
  - seeks to explain relations between Persons whilst maintaining the unity
  - assumes orthodoxy of filioque, seeks to explain nature of procession cf. generation
  - begins with Spirit as consubstantial 'bond of love' uniting Father and Son
  - since the relation of Father and Son to the Spirit is identical (bond of mutuality) the operation must be identical i.e. Father and Son form a single principle in 'breathing' out the Spirit
  - the double procession explains why there are not two Sons in the Trinity
  - the Father remains the principal source of the procession, because the Son derives his capacity to bestow the Spirit from his generation by the Father.
- e. Later Western emphases
  - Anselm, if deny filioque Son and Spirit are divided
  - Aquinas, Eastern position denies unity of Father and Son.

### 4. Summary of Eastern objections

- a. denies access to immanent Trinity
  - negative (apophasic) tradition; improper to seek to know immanent Trinity.
  - impossible to solve question of difference between procession and generation by filioque speculation
  - can't correlate inner and outer Trinitarian works point by point
- b. threatens monarchy of Father
  - Father as fount of Godhead
  - unity of Trinity is in Father as origin
  - filioque means two principles in the Godhead (Father and Son), or unity is found in the 'nature' or essence.

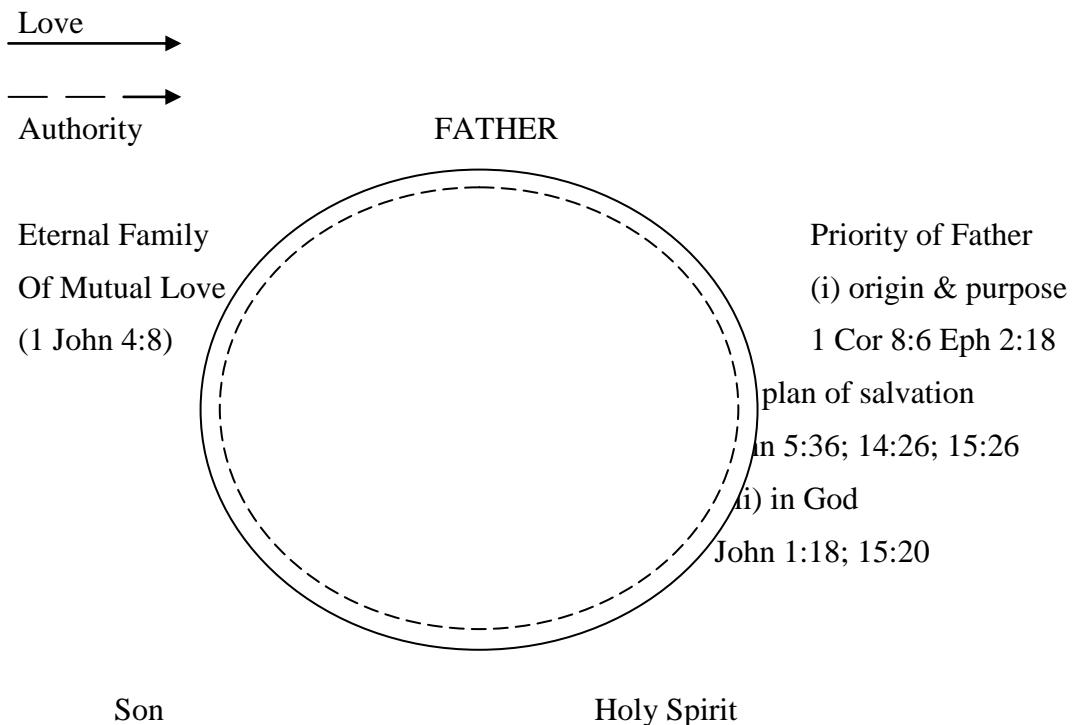
- c. real distinctions between Persons are threatened
  - the relations, instead of being characteristics of the hypostases are identified with them (Aquinas: Persona est relatio)
  - relations become differentiations within the nature or essence, but nature does not exist prior to or apart from the Persons
- d. filioque leads to excessive Christocentrism
  - functional subordination of Spirit to Son
  - authoritarian Church ie. Pope as ‘vicar of Christ’ over Spirit’s work in Church, or Reformation rule of the Word.
- e. hypostasis of Spirit threatened
  - relation to Father and Son indistinguishable
  - a mere reciprocal bond between Father and Son

#### 5. Summary of Western objections

- a. Spirit stands in closest possible relationship to Son in N.T. e.g. Rom.8:9.
- b. what God is in revelation he is antecedently in himself
  - ground of Spirit’s work upon us as Spirit of Father and Son is his eternal relation to Father and Son
- c. the objective ground for our fellowship with God in time is the eternal fellowship of Father and Son in the Spirit in eternity.
- d. if filioque denied the Spirit loses his mediating position in the Trinity, the mutual connection of Father and Son is lost and the unity of the Trinity is threatened.
- e. Christological reduction
  - immediate access to Father through Spirit apart from Son (Word) e.g. Spirit- mysticism

## APPENDIX 5: Trinity and Family.

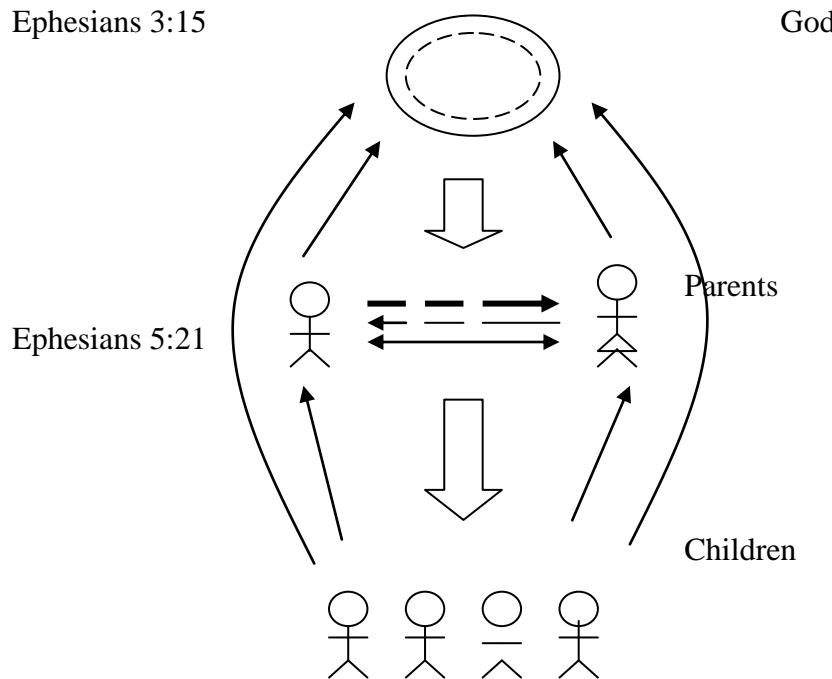
### 1. THE ETERNAL TRINITY AS FAMILY



### 2. THE CREATED FAMILY

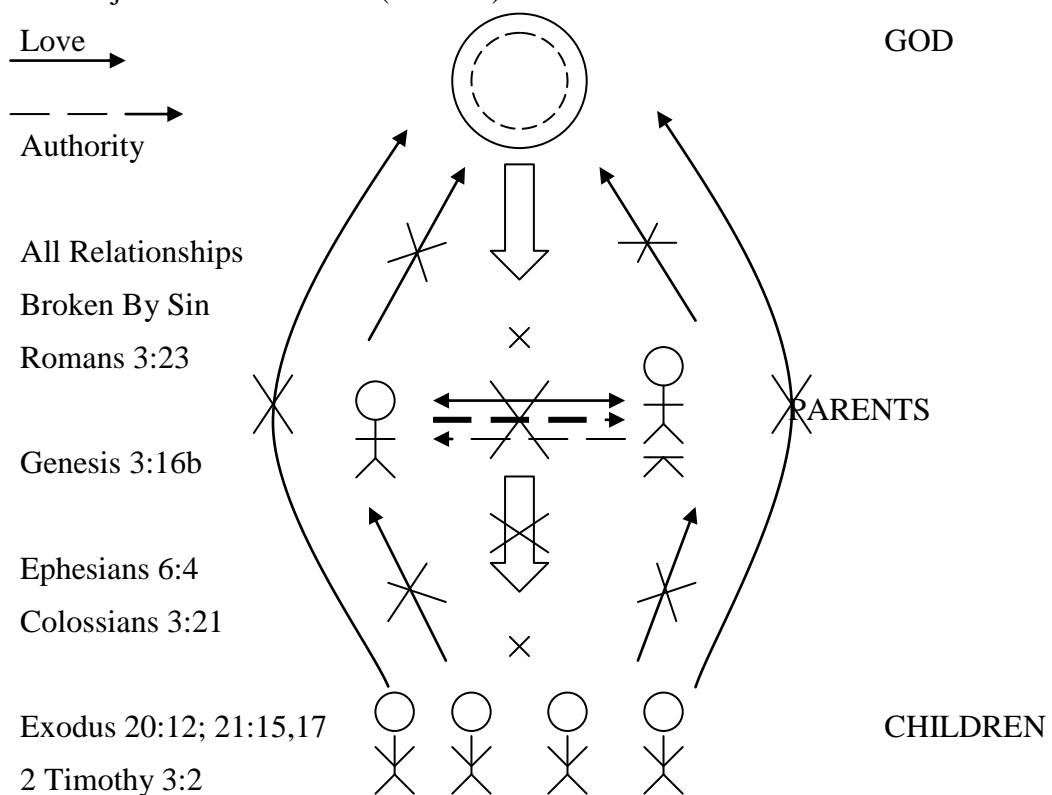
Creation of Humanity in the Image of This God (Genesis 1:26-28)

Ephesians 3:15



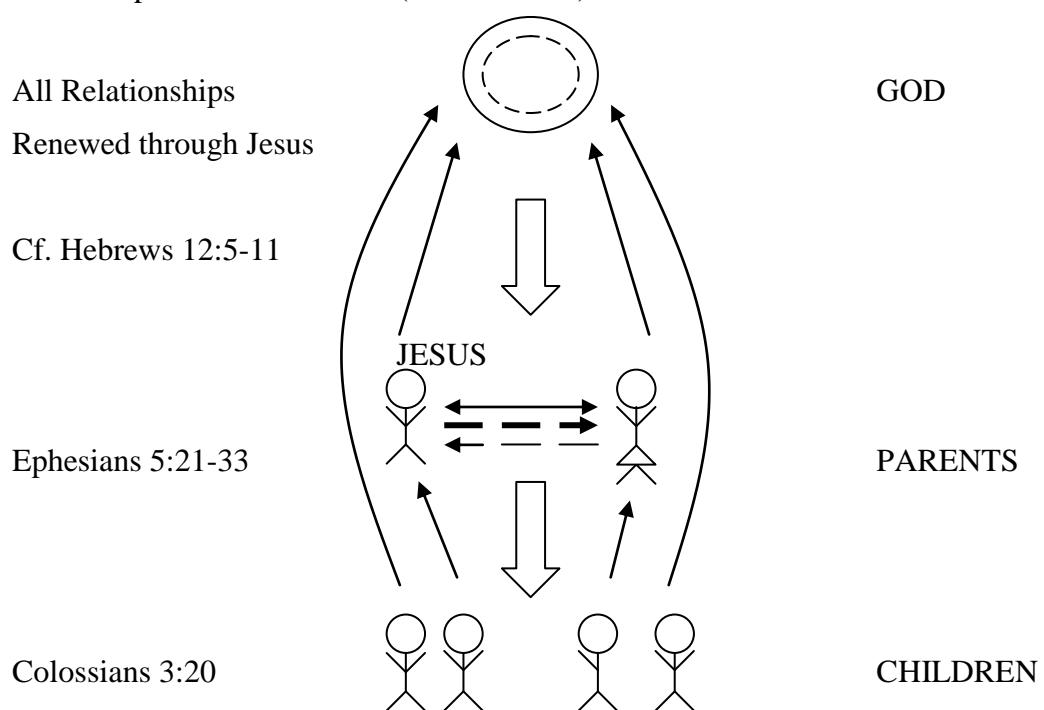
### 3. THE FALLEN FAMILY

Rejection of the Father (Jer 2:27)



### 4. THE RENEWED FAMILY

Acceptance of the Father (Romans 8:15)



SEE ALSO: Deut 6:6-7, Proverbs 22:6; 2 Timothy 3:14-15.

## APPENDIX 6: Models of the Trinity.

1. Augustine
  - a. begins with the unity of God, distinction of Persons is the issue.
  - b. God is one substance, nature, majesty, operation, will.
  - c. the whole Godhead is operative in each Person, qualitative differentiation of the Godhead is excluded
  - d. each divine Person is identical with the others in substance, and with the whole Godhead. This involves coinherence.
  - e. Augustine finds his analogies within a single human person, not in three persons relating (Cappadocians). Thus a human being, especially their rational nature, is created in the image of God.
  - f. Persons are not substance (undivided) nor accidents (incidental) but relations. Since they are relations of God they must be eternal and immanent.
  - g. Son and Spirit may seem to be posterior and subordinate to the Father but this is only in the economy of salvation.
  - h. there are three mutually reciprocal relations in the one God. Father, Son and Spirit know each other mutually.
  - i. use of the mysticism of love - identifies Spirit with love (caritas) because he mutually unites God and believers
  - j. Spirit therefore is the bond of love (vinculum amoris) between Father and Son.
  - k. this is supported by the observation (1Cor.13:13) that God's greatest gift is love and God's greatest gift is the Holy Spirit
  - l. criticism - tends to make Spirit less than fully personal
  - m. analogies
    - search for traces of the Trinity (vestigium Trinitatis) in the creation
    - human beings created in image of God, human mind the apex of creation
    - 'psychological analogies' e.g. mind, knowledge, love; memory, understanding, will
    - three faculties in the one mind correspond to the three Persons in God.
  - n. criticism
    - individualistic rather than social (influence of neo-Platonic mystical intellectualism)
    - division of mind into three faculties is arbitrary, and follows the order set down in Augustine's theology of the Trinity.
    - analogies are properly attempts to illustrate rather than explain the Trinitarian mystery.
  - o. influence of Augustine
    - set major lines of Trinitarian thought in West up until Karl Barth.

## 2. Karl Barth

- a. the doctrine of the Trinity is the exegesis of the fact of revelation i.e. it explains to us through reflection how it is possible for God to speak to humanity.
  - b. ‘God reveals himself. He reveals through himself. He reveals himself’ i.e. God is the source, medium, content of revelation; only God can reveal God.
  - c. rejection of any other starting point for the knowledge of God e.g. analogies, than the knowledge given in revelation.
  - d. it is by nature of the case impossible for sinful humanity to hear the Word of God, but humanity has heard the Word, for it’s sinfulness has been made known to it.
  - e. this implies humanity is passive in receiving revelation. God is sovereign as Lord in effecting revelation from beginning to end. This is what makes revelation to be revelation.
  - f. direct correspondence between revealer and the revelation (God is what he is in revelation). If ‘God reveals himself as Lord’ (in his revelation) then God must be Lord ‘antecedently in himself’.
  - g. revelation is the repetition or reiteration in time of what God is in eternity.
  - h. direct correspondence between : the revealing God  
: the self-revelation of God.
  - i. that is, the Father is revealed in the Son.
  - j. versus modalism, - God in revelation (our God) is really God. Modalism - ‘God behind God’.
  - k. versus subordinationism - God (as he is in himself) is really God in revelation (our God) i.e. homoousios ensures revelation of God.
  - l. Spirit
    - ‘revealedness’
    - means by which Jesus is recognised as the self-revelation of God
    - revelation ‘becoming manifest’, subjective side (personal participation) in revelation
    - eternally grounded in Spirit as bond of communion between Father and Son.
  - m. hearing and the capacity to hear the Word of God are given in the one act of the Spirit as Lord of revelation.
  - n. criticism - minor role given to Spirit in Barth’s theology.
- ## 3. Robert Jenson
- a. The Triune Identity: God According to the Gospel (1982)
  - b. ‘Father, Son, and Holy Spirit’ is God’s proper name.
  - c. doctrine of Trinity comprises the proper name and an elaborate development and analysis of corresponding identifying descriptions.
  - d. O.T. - name of God, ‘Yahweh’ versus polytheism

- N.T. - name of God revealed in Jesus.
- e. doctrine of Trinity identifies and names the Christian God in a manner consistent with the biblical witness.
  - f. God has chosen his own name and authorised us to use it - priority of God's self-revelation.
  - g. gospel identifies God as the one who raised Israel's Jesus from the dead - trinitarian language and thought expounds this with attempted precision.
  - h. philosophical categories (Hellenistic) were introduced to explain what Christians believe about God.
  - i. Hebraic tradition - God identified by historical events. i.e. exodus from Egypt.
  - j. N.T. - God is the one who raised Jesus Christ from the dead
    - 'God' and 'Jesus Christ' are mutually determining.
  - k. proper names are used in address, prayer, worship ie. essential to religion.
4. John Macquarrie
- a. Principles of Christian Theology (1966)
  - b. use of existentialism
    - concepts of Heidegger
    - basis for a viable twentieth century philosophical ('natural') theology in a contemporary and open way
    - correlation with the structures of human existence.
  - c. any experience of God as holy Being as both dynamic and stable would lead us from philosophical theology to something like the Christian doctrine of the Trinity.
  - d. Being - 'substance', the energy of 'letting-be'  
 'Persons' - movements within the stability of Being
  - e. Father - 'primordial Being'
    - ultimate act of 'letting-be'
    - source and condition of all possibility and reality.
  - f. Son - 'expressive Being'
    - 'Primordial Being' expresses itself in the world of beings by 'flowing out through expressive Being'
    - use of Word, Logos concept
    - Jesus identified with 'expressive Being'
  - g. Holy Spirit - 'unitive being'
    - maintains, strengthens, restores unity of Being with beings - promotes higher levels of unity between God and the world
  - h. criticism - not creative, re-expression using existential categories of classical doctrine
    - limited by categories used.