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### Receiver, Bearer, and Giver of God's Spirit-Jesus' Life and Mission in the Spirit as a Ground for Understanding Christology, Trinity, and Proclamation

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RECEIVER, BEARER, AND GIVER OF GOD'S SPIRIT:  
JESUS' LIFE AND MISSION IN THE SPIRIT AS A GROUND  
FOR UNDERSTANDING CHRISTOLOGY, TRINITY, AND PROCLAMATION

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF CONCORDIA  
SEMINARY, SAINT LOUIS, DEPARTMENT OF SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY,  
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR  
THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN THEOLOGY

BY

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MAY 2003

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*In Memoriam*

†

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&

*Ramón Antonio Merino Venegas*

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## ABBREVIATIONS

- ANF *The Ante-Nicene Fathers: Translations of the Fathers down to A.D. 325.* 10 vols. Edited by Alexander Roberts et al. Reprint, Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1994.
- Credo in Spiritum *Credo in Spiritum Sanctum: Atti del Congresso Teologico Internazionale di Pneumatologia.* 2 vols. Edited by José Saraiva Martins. Rome: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1983.
- BC *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church.* Edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2000.
- CA The Augsburg Confession (*Confessio Augustana*)  
Ap Apology of the Augsburg Confession  
SC Luther's Small Catechism  
LC Luther's Large Catechism  
FC Formula of Concord  
SD Solid Declaration of the Formula of Concord
- LCC *The Library of Christian Classics.* 26 vols. Edited by John Baillie, John T. McNeill, and Henry P. van Dusen. Philadelphia: Westminster.
- NPNF<sup>1</sup> / NPNF<sup>2</sup> *A Select Library of the Christian Church: Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers.* 28 vols. in two series. Edited by Philip Schaff. Reprint, Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1994.
- NRSV New Revised Standard Version of the Bible
- ST Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae.*
- TDNT *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament.* 10 vols. Edited by Gerhard Kittel and G. Friedrich. Translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1964-1976. Reprint, 1999.



## PREFACE

In this project, I assess the usefulness of a Spirit-christology for reflection on Jesus' perennial question, "But who do you say that I am?" (Mt. 16:15), and its implications for christology itself, trinitarian theology, and the proclamation of Jesus' story.<sup>1</sup> I argue that reading the life and mission of Jesus as receiver, bearer, and giver of God's Spirit—i.e., a "Spirit-christology"<sup>2</sup>—invigorates and complements classic Logos-oriented approaches to christology, Trinity, and proclamation.

Like many proposals in systematic theology, mine has both critical and constructive tasks. Critically, I investigate some reasons for the partial eclipse of the place of the Holy Spirit in the history of theological reflection on Jesus Christ. Constructively, I propose an invigoration or revitalization of the pneumatological dimensions of the Christ-event in view of their relativization by the church's predominant apologetic interest in Logos-oriented approaches to the same. My investigation shows that a rediscovery of these historically weakened and even forgotten pneumatic aspects can help us immensely to recover once again the *economic-trinitarian* dimensions of the mystery of Christ for the sake of reflection on their *soteriological* and *immanent-trinitarian* implications. In other words, a Spirit-christology places the question of Jesus' identity in the broader context of God's acts in history through the Son and in the Spirit (economic Trinity) for the sake of reflection both on their import for us (soteriology) and on their eternal ground in relations among divine persons who precede our creation and salvation (immanent Trinity).

Against Arianism and modalism, a Logos-oriented christology defines Jesus' identity respectively in terms of his divine equality with God the Father and his personal self-

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<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise noted, biblical references are to the NRSV.

<sup>2</sup> Some interchangeable terms include pneumatological christology, Spirit-oriented christology, pneumatologically orientated christology, and christology of the Spirit (Sp., *cristologia del Espíritu*).

distinction from the same in eternity. Moreover, in reaction to Nestorian and Eutychian christologies, this classical approach defines Jesus' identity in terms of his individual inner-constitution in time as God-man from the first moment of the incarnation. In both cases, the emphasis falls on the "static" and "individual" dimensions of Jesus' identity, namely, his "being-from-the-beginning" (or being-from-before") and his "being-in-himself." A Spirit-oriented christology, as I envision it, defines the Son's identity in terms of his openness to exist in relation to the Father *in the Spirit*, both temporally *for us* and eternally in the *inner-life* of God. By placing the question of Jesus' identity in the wider soteriological and trinitarian context of his acts and relations, a Spirit-oriented christology complements, *not replaces*, the static and individual emphases of Logos-oriented christology with "dynamic" and "relational" aspects. We can then speak of Jesus' identity in terms of his "being-in-act" (or "being-in-action") and his "being-in-relation" (or "being-in/through/with/for-another"). This move allows us to give full weight to the defining place of the Spirit of the Father in the humanity of the Son and the events of his life and work (christology), in his trinitarian existence (Trinity), and in our present-day participation in his anointing (baptism), death, and resurrection through the convicting and liberating word (proclamation).

In formulating my thesis, I use the language of "invigoration," "revitalization," and "complementarity" as part of a conscious methodological decision to think of Logos- and Spirit-christologies as two *aspects* pointing to the one and same reality who is Christ.<sup>3</sup> From this angle, the terms "static" and "individual" are not to be seen as "negative" ones, but rather as designations that best describe the ontology of the Logos-oriented approach.

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<sup>3</sup> Speaking of Logos- and Spirit-oriented approaches as "aspects" (instead of "models") of the mystery of Christ appears to better support the notion of complementarity. See my interview with Ladaria in 4.2.1.

Conversely, the terms “dynamic” and “relational” are not to be seen as “positive” ones because they are “better” than their counterparts. These are *complementary* aspects of Jesus’ identity that must not be interpreted unilaterally or set in opposition to each other.

At a meeting of the Hispanic Theological Initiative (HTI), my colleague Manuel Jesús Mejido suggested that my project could be seen in a broader philosophical perspective as a critique of Western logocentrism. Days later Manuel Paniagua, a friend from seminary days and now a Lutheran pastor, made a similar comment on a phone conversation. As I understand the general function of the term, “logocentrism” denotes any attempt to see or explain reality in one way alone or according to an exclusive logic. After reflecting on their intuitions, I admit that the critical part of my work serves at first as a deconstruction of Logos-oriented approaches to christology in the history of dogma. However, I also believe that the crucial problem that necessitates as a methodological strategy such an initial decentering of the predominant narrative (especially in the West) does not have to do so much with the centrality of Jesus’ identity as the incarnate Word clearly attested in the Scriptures, the councils, and the patristic tradition. Instead, the real danger lies in *logomonism*, that is to say, the tendency to make of such a centrality the exclusive and absolute biblical and theological reality to the exclusion of its broader soteriological and trinitarian dimensions. Moreover, I am convinced that my proposal complements Logos-oriented approaches without falling into either pneumatocentrism or pneumatomonism.

On the issue of God-language, I acknowledge both the potential abuse of masculine images for God as an instrument of oppression and, on biblical and theological grounds, the possibility of using some feminine language to speak of God (e.g., Isa. 66:13 and Lk. 13:34). But I also agree with LaCugna’s observation that calling God “Father” does not

necessarily amount to patriarchalism, just as calling God “Mother” instead of “Father” does not necessarily safeguard against the danger of trading trinitarian monotheism for a unitarian theism.<sup>4</sup> Because I engage the biblical narrative of Jesus and the classical trinitarian language of the tradition on its own terms, I often refer to God as “Father.” In dialogue with the East, this identification of the one God (*ho theos*) with the person of the Father in particular instead of the one divine substance in general serves to revitalize to a significant degree the Western-Augustinian approach to the Trinity.

When I refer specifically to the person of God the Father, I use expressions like “God reveals himself” or “God is in himself.” If I wish to refer to the triune God at one and the same time, I use the expressions “God reveals Godself” and “God is in Godself.” In the first case I refer to the economic Trinity, that is to say, the one God’s self-revealing, self-communicating, or self-giving *to us* through the Son and in the Holy Spirit in the history of salvation. In the second case I refer to the immanent Trinity, namely, the mystery of the divine persons as they relate *to each other*. Without using any pronouns, one can speak of “God in three persons” or “God’s triunity.” But what if one wants to use a reflexive pronoun to refer to the one God as triune? Although “Godself” functions as a singular pronoun, its inclusion of the name “God” as a prefix (instead of “him”) leaves the possibility open for conceiving of God not only in terms of oneness (singularity) but also in terms of threeness (plurality). For the designation “Trinity,” I use the singular pronoun “it” to point to oneness since the term’s prefix “tri” already points to threeness.

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<sup>4</sup> Catherine Mowry LaCugna, *God for Us: The Trinity & Christian Life* (N.Y.: HarperCollins, 1991), 18.

I often use neuter pronouns to refer to the Spirit.<sup>5</sup> They add an element of elusiveness to the mystery of its personhood that is alluded to some degree in the biblical language of wind, breath, power, and water. I am not speaking of the hopeless elusiveness of deceit, but of the immense depth of the Spirit's most personal and immediate presence, love, and works for and in humans in God's economy of salvation—in particular, in the life and work of the incarnate Christ and his body, the church. The Spirit indwells, leads, and empowers the Son in his redemptive mission as the breath of God accompanies the word in the creation of the world. Just as an audible wind blows where it chooses while hiding from us its origin, so the Creator Spirit gives us the breath of life in our mothers' wombs, imparts to us rebirth to new life in Christ through the waters of baptism, and even dwells in and showers us with gifts for participation in the mission of the Son through witness in proclamation and example of love until his glorious return at the end of history. Yet in all its concrete descents or comings, and as the closest point of contact between the triune God and us, there is a certain anonymity in interiority to the Spirit of God's inhabitation in us. Although the Spirit indwells and sanctifies the saints, it is never incarnate in the way the Son of God became flesh. It does not draw undue attention to itself. The Holy Spirit dwells in the saints and, in a sense, becomes freely and graciously the horizon or space from and in which they confess Christ as Lord, come to know God as a gracious and loving Father, and love their neighbor as God has loved them in Christ. It is only from this being and living in the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ, that the saints can grasp the distinction between themselves and the Spirit itself who is God. It seems

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<sup>5</sup> The argument could be made that the feminine noun *ruah* and the masculine noun *paraklētos* also allow for the possibility of conceiving of the Spirit respectively in feminine and masculine images or metaphors.

characteristic of its personhood that the Spirit's closeness in hiddenness escapes us and grasps us at one and the same time.

In addition to purpose and dedication, the completion of doctoral studies requires the academic, financial, collegial, and personal support of institutions and individuals. Drs. James Voelz and Bruce Schuchard, deans of the Graduate School of Concordia Seminary during my years as a doctoral student, offered creative leadership as well as academic and collegial support at various stages of the program. I am also indebted to the Graduate School for providing me with an Anonymous Scholarship and an Overseas Study Grant. The latter stipend allowed me to pursue dissertation research at the prestigious Gregorian University in Rome, where I engaged in productive consultations with Drs. Philip J. Rosato, Luis F. Ladaria, and John J. O'Donnell. I wish to thank these three fine Roman Catholic scholars for their ecumenical spirit, penetrating insights, and advice. At various stages of my argument, I especially note Ladaria's influence in my thinking on issues concerning the complementarity between Logos- and Spirit-christologies.<sup>6</sup>

I have benefited much from my involvement with The Hispanic Theological Initiative (HTI), a program of The Pew Charitable Trusts for advancing theological reflection from a Hispanic perspective. Through generous Doctoral, Special Mentoring, and Dissertation Year grants, writing workshops, and other networking opportunities, HTI has facilitated my growth as a Latino theologian and strengthened my commitment to our communities. I am deeply appreciative to my HTI mentor, Dr. Samuel Solivan, with whom I had the honor to work as a teaching assistant at the 2000 Hispanic Summer Program at Princeton Theological Seminary, learning from his valuable experiences as educator, pastor, and theologian. Our relationship resulted in Dr. Solivan's gracious participation as a reader

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<sup>6</sup> See esp. 3.3 and 4.2.

for this dissertation. I thank HTI and Dr. Robert Ratcliff from Abingdon Press for their collaborative help in facilitating the completion of this manuscript. A special “thank-you” to the HTI staff and their past and current directors Dr. Zaida Maldonado Pérez and Joanne Rodríguez for their vision, encouragement, and hard work for us all.

Through the language of “conviction” and “liberation” in the chapter on proclamation, I call for both a self-critical and hopeful reading and speaking of Jesus’ story that leads us to repentance of our sins against him (oppression) in order to be forgiven for them and given resurrection hope through him (liberation).<sup>7</sup> In this way, I am seeking to bring together matters of great interest to a U.S. Latino Lutheran theologian such as myself (and hopefully to others as well), namely, the use of the classic distinction between law and gospel in proclamation as an instrument of denunciation of sins and annunciation of forgiveness and hope. Admittedly, I may only be dealing in these reflections with what Gutiérrez refers to as the third level of liberation, namely, “liberation from sin,” but I also believe that the other two dimensions of “personal transformation” and liberation from “oppressive socio-economic structures” should, can, and often do follow from a repentant and forgiven heart that has been reconciled to God in Christ by the power of the Spirit.<sup>8</sup> For now, I leave these ethical implications of living in obedience to God and for others—in other words, of being and acting *in the Spirit* as Jesus did—for future work.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Chapter five is a slightly revised version of the first prize-winning essay for the 2003 *Word & World Essay Prize for Doctoral Candidates*. It was published in an issue on the Holy Spirit under the title “God against Us and for Us: Preaching Jesus in the Spirit,” *Word & World* 24, no. 2 (2003): 134–45. I wish to thank the editor and editorial board of this fine journal for the prize and the publication of my essay.

<sup>8</sup> For the “three levels of liberation,” see Gustavo Gutiérrez, new introduction to the fifteenth anniversary edition of his classic *A Theology of Liberation: History, Politics, and Salvation*, ed. and trans. Sister Caridad Inda and John Eagleson, rev. ed. (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1973; new introduction, 1988), xxxviii.

<sup>9</sup> Two recent and significant works in U.S. Hispanic/Latino theology that deal with the role of the Spirit (although not specifically concerning a Spirit-christology) in liberation from a Pentecostal perspective are: Eldin Villafañe, *The Liberating Spirit: Toward and Hispanic American Pentecostal Social Ethic* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1993); and Samuel Solivan, *The Spirit, Pathos, and Liberation: Toward*

Among the faculty at Concordia Seminary, I wish to express my gratitude to Drs. Joel Okamoto, Charles Arand, Jeffrey Gibbs, Paul Raabe, James Voelz, and Robert Kolb for commenting on the initial proposal for this project. The first two faculty members also deserve my thanks for their respective services as dissertation supervisor and reader. I also thank Drs. Arand and Andrew Bartelt from Concordia Seminary, Dr. Alberto García from Concordia University Wisconsin, Dr. Douglas Rutt from Concordia Theological Seminary, Dr. Douglas Groll from the Hispanic Institute of Theology of Concordia Seminary, and Rev. Manuel Paniagua for their collegial and personal interest at various levels in my development as a Hispanic-Lutheran theologian. Dr. David P. Scaer from Concordia Theological Seminary first taught me to appreciate the soundest insights in all three major types of atonement theories. My modest attempt to bring them together under a Spirit-christology is a tribute to his influence on my theological formation.<sup>10</sup>

Undoubtedly, the most enriching component of my doctoral experience at Concordia has been the professional collaboration and personal friendship that my Doktorvater Joel Okamoto and I have shared over the past four years. His influence on my thinking is most notable in the final chapter on proclamation, which I offer as an initial attempt to honor his continuous call in the classroom for reading the Bible as a theologian of the cross. Not only is Dr. Okamoto a keen intellect and a kind human being, but he also exemplifies for me the type of theologian and advisor I aspire to be to others in future dealings with laity, students, and colleagues. I celebrate and fully acknowledge the

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*an Hispanic Pentecostal Theology* (Sheffield, England: Sheffield, 1998). For a more post-Chalcedonian approach to the ethical aspects of the reality of Spirit in Jesus that does not engage either Logos-christology in particular or trinitarian theology in general, see Marcus J. Borg, *Jesus, A New Vision: Spirit, Culture, and the Life of Discipleship* (N.Y.: Harper & Row, 1987).

<sup>10</sup> See 2.3.2.



influence of this fine doctoral advisor's attention to detail, commitment to students, passion for theology, and love for the church in my professional and personal growth.

It was almost fourteen years ago that I first arrived in the United States, leaving my mother Conzuelo, my father Carlos, and my sister Dayana behind in the city of Panama and embarking on a journey that took me to Williamsburg, Iowa; Mequon, Wisconsin; Fort Wayne, Indiana; Caracas, Venezuela, and more recently St. Louis, Missouri. Along the way, God used a number of people too high to mention—they have not escaped my mind and heart—to lead me on a vocational path to the holy ministry. Heartfelt gratitude goes to the family of Mr. and Mrs. Larry and Pat Dellamuth, who were (and in my book, still are) my family in this not-so-foreign country anymore. It was their unconditional devotion to Jesus Christ and their unassuming service to the church, their families, and their neighbors that served as the key witness resulting in my becoming a Lutheran and, later, a Lutheran seminarian. In St. Louis, Missouri, a most special thanks goes to the family of Mr. and Mrs. Tom and Kathy Von Behren for their love and support in ways too great to describe, but especially for their help in securing a top quality computer and volunteering for babysitting services to enable me to work on and complete this project in a timely fashion.

I am thankful for my father Carlos, my mother Conzuelo, and my sister Dayana, who had the courage and made the sacrifice of letting, respectively, their firstborn son and only brother go away in God's hands to a distant land with the hopes and dreams that loving families have for their loved ones. They gave up much for the Lord, but with a humble and joyful heart. In their sacrificial self-giving to God and for me, I find a human analogy for the immense depth of God's love for us in the crucified and risen Christ. It is

to them that I dedicate my fourteen years of uninterrupted study in the United States and in preparation for service to Christ, which now formally culminates with the Doctor of Philosophy in Theology degree. Thanks to Vincent, Vini, Teresa, Carlita, and Laura for being a supportive family, to Ahmed Che, Jaime Hardy, and Manuel Paniagua for their friendship, and to all my family in Panama and Chile for their love and respect.

To my beloved wife Tracy and our precious boy Lucas, I owe a profound debt of gratitude that words can neither repay nor fully express. I am speechless. You give me love and joy that moves me to do meaningful things and to serve others. I often reflect on and attempt to imagine the Spirit's role in Jesus' life and mission, but at home I see with my own eyes in both of you the gifts of the Spirit of Jesus. Through you, as the members of Christ's body closest to me, I approximate the mystery of Christ, God's faithful Son and suffering Servant. And I smile and say to myself, "God is love." Te quiero mucho Lucas. I love you very much, Tracy. It is to the two of you that I dedicate this work of love, the shared labor of four years. May the Spirit keep us united in that never-ending reciprocal love that binds our loving Father and his beloved Son. Amen.

Leopoldo Antonio Sánchez Merino  
May 27, 2003 (Easter Season)  
St. Louis, Missouri, U.S.A.

## INTRODUCTION

The term “Spirit-christology” encompasses a variety of meanings. In the history of dogma, ideas regarding “Spirit” (*pneuma, spiritus*) have informed and supported both orthodox and heterodox understandings of Jesus’ identity. There is an early orthodox type that identifies Spirit—and even “Holy Spirit” in Luke 1:35—as the divine principle in Christ, or, more specifically, as the name of the preexistent Logos.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, there are Ebionite and “adoptionist” types that affirm the presence of God’s Spirit in Jesus to the detriment of his preexistence and divinity.<sup>2</sup> Other contemporary post-Chalcedonian proposals substitute a Spirit-christology for the church’s classical Logos-christology by arguing for Jesus’ divinity solely on the basis of his unique possession of Spirit, leaving aside the question of his personal identity as Logos.<sup>3</sup> In such systems, the term “Spirit”—much like “Logos” or “Wisdom”—functions only as one of many viable biblical “metaphors” or “symbols” for describing in a general way God’s simultaneously immanent and transcendent presence in and to creatures.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> A classic study is M. Simonetti, “Note di cristologia pneumatica,” *Augustinianum* 12 (1972): 201-32; see also my discussion in 2.1.1 and 4.2.1.

<sup>2</sup> Philip J. Rosato, “Spirit-Christology: Ambiguity and Promise,” *Theological Studies* 38, no. 3 (1997): esp. 429-38; see also Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Jesus—God and Man*, trans. Lewis L. Wilkins and Duane A. Priebe, 2d. ed. (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1977), 116-23; for orthodox reactions to the adoptionist principle in three major heterodox views of Jesus’ reception of the Spirit at the Jordan, see my discussion in chap. 1.

<sup>3</sup> See G. W. H. Lampe, “The Holy Spirit and the Person of Christ,” in *Christ, Faith and History*, ed. S. W. Sykes and J. P. Clayton (London: Cambridge, 1972), 111-30, later expanded in *God as Spirit* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1977); see also Roger Haight, “The Case for Spirit Christology,” *Theological Studies* 53, no. 2 (1992): 257-87, and his subsequent treatment in *Jesus—Symbol of God* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1999); also my assessment of J. D. G. Dunn and Lampe in 4.2.1.

<sup>4</sup> See, e.g., Lampe, *God as Spirit*, 37, 115-16; and Haight, “The Case for Spirit Christology,” 257, 267-68. Schoonenberg’s approach to the presence of the Logos and of the Spirit in Jesus’ “human reality” assumes

My approach to Spirit-christology presupposes a biblico-theological understanding of Spirit as an agent and person in its own right, distinct from and related to the Father from whom it principally proceeds and to the Son in and upon whom it rests. Within this trinitarian framework, we can speak of a twofold self-differentiation in God's self-giving to the humanity of Christ in the person of the Son *and* in the person of the Holy Spirit.<sup>5</sup> The former self-giving yields a Logos-christology; the latter, a Spirit-oriented one. Even though I see both christological orientations as distinct but complementary aspects that draw us closer to the one and same Jesus Christ, the history of theological reflection on Christ actually shows a partial relativization of the pneumatic dimensions of his identity as receiver, bearer, and giver of God's Spirit. My study shows that a revitalization of these aspects is crucial to recover the *economic-trinitarian* dimensions of Jesus' identity for the sake of reflection on its *soteriological* and *immanent-trinitarian* implications.

Logos-christology reflects on the personal identity of Jesus and the Logos, protecting the Son's divine consubstantiality with God the Father and his distinct self-subsistence from him in eternity. It also safeguards the unity of his personal constitution as God-man in time from the first moment of the hypostatic union. Thus the ontology of the Logos-oriented approach stresses the "static" and "individual" dimensions of Jesus' identity both as eternal and incarnate Son, that is, his "being-from-the-beginning" and his "being-in-himself."<sup>6</sup> As an approach "from above," Logos-christology proceeds from the Son's

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a similar position, but allows for a bit more differentiation between these modes of presence. See "Spirit Christology and Logos Christology," *Bijdragen* 38 (1977): esp. 360-75, and my analysis in 2.2.1.

<sup>5</sup> I argue this point at length in 3.1.2.

<sup>6</sup> I inquire briefly into the reasons for the move towards a static and individual ontology in 3.2.1. Under a static ontology, and within a strict distinction between time and eternity, it is probably better to speak of a

eternal and divine preexistence to his assumption of humanity at a set or absolute point in time. It argues that *the Logos* is Jesus and thus that Jesus saves us *because he is God*.<sup>7</sup>

A study of God's self-giving to the humanity of the Son in the Spirit, as I articulate it, invigorates and complements—and, therefore, *does not replace*—Logos-christology by reflecting on the broader soteriological and trinitarian implications of the incarnation. As an approach “from below,” a Spirit-christology proceeds from a consideration of Jesus' loving acts and relations to his Father and for us as faithful Son and suffering Servant in the economy of salvation—namely, his life and mission *in the Spirit*—to an affirmation of his lordship, preexistence, and divinity in the light of the paschal mystery.<sup>8</sup> In the light of the crucified Jesus' glorification in the Spirit and his sending of the same Spirit unto us as risen Lord (and even as eschatological life-giving Spirit), a Spirit-christology shows that *the man Jesus*, the receiver, bearer, and giver of God's Spirit, is the Logos and thus that Jesus is our Lord and God *because he saves us*.<sup>9</sup>

In chapters one and two, I argue that the pneumatic and thus economic-trinitarian dimensions of Jesus' identity suffered a partial yet significant eclipse in the history of dogma due to the church's apologetic interest in preserving Logos-oriented approaches

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“being-from-before” (rather than a “being-from-the beginning”) when referring to the *eternal* Son.

Perhaps, one could speak of an “eternal beginning” in the logical (not temporal) sense that the Son is whom he has always been from the very first moment of his divine preexistence (which, of course, is eternal).

When I use “being-from-the-beginning” to refer to the eternal Son in this project, I mean it in this logical sense.

<sup>7</sup> See 4.2.2; cf. 2.2.2.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> The reader should note that Paul uses the title “life-giving Spirit” to refer to Christ as the last Adam (cf. 1 Cor. 15:45). I discuss the implications of this title for Jesus' identity as bearer and especially giver of the Spirit in 2.3.1.

against various heterodox groups. Furthermore, I argue that a recovery of such crucial dimensions is not simply desirable but necessary to invigorate and complement Logos-oriented emphases on the “static” and “individual” aspects of Jesus’ identity as Son with respective “dynamic” (or actualizing) and “relational” (or ecstatic) ones. What I mean to say is that the Son exists in openness (dynamic aspect) and in relation (ecstatic aspect) to his Father precisely *in the Spirit*, both temporally *for us* in the economy of salvation and eternally in the *inner-life* of the triune God, without losing his own personal or hypostatic identity as the preexistent and incarnate Logos. I work out the christological, trinitarian, and kerygmatic implications of this argument in chapters two through five. In doing so, I show how a Spirit-oriented christology helps us greatly to reflect on the significance of the mysteries of Jesus’ life (i.e., conception, baptism, death, and resurrection) for the incarnate Son himself (christology), for exploring both immanent-trinitarian models and approaches towards the complementarity of Logos- and Spirit-oriented christologies (Trinity), and for the proclamation of Jesus’ story as a death-and-life event for sinners in the here-and-now (proclamation).

A closer look at the themes and arguments of each chapter is in order. Using Jesus’ baptism as a locus for assessing heterodox views of his relationship to God’s Spirit, chapter one argues for the influential character of orthodox responses to the heterodox prior to the council of Constantinople (A.D. 381) in the church’s partial relativization of the pneumatic aspects of christology for centuries to come. Reaction to the adoptionist principle in Jewish, some Gnostic, and Arian views of Christ led early church fathers to defend his divine preexistence and incarnation to the extent that in some cases the Spirit’s descent on him became only revelatory *for others* and not constitutive *for himself*.

Under the rubrics of Jesus as receiver, bearer, and giver of God's Spirit, chapter two seeks to invigorate classic Logos-oriented readings of the biblical story of Jesus with its constitutive pneumatological dimensions. Logos-oriented readings see events in Jesus' life and mission as *revelatory*, confirming, declarative, or proclamatory of either his prior identity as God or of his prior possession of the Spirit as God-man from the first moment of the incarnation. At least in the case of Jesus' baptism, the Jordan event can also be seen as *exemplary* of Christian baptism for the church. All such readings highlight the prominent place of the Logos as the subject of acts in and through his assumed and sanctified humanity from the first moment of the hypostatic union. A Spirit-oriented christology reads the same events as special instances of the Father's sending of his Spirit upon his incarnate Son in the economy of salvation and, therefore, as *constitutive* moments for his own humanity in the work of redemption. It highlights the *dynamic* presence of the Spirit as an agent in its own right in the humanity of the Son throughout his life and work as obedient Son, suffering Servant, and risen Lord. Moreover, a Spirit-oriented christology underscores the place of the Father as principal *source* of the Spirit to his incarnate Son—a fact that does not receive sufficient attention in a Logos-oriented christology. Both moves help immensely to place the person of the Logos in the broader context of his acts and relations to the Father in the Spirit for us.

In chapter three, I show how the joint mission of the incarnate Son and the Spirit in God's economy of salvation provides a ground for reflection on the immanent Trinity. I argue for the constitutive place of pneumatology in assessing the trinitarian implications of the incarnation (both as hypostatic union and as the whole Christ-event), the ideas of person and relation (especially as these apply to the Son), and the relationship between

the social (or perichoretic) and processional character of personal relations. In particular, I argue that the *in spiritu* model of the Trinity best safeguards the constitutive place of the Spirit in the human existence of the Son, in the Son's eternal openness to exist in relation to the Father, and in the Father's eternal generation of the Son. Otherwise stated, I show how the *in spiritu* model avoids monophysitism while preserving the logical priority of union over sanctification, adds dynamic and relational aspects to the Son's personhood while retaining its static and individual dimensions, and invigorates the communitarian view of trinitarian relations without doing harm to the logical priority of the Son over the Spirit in the classical order of processions. My reflections in this chapter already point in some ways to the complementarity of Logos- and Spirit-oriented christologies.

In chapter four, however, I show more concretely that Logos- and Spirit-christologies are complementary by presenting some proposals towards a synthesis of approaches under three major considerations: 1) the trinitarian distinction and relation between the personal or hypostatic "identity" of Jesus and the Logos and the personal "non-identity" between Jesus and the Holy Spirit, 2) the philosophico-theological distinction and relation between the order of knowledge (*ordo cognoscendi*) and the order of being (*ordo essendi*), and 3) the conciliar distinction and relation between the human and divine wills and operations in the person of Jesus Christ.

As an initial attempt to move from a pneumatological christology to the broad field of christological pneumatology, chapter five proposes that the proclamation of the story of Jesus in word and sacrament from a pneumatological perspective fosters the present-day Spirit-led plunging of hearers into the anointing, death, and resurrection of Jesus. By being incorporated into the mysteries of Jesus' life, hearers are continually convicted of



their sins against Jesus (law) in order to be liberated from them through the forgiveness of sins and the promise of the final resurrection in him (gospel). It is through conviction, forgiveness, and resurrection hope that the Spirit addresses us today in order to shape and incorporate our life-stories into Jesus' own life-story—a story lived in the Spirit.

## CHAPTER 1

### **Towards the Historic Eclipse of Spirit-Oriented Christologies:**

#### **Classic Orthodox Reactions to Heterodox Views of Jesus' Anointing at the Jordan**

In this chapter, I show how three classic orthodox reactions to heterodox views of the baptism of Jesus paved the way for church theologians to defend his divine preexistence and incarnation to the extent that in some cases the place of the Spirit of God in his human life and mission became only *revelatory for others* but not *constitutive for himself*. These responses represent foundational arguments for and at times influential instances of a broader problem in the history of dogma, namely, the partial but significant eclipse of the pneumatological—and thus economic-trinitarian—dimensions of christology.

In his treatise on the baptism of Christ, Cantalamesa argues that the rise of Gnostic, Arian, and “adoptionist” (more specifically, Samosatene) views of the relationship between Jesus and the Holy Spirit contributed to a weakening of the pneumatic aspects of christology.<sup>1</sup> His comments serve as an instructive guide and point of departure to pursue the causes for what I have already called the partial eclipse of Spirit-oriented christology:

In the Gnostic view, Jesus was one person and the Christ another. Jesus denoted the man born of Mary, whereas Christ denoted the deity that descended on Jesus at the moment of baptism. Thus the baptism came to negate the reality of the incarnation and this could not give but a strong reaction on the part of the Church. Other heresies came later to reinforce the reasons for “discrediting” the baptism of Jesus: Arianism used Jesus' baptism as a pretext for asserting that if any change occurred in Jesus at the moment of baptism, this meant that he was subject to

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<sup>1</sup> Raniero Cantalamesa, *The Holy Spirit in the Life of Jesus: The Mystery of Christ's Baptism*, trans. Alan Neame (Collegeville, Minn.: The Liturgical Press, 1994), 7.

change and therefore not a changeless God like the Father; the adoptionism of Paul of Samosata made Christ's actual divinity depend on the coming of the Holy Spirit, as though Jesus were one of the prophets, though certainly the holiest one, in whom the power of God had worked.<sup>2</sup>

At a methodological level, Cantalamesa proposes that Jesus' baptism serves as a fruitful locus to investigate and analyze heterodox views of Jesus Christ's identity and orthodox reactions to the same. Following the lead of this patristic scholar, I elaborate further on three Christian responses to a Jewish question, to Gnostic views (at times combined with Ebionite elements), and to Arian theology respectively.<sup>3</sup> All these controversies deal to a significant degree with the issue of the proper use of biblical texts pointing directly or indirectly to the anointing of Christ at the Jordan.

First, I look at the arguments of the Christian philosopher Justin Martyr (ca. 100-ca. 165) in his *Dialogue with Trypho, a Jew*, an apology on the Old Testament's witness to Christ's messiahship and divinity. Second, I study the major extant apologetic work of Irenaeus (ca. 130-ca. 200), bishop of Lyons (beginning ca. 177), namely, his extensive refutation of various Gnostic systems entitled *Against Heresies* (written ca. between 182 and 188). Finally, I deal with one of the most significant and mature works of Athanasius

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> González reminds us that Paul of Samosata (3d century) does not hold to an adoptionist position in the strictest sense because he affirmed that Jesus is Son of God (although not exactly the Word) already from birth. Admittedly, an adoptionist trend surfaces in his teaching that the Word who dwells in and makes Jesus the Son of God from the moment of the incarnation represents the reason, purpose, or power of God but not God as such. Since the substantial identity of the Word and God and the personal identity of the Word and Jesus are severed, Jesus Christ is only a mere man. Thus there is a disjunctive principle in Paul's adoptionism as well. Here I have not included Paul primarily because his adoptionist (and disjunctive) principle seems to focus much more on the relation Word-Jesus at the moment of conception than on the relation Jesus-Spirit or Son-Spirit at the Jordan. See Justo L. González, *A History of Christian Thought: From the Beginnings to the Council of Chalcedon*, vol. 1, rev. ed. (Nashville: Abingdon, 1987), 248-51.

(ca. 296-373), bishop of Alexandria (beginning in 328), namely, his first of four *Discourses against the Arians* (written ca. between 356 and 360).

The reason for exploring these particular patristic sources lies in the conviction that any proposal for a Spirit-oriented christology today must learn from history, especially from dangers inherent in adoptionist christologies. At the risk of overgeneralization, adoptionism sees Jesus as a mere man made worthy of sonship and/or elected by God into the same, often by the grace, virtue, or indwelling of the Spirit in him.<sup>4</sup> The problem of Jesus' preexistence and divinity becomes irrelevant, meaningless, or simply denied. Of those mentioned in our study, Trypho the Jew, Cerinthus (a Gnostic with Ebionite leanings), and Arians represent the adoptionist principle in various ways. Indeed, an in-depth examination of post-Niceno-Constantinopolitan adoptionist christologies in their complete historical development and as a dogmatic problem needs more elaboration and precision than this essay requires. Such a study would have to include, for example, the problem of Nestorianism<sup>5</sup> and the Spanish adoptionism of the late eight century.<sup>6</sup> Here I

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<sup>4</sup> Based on his analysis of Ebionite christology, Rosato gives a helpful definition of adoptionism: "[T]he generalization can be made that this Christology was in effect no Christology at all, but rather a blend of Father theology and Spirit theology to the exclusion of Son theology. . . . Emphasis on a strict monotheism on the one hand and on a theology of grace on the other made any assertion about Jesus Christ's unique ontological role in the very nature of God superfluous. Instead, God's absolute transcendence and man's universal participation in grace through the Spirit reduced the Messiah to the model of man's own relationship to God, to the paradigm of man's own adoption as son of God. . . ." See Philip. J. Rosato, "Spirit-Christology: Ambiguity and Promise," 435.

<sup>5</sup> Adoptionism can be closely related to so-called "disjunctive" christologies, which separate divine and human elements in Christ. After the council of Ephesus (A.D. 431), adoptionist/disjunctive christologies became suspected of being Mopsuestian or Nestorian in spirit. This judgment is clear in Constantinople II (A.D. 553) and its twelfth sentence or anathema against Theodore's teaching "that the Word of God is one person, but that another person is Christ . . . as a mere man was baptized . . . and obtained by this baptism the grace of the Holy Spirit, and became worthy of Sonship. . . ." *The Capitula of the Council*, in *NPNF*<sup>2</sup>, vol. 14, 315; we find the same view in Pope Vigilius's letter in confirmation of Constantinople II, in which he condemns Theodore for teaching ". . . that it was a mere man who was baptized . . . and that he received through his baptism the grace of the Holy Spirit and merited his adoption. . . ." *The Decretal Epistle of Pope Vigilius in Confirmation of the Fifth Ecumenical Council*, in *ibid.*, 322. The views above show that the real problem behind the idea of an adoption into sonship lies above all in the disjunction in the person of Jesus Christ that it seems to require as its condition or that it can in effect promote.

am interested in only three early heterodox views of Jesus' reception of the Spirit at his baptism that called forth some alternative explanations from the orthodox for the first time in the history of dogma. I focus on the orthodox responses as such, leaving the issue of their accurate portrayal of the heterodox positions to other scholars. It is the relatively distinct, articulate, and lengthy answers of the orthodox to the controversies at hand that provide hermeneutical building blocks for the church's later judgment on similar issues.<sup>7</sup>

### 1.1. Anointed As Christ/God in Eternity:

#### St. Justin Martyr's Answer to Trypho the Jew

Justin's *Dialogue with Trypho* is of great significance in the history of dogma for later reflection on Jesus' baptism in the face of threats to his divine preexistence. He gives us a key second-century response to a Jewish question concerning the appropriate manner to reconcile Christian belief in Christ's preexistence with his reception of the Spirit's gifts cited in Isaiah 11:1 ff. Trypho asks "how He [i.e., Christ] can be demonstrated to have been pre-existent, who is filled with the powers of the Holy Ghost . . . as if He were in lack of them?"<sup>8</sup> Justin answers that Christ did not need the anointing for himself, but only for our salvation. Indeed, if Jesus is God from eternity and then also from the first

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<sup>6</sup> Beginning with Alcuin, the judgment of the councils is passed on to the Spanish Elipandus of Toledo and Felix of Urgel, since they had taught that according to his assumed humanity Jesus was the "adoptive" Son of God (especially Elipandus). In his revisionary study of these theologians, Cavadini argues that Alcuin (mis-) interpreted their uniquely Western approach to christology through Eastern categories foreign to the context in which it arose (i.e., the Nestorian-Eutychian polarity). He explains that the Spanish teaching on Jesus' "adoptive" sonship as the firstborn *for others* was necessary to ensure *our* participation in the same by grace. The rationale behind this move was the impossibility of humans to share in the divine sonship of Jesus as the only-begotten of the Father, which belongs to him alone and thus cannot be communicated unto others. In summarizing Elipandus's views, Cavadini writes: "There is never, finally, a point at which the Father (e.g.) is said to have 'adopted' the Son or a human nature or a man, etc. The point is much more subtle, namely, that *by assuming* flesh or a body, etc., the *Word*, the 'Only-begotten' with regard to nature, becomes the 'First-born' in adoption and grace." John C. Cavadini, *The Last Christology of the West: Adoptionism in Spain and Gaul, 785–820* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1993), 33.

<sup>7</sup> In chapter two, I greatly expand on this argument by looking at examples of the partial eclipse of Spirit-christology in times following the theologians discussed in this chapter.

<sup>8</sup> *Dialogue with Trypho* 87, in *ANF*, vol. 1, 243.

moment of birth (as incarnate God), what else could he possibly need for himself (even in his humanity) that he does not already have? For example, Justin speaks of a pretemporal anointing of Christ as God into the offices of priest, king, and prophet. From this angle, divine preexistence and messiahship become intrinsically related realities. Together with his well-known teaching of the cosmic function of Christ's eternal anointing in view of the world's creation, Justin relativizes in some measure the unique significance of God's anointing of Jesus with the Spirit for mission at the Jordan. As a result, Jesus' baptism only reveals *to or for others* the saving knowledge of his prior identity as Christ/God. A partial eclipse of the pneumatological dimension of christology occurs.

Let us look at the development of Justin's arguments more closely. Prior to Trypho's question above, Justin had acknowledged that "some . . . of our race"—perhaps some "Christians" of Judaizing persuasion (Ebionites?)—spoke of Christ as nothing more than a "man of men."<sup>9</sup> Trypho is willing to allow for "this Jesus... born man of men" to achieve dignity and honor as Christ, but only by election "on account of having led a life conformed to the law."<sup>10</sup> Yet such a concession assumed a denial of Justin's witness to the fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah 7:10 ff. in the birth of Christ (= God) from a virgin: "Behold, the virgin shall conceive, and shall bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel" (v. 14b). Since Trypho finds the fulfillment of this passage entirely in Hezekiah's birth from "a young woman," he sees the Christian interpretation of the prophecy as "monstrous" and dismisses the virgin birth of Christ (= God) as Greek mythology.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 48, 219.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 67, 231.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid. Justin explains the prophecy at length in other chapters (esp. 68, 77, 78, and 84).

When Trypho asks for an answer to his seemingly insurmountable question on the way of reconciling Christ's divine preexistence and possession of the Spirit's gifts, he simply assumes—but only for the sake of argument—what Justin defends, namely, that Jesus is the Messiah or Christ and, more specifically, the preexistent God made incarnate by being born of a virgin. But now Trypho takes Justin to task for affirming at the same time that this Christ/God is the “rod from the root of Jesse” upon whom the Spirit of the Lord shall rest.<sup>12</sup> Does not the resting of the Spirit and its powers upon Christ imply a necessity or lack unbecoming his nature as preexistent God? Significantly, Justin had previously cited Psalm 45:6 ff. to support God's (= the Father's) witness to his incarnate God (= Son or Logos) “as deserving to be worshipped, as God and as Christ.”<sup>13</sup> The crucial words of the psalm in the same manuscript read as follows: “Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a scepter of rectitude is the scepter of Thy kingdom. . . . [T]herefore God, even Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows” (vv. 6-7). Justin links the language of anointing to Christ's divine dignity. Thus the incarnate Christ, who is born from or begotten through Mary's womb in history by the Father's will or intention, receives our adoration because of his being “from above” or preincarnational anointing as Christ (= God) from God the Father.<sup>14</sup> For Justin, the Son or Word “who also was with Him [i.e., the Father] and was begotten before the works . . . is called

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 87, 243.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 63, 229; Justin quotes the psalm earlier to show that Christ receives adoration (see 38, 213-14).

<sup>14</sup> Ibid. Quoting Psalm 110:3-4 as a prophecy of the nocturnal virgin birth of the preexistent Christ by the Father's will, Justin writes, “And then, what is said by David, ‘In the splendours of Thy holiness have I begotten Thee from the womb, before the morning star. . . . Thou art a Priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek,’—does this not declare to you that [He was] from of old [or, in the Greek, ‘from above’], and that the God and Father of all things intended Him to be begotten by a human womb?”; see also Justin's similar use of Psalm 72:5, 17: “And David predicted that He would be born from the womb before sun and moon, according to the Father's will, and made Him known, being Christ, as God strong and to be worshipped.” Ibid., 76, 236; for my parenthetical use of the Greek phrase “from above” in *Dialogue 63* (instead of the Latin “from of old”), and for a study of the texts cited above, see Antonio Orbe, *La unción del Verbo*. Analecta Gregoriana, vol. 113 (Rome: Università Gregoriana, 1961), 22-29.

Christ, in reference to His being anointed and God's ordering all things through Him."<sup>15</sup>

Thus Justin argues that the Father anoints the Son in eternity as God with a view towards the creation of the world. What happens in time has its ground in a pretemporal unction.

Later on, and right before Trypho asks his historic question, Justin returns to Psalm 45:7b to point out that "all kings and anointed persons obtained from Him [i.e., Christ] their share in the names of kings and anointed: just as He himself received from the Father the titles King, and Christ, and Priest, and Angel [= Prophet]."<sup>16</sup> Note that Justin here interprets the idea that God anointed Christ "above" his fellows in the sense that Christ's *preincarnational* status as King and Christ (= Anointed One) already set him "above" kings and anointed people of the Old Testament who shared in his unique unction from God. Justin returns to this insight later. Once again, what takes place in time has its ground in a pretemporal anointing of Christ into various offices. In sum, notice that the author has ascribed to Christ divine preexistence and, closely linked with such pretemporal dignity, his unparalleled reception of God's anointing into all titles (e.g., King, Priest, and Angel = Prophet or Apostle). He has also ascribed to Christ the subsequent dispensing of his anointing from God to others such as kings, priests, and prophets in the Old Testament church. It is crucial to remember once again that, for Justin, all these types are not simply fulfilled later in the incarnate Christ (although this is true), but already derive before time from the preexistent Christ due to his eternal anointing as God (= Messiah) by God the Father into all of them.<sup>17</sup>

To return to Trypho's question: If Christ fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah 11:1 ff., he must be the messianic receiver and bearer of the Spirit of God in history, namely, the one

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<sup>15</sup> *Second Apology* 6, in *ANF*, vol. 1, 190; on the cosmic anointing, see Orbe, *Unción*, 61-72.

<sup>16</sup> *Dialogue* 86, 242; "Angel" is synonymous with prophet and apostle. See *ibid.*, 75, 236.

<sup>17</sup> Orbe, *Unción*, 61.



on whom the Spirit will rest and who will be filled with the Spirit's powers. But then Christ cannot be God, for the descent of the Spirit upon him—that which can make him the Christ by election—belongs only to the world of humanity. Receiving and bearing the Spirit of God may make a great Messiah—a great “man born of men”—but is still unbecoming the nature of God. So goes Trypho's implicit argument in his question to Justin, leaving the philosopher with the task of reconciling his belief in Christ's divine dignity with his identity as receiver and bearer of the Spirit of God in history.

Justin held that the “powers of the Spirit” do not supply a need in Christ. To say that they do would suggest that Christ as preexistent God lacked something. Instead, our author affirms that these powers “find their accomplishment in Him [i.e., Christ]” as the fulfillment of all the Old Testament prophets who only received the Spirit's powers in piecemeal fashion.<sup>18</sup> After John the Baptist, the last Old Testament and Jewish prophet, the Spirit's prophetic gifts now come to rest in Christ “so that there would be no more prophets in your nation.”<sup>19</sup> Yet Christ is also the one in whom the prophetic Spirit rested or “ceased” as his definitive bearer, so that—under the new dispensation—he may be the giver of the Spirit's gifts to the worthy after his ascension (Ps. 68:18 and Joel 2:28-29).<sup>20</sup> Even though Justin does not explicitly mention Psalm 45:7b at this point in the argument, he clearly extends his previous thoughts on God's eternal anointing of Christ “above” his fellows to the title of prophet and the gifts of prophecy. These title and gifts find their historical fulfillment in the incarnate Christ from whom Christians in turn receive the

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<sup>18</sup> *Dialogue* 87, 243.

<sup>19</sup> Justin speaks of the Baptist as “a prophet among your nation; after whom no other prophet appeared among you.” *Ibid.*, 49, 218; Justin also writes, “the powers enumerated by Isaiah would not come upon Him [i.e., Christ], not because He needed power, but because these would not continue after Him.” *Ibid.*, 88, 243.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.* 87, 243; cf. Eph. 4:8 and Acts 2:17-18.

“prophetical gifts” that Jews once possessed.<sup>21</sup> In short, Christ receives and bears the Spirit of God (with all its powers) who once rested among the anointed ones of the Old Testament. Consequently, Christ has the Spirit in order to impart in the new messianic era inaugurated by him “the grace of His Spirit’s power . . . to those who believe in Him, according as He deems each man worthy thereof.”<sup>22</sup>

However, if the incarnate Christ/God imparts his Spirit and accompanying gifts after his ascension, then, when does he receive the fullness of the Spirit of God, along with its powers? Not at the Jordan, “for even at His birth He was in possession of His power,” as the worship of the Christ/God child by the Magi illustrates (see Mic. 5:2 and Mt. 2:11).<sup>23</sup> Only after Justin has placed the full reception of Christ’s “power” at the moment of his virgin birth (because of his preincarnational anointing as God) does the apologist speak of the Holy Spirit’s descent upon him “when He came out of the water.”<sup>24</sup> Since Christ has the fullness of power already from birth (as the Magi’s worship of the Christ child proves), his possession of the Spirit and its powers at the Jordan seems superfluous.

In such a framework, Christ did not need baptism or the Spirit’s anointing for himself (or his own preexistent person) but for the sake of humanity’s sin inherited from Adam. So the Spirit’s descent upon this otherwise humble son of Joseph serves as “proof” to others that he is the Messiah (= God).<sup>25</sup> When Christ went into the Jordan “a fire was

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<sup>21</sup> Justin tells Trypho, “[the gifts] formerly among your nation have been transferred to us.” Ibid., 82, 240; he also writes, “Now, it is possible to see amongst us women and men who possess gifts of the Spirit of God.” Ibid., 88, 243.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 87, 243.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 88, 243. Thus the Magi’s worship of the child proves the divinity of the child; Justin had made an earlier reference to the Magi in order to buttress his argument in favor of a fulfillment of Isaiah 7:10 ff. in the virgin birth of Christ, the preexistent God. Ibid. 78, 237-38.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 88, 243.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 88, 243-44; similarly, Justin argues that it was not Jesus’ riding into Jerusalem on a donkey (see Zech. 9:9) “that empowered Him to be Christ, but it furnished men with a proof that He is the Christ” (243; cf. 53, 222).

kindled in the Jordan”; when he came out of the river, “the Holy Ghost lighted on Him like a dove.”<sup>26</sup> Above all, such expressions underscore the epiphanic or revelatory character of the event for the sake of others.

Is the descent of the Spirit of God upon Christ only a sign or epiphany *for others* or is it in some way constitutive for Christ *himself*? At first, when Justin refers to the Jordan event as a new generation or birth of Christ for the sake of humans (by appropriating the language of Ps. 2:7 or the variant reading of Lk. 3:22b), he seems to have in mind only that “time when they [i.e., humans] would become acquainted with him.”<sup>27</sup> As Kilian McDonnell notes, in this case “to be known is to be born.”<sup>28</sup> Jesus’ baptism confirms for others what he has always been, namely, the Christ (and thus God, for the Magi worship him from birth), but does not appear to affect Christ himself. Should we qualify this judgment? Unlike McDonnell, Antonio Orbe argues that the anointing of Jesus at Jordan is not just a “sign” for others of a prior reality, but is actually “real” in a salvific sense because at that time (and not before) Christ receives the Spirit “in his humanity” for the sake of the church.<sup>29</sup> Since Christ is already anointed as God before time, he does not need to receive the Spirit for himself once again as God. However, as human he does receive the Spirit for others, so that the church can share in his anointing and receive the Spirit of adoption. Thus far Orbe. A few reflections are in order.

Orbe correctly notes that Justin does not conceive of the incarnation as the preexistent Logos’s anointing of his assumed humanity with his own divinity (as some later church

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 88, 243; cf. Justin’s reference to the manifestation or epiphany of Christ in the Old Testament as “the glory of fire” in the burning bush. Ibid., 128, 264.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 88, 244.

<sup>28</sup> “When he is recognized by us as the Son of God, at that moment he . . . is born Son of God for us, for the Church. To be known is to be born.” Kilian McDonnell, *The Baptism of Jesus at the Jordan: The Trinitarian and Cosmic Order of Salvation* (Collegetown, Minn.: The Liturgical Press, 1996), 92-93 (cf. 111-13).

<sup>29</sup> Orbe, *Unción*, 40-43, 634-36.

fathers do).<sup>30</sup> In other words, he does not use anointing as a metaphor for the work of the Logos in the incarnation or hypostatic union. However, do Justin's apologies show any concern for speaking of an anointing of Jesus by God the Father with or in the Spirit from birth? Perhaps the most one could say, as McDonnell argues, is that Justin's reference to Christ's possession of his "power" from birth points to the fact that "he possessed the Spirit and the gifts of the Spirit since his birth."<sup>31</sup> If this is the case, then, the anointing at the Jordan becomes relativized by the emphasis on Jesus' prior possession of the Spirit from the first moment of his human existence. However, some elements in Justin's theology make a final decision on McDonnell's judgment more elusive. Above all, for Justin, God's anointing of the Son is an eternal reality. From this perspective, Justin's reference to the child's possession of all his "power" from birth appears to point more to the incarnation as an epiphany of his preincarnational anointing and dignity as preexistent Christ/God (as revealed *to and for others* in the Magi's act of worship) than to a total reception and bearing of the Spirit and its gifts *in his humanity* from birth. Moreover, in an allusion to Luke 1:35, Justin interprets the Holy Spirit and the "power" of God as a reference to the preexistent Word who coming upon and overshadowing Mary "caused her to conceive, not by intercourse, but by power."<sup>32</sup> This means that the "power" that Jesus has from birth does not appear to be the Holy Spirit and its gifts as much as the divinity and/or divine attributes of the Logos. Not surprisingly, we may recall that Justin argues for the virgin birth to protect Christ's divine preexistence and not really to make a point about the Holy Spirit's role in his humanity from the moment of the incarnation.

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 635; see my discussion of Athanasius in 1.3 and other theologians in 2.1.2.

<sup>31</sup> See McDonnell, *Baptism of Jesus*, 24.

<sup>32</sup> *First Apology* 33, in *ANF*, vol. 1, 174.

The crucial questions are: Did Justin feel that Christ's preexistence could only be safeguarded by making the Spirit's descent upon him at the Jordan *revelatory* for others (McDonnell)? Or is such a descent *constitutive* for Christ in his own humanity (Orbe)? Or both? On the one hand, Justin speaks of the Jordan event as "proof" of Jesus' identity as the Christ. And for Justin, the title "Christ" immediately points to his anointing as preexistent God before time in view of the world's creation. Furthermore, as we have seen, Justin also states that the baptism points to Jesus' generation at the river for us insofar as *we* "become acquainted with Him."<sup>33</sup> Here the language does not really make clear that *Christ* himself is reborn "in his humanity" (as Orbe says) for us or as head of the church in the Jordan, although the idea of his dispensing of the Spirit's gifts to those who believe in him after his ascension seems to presuppose this prior reception and bearing of the Spirit. A difficulty, however, arises if we consider that Christ as God already has the anointing (= the Spirit?) of the Father from eternity. Strictly speaking, one could conclude that, upon his ascension, Christ gave the Spirit to the church acting as preexistent God, but not necessarily as glorified man. Then his baptism becomes only a sign to us that Jesus is the Christ/God without showing that he actually received the Spirit and its gifts for himself in his humanity. If this is the case, then, even if we disagree with McDonnell on whether Justin taught or not Jesus' possession of the Spirit from birth, we can still agree with his judgment that Jesus' birth at the Jordan does not say much about his own identity as Messiah than about the church's knowledge of him as God.

On the other hand, even if the title Christ (and thus the idea of messiahship) has its roots in an eternal reality (anointing), we must also admit that this preincarnational unction always occurs in view of the Father's future ordering (anointing) of the world

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<sup>33</sup> See p. 16 above.

through the creative Word.<sup>34</sup> As Orbe suggests, then, the anointing of Jesus at the Jordan may also be seen as analogous in the order of grace to the cosmic anointing of the Word in the order of nature.<sup>35</sup> In other words, the cosmic anointing and the church's anointing find their eternal ground in God's pretemporal anointing of his Son as preexistent Christ and God. Within this framework, however, greater care must be taken not to minimize the unique place that Scripture gives to the anointing of Jesus at the Jordan. As long as we keep this important point in mind, we must not dismiss that Justin actually has a rich and nuanced theology of the anointing that can encompass to various degrees Christ's identity as preexistent God, creative Word, and receiver, bearer, and giver of the Spirit to others in the economy of salvation that precedes and follows the incarnation event. Still the transposition of Jesus' messianic dignity and the idea of anointing to the eternal realm of preexistence clearly relativizes the unique significance of the anointing at the Jordan for Jesus' own humanity—although less so for our sake. To this extent, Justin's theology of anointing favors a partial eclipse of the pneumatological dimensions of christology.

## **1.2. The Priority of the Incarnation over the Anointing:**

### **St. Irenaeus's Response to Cerinthus and Other Gnostics**

In this section, we look into Irenaeus's response to a common teaching among various Gnostic groups concerning the Holy Spirit's descent upon Jesus at the Jordan.<sup>36</sup> Irenaeus suggests that, in their similar interpretations of the Jordan event, Gnostics shared a denial of the union of Jesus' human (= fleshly) reality and the divine Word both prior to Jesus'

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<sup>34</sup> This is the sense of Justin's *Second Apology* 6, 190; see Orbe, *Unción*, 63-66.

<sup>35</sup> Orbe, *Unción*, 71-72.

<sup>36</sup> In this section I am leaving aside Irenaeus's teaching on the eternal anointing of the Son with a view towards the creation of the cosmos, a doctrine which he basically shares with Justin Martyr, in order to focus on his reaction to the Gnostic interpretation of the Jordan event. For a discussion of the eternal/cosmic anointing in Irenaeus, see Orbe, *Unción*, 521-27, and McDonnell, *Baptism of Jesus*, 56-59.

baptism and also right before and during his passion and death. In his response to the Gnostics, and in contrast to Justin's answer to Trypho, Irenaeus gives full weight to the Father's sending of the Spirit (= unction) upon the incarnate Word both for himself and his salvific mission among us. At the Jordan river, the anointing one (= Father) sends his unction (= Spirit) upon the incarnate Word and thus constitutes him as anointed one (= Christ). Dwelling in the flesh of Christ (= anointed one), the Spirit becomes accustomed to dwell in the human race. Irenaeus's move is predicated upon a logical and temporal priority of the union of Word and flesh (incarnation) over the descent of the Spirit upon him at the Jordan (anointing). Unlike Irenaeus, however, later fathers will focus almost exclusively on the incarnation as such (the nature of the union itself) to the detriment of the subsequent mysteries of Jesus' life (especially his anointing, death, resurrection). From this angle, Irenaeus's response to the Gnostics gives us significant theological background for understanding concerns in later developments leading to the eclipse of Spirit-christology, as well as an early attempt to bring into some harmony the concerns of a Logos-oriented christology (i.e., preexistence and incarnation) with those of a Spirit-oriented one (e.g., conception and birth, anointing or baptism).

A few reasons led to the Gnostic (especially Valentinian) position. To grasp such reasons, we need to take a brief look at Irenaeus's description of their cosmological, anthropological, christological, and soteriological assumptions. Gnostics present us with a cosmology that begins "from above" in the Pleroma, a heavenly-like realm of entities called eons separated from one another by degrees of emanation from the perfect and preexistent eon known as Propator (= First-Father).<sup>37</sup> All "material substance" (i.e., the created world) is a defect resulting from the primordial passion of an eon called Sophia,

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<sup>37</sup> *Against Heresies* 1.1.1-2, in *ANF*, vol. 1, 316-17.

who desired to have the impossible knowledge (gnosis) of the Father's nature ahead of the other eons preceding her in the scale of gradation.<sup>38</sup> To prevent a similar passion, the supreme Father wills to produce, through Monogenes (= Only-Begotten), Christ and the Holy Spirit. They in turn make the rest of the eons aware respectively of their inability to know the Father and of their common equality.<sup>39</sup> As a cosmic act of thanksgiving to the Father for strengthening the Pleroma, all eons then collaborate with one another to produce Jesus (= Savior, Christ, and Logos).<sup>40</sup> But who is this Gnostic Savior and whom exactly does he save?

The representative Savior basically serves as a mediator between the realm of the eons (Pleroma) that collectively formed him and especially the "spiritual substance" in the created world that derives from Achamoth, the product of Sophia's passion.<sup>41</sup> I say "especially" because this Savior also mediates between the Pleroma and the "animal" (in contrast to spiritual) substances created in turn by the Demiurge, Achamoth's offspring and the equivalent of God the Father and the Creator of the world for Christians.<sup>42</sup> In Gnostic anthropology, a human (created) being receives "his animal soul from the Demiurge, his body from the earth, his fleshly part from matter, and his spiritual man from the mother Achamoth."<sup>43</sup> Since the body and the flesh (= matter) cannot receive incorruption, redemption touches the animal substance to some imperfect degree and the spiritual one to the fullest measure of illumination. Not surprisingly, Gnostics reject the

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 1.2.1-3, 317-18.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 1.2.5-6, 318.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 1.2.6, 318.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 1.4.1, 5, 320, 322. Earlier on, the author affirms that "she [i.e., Sophia] herself certainly remained within the Pleroma; but her enthymesis, with its passion . . . was expelled from that circle. This enthymesis was no doubt, a spiritual substance, possessing some of the natural tendencies of an Eon. . . ." Ibid., 1.2.4, 318.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 1.5.1-2, 5, 322; for Irenaeus's biblical refutation of the cosmological drama supporting the identity between God the Creator and the Gnostic Demiurge, see 1.12.1, 347, and also his preface to bk. 2, 359.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 1.5.6, 323.



notion that their Savior assumed a true humanity in the material sense, for this notion undermined their principle that “matter is incapable of salvation.”<sup>44</sup> Herein lies the docetic principle in their christology.

In terms of soteriological implications, church members who live only by faith are seen as “animal” humans inferior to “the spiritual and perfect” (i.e., the true “Christian” Gnostics) who alone receive salvation in the fullest sense through “perfect knowledge” (gnosis) of the Father.<sup>45</sup> Given their anthropological and soteriological presuppositions, Gnostic christology can speak of a cosmic Savior who assumes unto himself animal and spiritual substances in order to redeem, respectively, animal and spiritual human beings (churches)—though only the latter will eventually enter the Pleroma, together with their spiritual mother Achamoth.<sup>46</sup> With these tenets in mind, we can now approach some common Gnostic understandings of what took place at the Jordan. Let us begin with Irenaeus’s description of Cerinthus’s position:

He represented Jesus as having not been born of a virgin, but as being the son of Joseph and Mary according to the ordinary course of human generation, while he nevertheless was more righteous, prudent, and wise than other men. Moreover, after his baptism, Christ descended upon him in the form of a dove from the Supreme Ruler, and that then he proclaimed the unknown Father, and performed miracles. But at last Christ departed from Jesus, and that then Jesus suffered and

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid., 1.6.1, 324.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 1.6.2, 4, 324-25.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 1.6.1, 324; 1.7.1, 235; on the other hand, the “animal” humans will enter an intermediate sphere together with the Demiurge and all matter will be destroyed. See *ibid.*, 1.6.4, 1.7.1, 325.

rose again, while Christ remained impassible, inasmuch as he was a spiritual being.<sup>47</sup>

For Cerinthus, Jesus and Christ are two different beings. “Christ” refers to the Savior of whom I have already spoken, the one who mediates between the Pleroma and the created world.<sup>48</sup> But who is Jesus? Cerinthus seems to hold a more Ebionite view on this point: Jesus is a man born of Joseph and Mary in an ordinary way (i.e., not through a virgin birth as some Gnostics taught), and perhaps also one who perseveres in the observance of the law.<sup>49</sup> In Gnostic theology, this Jesus may be seen as a product (even a son) “of an animal nature” originating from the Demiurge, but also as one who possesses the spiritual substance from Achamoth.<sup>50</sup> In Cerinthus’s system, the Savior (= Christ) “from above” touches the man Jesus in both his animal and spiritual components by descending upon him in the form of a dove at the Jordan.<sup>51</sup> However, since the spiritual Savior or Christ cannot suffer, he must leave the animal substance of Jesus (along with his body and flesh) prior to the passion. There is a special type of union between Christ and Jesus at the Jordan, although not before the event or afterwards from the moment of his passion and death.

Can we gather from the Gnostic view of the Jordan event the significance of Jesus’ anointing for the Gnostic church? They spoke of the spiritual Christ who descended upon the spiritual Jesus as the “power” or “sweet odour” above all things in which the spiritual church in turn participates through her baptism (along with her reception of balsam or

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 1.26.1, 352.

<sup>48</sup> See p. 21 above; for some Gnostics, Christ, Savior, and Jesus are used interchangeably in this context.

<sup>49</sup> *Against Heresies* 1.26.2, 352.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 1.7.2, 325; in this context, Jesus may also be called Christ or Lord.

<sup>51</sup> Valentinian Gnostics, for example, can also distinguish between the baptism in water for the animal Jesus and the baptism in the Spirit for the spiritual Jesus. See Antonio Orbe, *Introducción a la teología de los siglos II y III*, tomo 2. *Analecta Gregoriana*, vol. 248 (Rome: Università Gregoriana, 1987), 655.

unguent as a type of such sweet odour) for regeneration into the perfect gnosis of the Father.<sup>52</sup> We may say that the Gnostic rite of baptism unto perfect illumination allows for the spiritual church's sharing in the anointing (= spiritual Christ) first received by the spiritual man Jesus at the Jordan. Ecclesiology finds its ground in christology.

Among the orthodox, Justin had already spoken of Jesus' anointing at the Jordan as the condition for the church's sharing in the knowledge of the Father's Son, but for the Martyr this participation took place through Christian baptism from the remission of sins inherited from Adam.<sup>53</sup> Irenaeus describes the ecclesiological import of Isaiah 61:1 in a similar way: "Therefore did the Spirit of God descend upon Him . . . so that we, receiving from the abundance of His unction, might be saved."<sup>54</sup> By contrast, in the Gnostic view of redemption, the crucial difference is that only the "animal" church receives the lesser baptism "for the remission of sins" instituted by the animal man Jesus.<sup>55</sup> Yet among both heterodox and orthodox theologians, the Jordan event links christology and ecclesiology.

The Ophites came closer than Cerinthus to proposing a kind of Spirit-christology in which the spiritual Christ (seen as the masculine principle) in conjunction with Sophia (also known as the Holy Spirit and seen as the feminine principle) descended upon and adopted the man Jesus at the Jordan, making him "Jesus Christ."<sup>56</sup> For the Ophites, the union Christ/Sophia produced "Jesus Christ," who as the receptacle of Sophia mediates unto her spiritual children (i.e., the church of the perfect) the Father's gnosis that only

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<sup>52</sup> *Against Heresies* 1.21.2-3, 345-46.

<sup>53</sup> See *Dialogue* 88, 243-44, and 14, 201.

<sup>54</sup> *Against Heresies* 3.9.3, 423.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.21.2, 345.

<sup>56</sup> The reader should note, however, that the Ophites's assertion that Jesus "was begotten of the Virgin through the agency of God" distinguishes them on this point from Cerinthus's Ebionite opinion. *Ibid.*, 1.30.12, 356.

Jesus can transmit to them because of his communion with Christ.<sup>57</sup> Once again, the spiritual church shares in Jesus' unique anointing with the Holy Spirit (= Sophia) through baptism into the knowledge of the Father first received by Jesus through communion with the spiritual Christ. Before the cross, the conjunction Christ/Sophia departs from Jesus, but Christ still puts in him "a certain energy . . . which raised him up again in the body, which they call both animal and spiritual" (though not in the actual flesh).<sup>58</sup> As in Cerinthus's belief, the union Christ/Jesus occurs preeminently at the baptism.

What, then, is Irenaeus's response to the Gnostic view of Jesus' anointing at the Jordan? In what way does his reaction serve as a building block for later orthodox reflection on a pneumatological christology? For the Gnostics, the impassibility of the representative Savior or Christ does not allow for a real and permanent union between his spiritual element (= Christ) from the Pleroma and a bodily or fleshly substance from the created world. Central to the problem of a lasting spiritual-material union of sorts in "Jesus Christ" is their docetism: Jesus is not a man in the flesh (in the material sense). Neither from birth nor during his passion can Jesus' flesh and body ever be united to an impassible spiritual element from above. The same observation applies to the union "Jesus Christ" at the Jordan, because Jesus does not truly possess the "material" human substance. Yet, as I have shown, Gnostics can also posit a union of an animal and a spiritual Christ with respective animal and spiritual human substances, both of which Jesus possesses. It is now time to take a closer look into the nature of the Gnostic idea of such a union in the light of Irenaeus's own reaction to it and his own view of the union.

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<sup>57</sup> On this point, I am indebted to Orbe's interpretation of Irenaeus's *Against Heresies* 1.20.11-12, in "El Espíritu Santo en el bautismo de Jesús (en torno a san Ireneo)," *Gregorianum* 76, no. 4 (1995): 681-83.

<sup>58</sup> *Against Heresies* 1.30.13, 357.

A crucial question is: Do the Gnostics posit anything more than an adoptive type of union in “Jesus Christ” at the baptism? In his discussion on the nature of the union Christ/Jesus at the Jordan according to some Ebionites, Orbe suggests that the descent of the Holy Spirit (= superior Christ)—a seed from God, but not God as such—in Jesus is not merely an “adoptive” union but rather a “substantial” one.<sup>59</sup> Despite this kind of “crasis” in which two substances come together without losing their distinctiveness, Orbe points out that the greater Ebionite emphasis fell on the “qualitative” union of the Spirit and the mere man Jesus.<sup>60</sup> In this latter sense, the union Spirit/Jesus surely differs from the union between the Spirit and the Old Testament prophets, but only “quantitatively,” by degree (intensity), or “in the measure of the divine filiation.”<sup>61</sup>

In the case of the Valentinian and Ophite Gnostics, Orbe suggests that their system could allow for a form of “hidden” and “inoperative” union between the superior or cosmic Savior and Jesus from birth that only becomes “active” and “dynamic” in Jesus (as the firstfruits of the animal and spiritual churches) from Jordan until his passion.<sup>62</sup> By emphasizing the latter type of union over the former, the “natural” over the “personal” one—these are Orbe’s terms—the Gnostics clearly showed a stronger interest in the baptism of Jesus than in his virgin birth for the sake of ecclesiology. The descent of the Christ from above upon the spiritual Jesus at the Jordan is the condition for the spiritual church’s attainment of the Father’s gnosis through him.

Irenaeus agrees that at the Jordan the Word of God was made “Jesus Christ,” but only in the sense that the *incarnate* Word (already from birth) was at that time (and not before)

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<sup>59</sup> Orbe, *Introducción*, 647; this patristic scholar had already looked at this in *Unción*, 302-23.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 651-52.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 652; Orbe already discussed this point in *Unción*, 302-23.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 655-61, and especially Orbe’s comments in n. 15 (659).

anointed as man (i.e., in his humanity) for a mission on our behalf. First, let us take the issue of the union. Irenaeus writes, “For Christ did not at that time descend upon Jesus, neither was Christ one and Jesus another: but the Word of God . . . who did also take upon Him flesh, and was anointed by the Spirit from the Father . . . was made Jesus Christ.”<sup>63</sup> By making the incarnation of the Word the logical condition for his anointing as man by the Spirit of God (a distinct agent in his own right), Irenaeus prevents a separation of the Word and Jesus into two distinct beings. He writes, “For inasmuch as the Word of God was man . . . in this respect did the Spirit of God rest upon Him, and anoint Him to preach the Gospel to the lowly.”<sup>64</sup> Therefore, the union of the Word and the flesh taken upon himself from birth (not after), even if defined as a “crasis” (i.e., something like a mixture without confusion of substances) in such an early stage of the history of dogma, still constitutes an impossible union for the Gnostics due to their low view of matter in general and their concomitant docetism in particular.<sup>65</sup>

Moreover, the logical priority of the incarnation of the Word over his anointing in the flesh does not allow for a separation between Jesus and Christ either. For Irenaeus, the title Christ does not point to a superior being above Jesus, but rather to the incarnate Word insofar as he is anointed as man by the Spirit of God for us. Thus the title points to the soteriological import of Jesus’ own anointing as declared in Isaiah 61:1 ff. (cf. Lk. 4:18 ff.): “For in the name of Christ is implied, He that anoints, He that is anointed, and the unction itself with which He is anointed. And it is the Father who anoints, but the Son who is anointed by the Spirit, who is the unction.”<sup>66</sup> Since the Gnostics often

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<sup>63</sup> *Against Heresies* 3.9.3, 423; cf. 3.16.1-2, 440-41.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>65</sup> On the use of “crasis,” Orbe cites Irenaeus’s *Epideixis*, 41, in *Unción*, 304 (esp. his comments in n. 7).

<sup>66</sup> *Against Heresies* 3.18.3, 446.

identified the dove (= Spirit) with the cosmic Christ or Savior from above, Irenaeus's use of the title Christ gives its proper due to the biblical role of the Holy Spirit (seen as a distinct agent) in Jesus' life and mission.<sup>67</sup> Drawing from Isaiah 11:1 ff. and 61:1 ff., Irenaeus notes that the Spirit descends upon Jesus to anoint him for his messianic mission to preach the Gospel, heal the sick, and forgive sins.<sup>68</sup> Upon completion of his mission, the Lord then gives the Spirit whom he received at the Jordan to the church through baptism.<sup>69</sup>

The Lord's identity as Spirit-giver implies that the Spirit of God actually descended upon and filled the incarnate Son of God at the Jordan, thereby "becoming accustomed in fellowship with Him to dwell in the human race, to rest with human beings, and to dwell in the workmanship of God, working the will of the Father in them, and renewing them from their old habits into the newness of Christ."<sup>70</sup> Although Irenaeus shares with Justin the idea of the eternal anointing of the Word as Christ in view of the world's creation, Irenaeus's language clearly stresses the constitutive role of the Holy Spirit in making the incarnate Word "Jesus Christ" at the Jordan in a way that Justin's does not. The cosmic anointing does not relativize the historical one. Having received the Spirit "as a gift from His Father," the Lord then does "confer it upon those who are partakers of Himself, sending the Holy Spirit upon all the earth."<sup>71</sup>

Irenaeus's theology of recapitulation requires the logical priority of the incarnation over the anointing. The Son of God becomes a human being (for Irenaeus, the Son of

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<sup>67</sup> "These men do, in fact, set the Spirit aside altogether; they understand that Christ was one and Jesus another; and they teach that there was not one Christ but many." Ibid., 3.17.4, 445.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., 3.9.3, 423.

<sup>69</sup> Irenaeus cites Matthew 28:19 and makes an allusion to Acts 2:17 (cf. Joel 2:28). Ibid., 3.17.1, 444.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., 3.17.2, 445.

man) so that he can recapitulate in his own humanity the image and likeness of God that humans lost in Adam: “God recapitulated in Himself the ancient formation of man, that He might kill sin, deprive death of its power, and vivify man.”<sup>72</sup> At times, Irenaeus uses the language of incarnation as an analogy to speak of the church’s sharing in God through the Word made flesh: “[T]he Word of God . . . dwelt in man, and became Son of man, that He might accustom man to receive God, and God to dwell in man, according to the good pleasure of the Father.”<sup>73</sup> If the Word accustoms human beings to receive God by becoming a human being himself (incarnation), does not this move relativize to some extent the idea that human beings can only share in God through the gracious indwelling of the Spirit who descended upon the incarnate Word incarnate at the Jordan (anointing)? Not necessarily.

Irenaeus understands that the church’s Spirit-led participation by the Father’s pleasure in the divine life happens through the church’s present-day reenactment of the incarnate Word’s *anointing* by the Father with the Spirit. Thus the church does not participate in the divine life through a reenactment of the divine Word’s *incarnation* as such, for that event constitutes an unrepeatable and non-transferable dimension of his identity. For Irenaeus, human reception of God and God’s indwelling in humans can only take place by the church’s sharing in the Spirit (unction) who first anointed Christ at the Jordan. For only the descent of the Spirit on the Word made flesh touches his true humanity in a way that allows for the church of all times to participate or share in his anointing or unction through Christian baptism, a partaking that allows for her regeneration into the image and likeness of God and thus into incorruptibility.

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<sup>72</sup> Ibid., 3.18.7, 448; cf. 3.18.1, 446.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., 3.20.2, 450.



In subsequent years, many orthodox theologians would almost completely focus on the nature of the union of God and flesh in Christ from birth and pay little or no attention to the Spirit's descent upon Jesus at the Jordan as a defining moment for himself and his mission for us. Others will rightly point to the import of the event for the church as an anticipation or example of her Christian baptism, but once again, at the expense of its significance for Jesus himself. In his response to the Gnostics, Irenaeus provides some of the most foundational arguments early on in the history of dogma for placing the union at the moment of the incarnation instead of at the Jordan. Our author's significance also lies in the fact that he defended such union (*crasis*), but never at the expense of the anointing. In other words, we may say that Irenaeus still is able to make the union at conception (incarnation) a condition for the anointing at the Jordan without losing sight of the importance of the event for Jesus as "Christ" (= anointed one) and the pneumatological link between christology and ecclesiology. Other church theologians would not be as discerning, making of the genuine stress on the language of incarnation an absolute and exclusive analogy for understanding the mystery of Christ and the church's participation in the same without due consideration to its constitutive pneumatological dimensions.

### **1.3. The Son Sanctifies and Anoints Himself with His Own Spirit at the Incarnation: St. Athanasius in the Struggle against the Arians**

Athanasius's approach to the problem of the anointing is of utmost significance for the history of dogma. Significantly, Athanasius's genuine anti-Arian concern for protecting the consubstantiality of the Son with God the Father and thus the Son's essential (as opposed to adoptive) sonship ends up contributing to the partial eclipse of the pneumatic dimensions of christology. By making the Son the preeminent *giver* of the Spirit *as God*

to others, Athanasius gives little weight to the Son's identity as *receiver* of the Spirit from God the Father *as man* at the Jordan. Above all, the emphasis falls on the ecclesiological import of Jesus' anointing *for us*. This is in and of itself a fine soteriological move, but one unfortunately made at the expense of the significance of the event *for the incarnate Son himself*. Second, and closely related to the views above, Athanasius makes the Son (in contrast to the Father) the preeminent *subject* of the anointing. As God, the Son of God is the preeminent giver of the Spirit, for in the eternal order of processions the Spirit logically proceeds from the Son who is one in essence with God the Father. What this ultimately means for our theologian is that the Son as such anoints or sanctifies *himself* with his own Spirit. But not exactly at the Jordan, for the Son already does this at the time of incarnation. Athanasius can even refer to the incarnation as a "chrism" (unction, anointing) in which the Son sanctifies his own humanity with his own divinity. At that time, the Son also gives to his humanity his own Spirit. One notices that there is no distinction between sanctification and anointing and, therefore, the Father's sending of the Spirit in and upon the incarnate Son at the Jordan becomes only a revelatory sign of the Son's prior giving either of his divinity or of his Spirit to his humanity from birth.

Let us now look at Athanasius's arguments more closely. In the aftermath of Nicea (A.D. 325), Athanasius arises as a staunch defender of the council's definition of faith. In particular, he upholds the fathers' use of the term *homoousios* (of the same essence or substance) to express the divine equality of the Son with the Father in an ontological sense as a reaction to Arian views of the same relation in more moral, adoptive, or subordinationist terms. Reflecting on the reason for the council's *homoousios* language, Athanasius notes that the Arian party accepted the teaching that the Son is "from God,"

but only in the same way that human beings and all created things have their beginning from God.<sup>74</sup> Certainly, Arians gave the Son a higher dignity than all children of God adopted by grace, but this claim failed to put him above the level of creatures who owe their origin and existence to God. At worst, the Son is only a man; at best, a deified man.

Athanasius never disputes that “the Son was created too, but this took place when he became man.”<sup>75</sup> The Son’s incarnation can never exhaust his own self-existing (divine) nature, for he can be considered as preexistent God apart from such an unrepeatable act of grace. Athanasius often speaks of “the Word, considered as the Word” to separate the Son’s unparalleled dignity as God from his becoming man for us. Thus the creedal term *homoousios* does not deny that the Son is a creature (as incarnate Son), but it strongly rejects the adoptionist principle that Arius’s teaching inevitably leads to, namely, that the Son is *only* a creature (although a greater one than the rest of us). In regard to their common nature as God, there can be no temporal distinction (or partition) between the Father and the Son who is begotten from him.<sup>76</sup> To use creedal language, the Son is “begotten, not made.” If there were a temporal division between the Son and the Father in regard to their undivided essence, then the Son would have to be said to have a beginning from the Father (even as other less virtuous creatures do) and this would imply at once his ontological subordination to God. In short, Athanasius strongly defends the Nicene teaching on the substantial (in contrast to adoptive) sonship of Jesus Christ in relation to God the Father. The distinction between both types of sonship ends up being a hermeneutical principle for defending *a posteriori* the Nicene teaching on Jesus Christ in

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<sup>74</sup> *Defence of the Nicene Definition* 5.19, in *NPNF*<sup>2</sup>, vol. 4, 162.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.14, 158.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.11, 157.

disputes with Arian readings of biblical texts. Passages on the anointing of Jesus serve as a key example.

Athanasius sees Psalm 45:7-8 neither as an eternal nor as a cosmic anointing, but as a reference to the anointing of the Word as man with the Spirit at Jordan. Let us review the psalm:

“Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity, *therefore* God, even Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows” (italics mine).<sup>77</sup>

Arians put a lot of weight on the word “therefore” (or “wherefore”) in their interpretation of biblical passages referring to Christ’s anointing and exaltation. They argued that such conjunction signified that the Son “received a reward . . . and would not have had it, unless He had needed it, and had His work to shew for it, then having gained it from virtue and promotion.”<sup>78</sup> Arians applied this argument by referring primarily to a text on Christ’s exaltation (Phil. 2:9-10): “*Wherefore* God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a Name which is above every name. . . .” (italics mine).<sup>79</sup> First, they argued, if the Son had received anything from God (i.e., exaltation, anointing), then he must have “acted from purpose” to obtain it.<sup>80</sup> However, to do so implies a need on the part of the Son to have (or be) what he does not already have (or is)—a creaturely quality unbecoming the nature of God.<sup>81</sup> Therefore, Arians argued, God exalted (and by implication, anointed) his Son as a “reward of His purpose” or “the prize of works done,”

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<sup>77</sup> *First Discourse* 11.37, in *NPNF*<sup>2</sup>, vol. 4, 328; I have used the version of the psalm cited in 12.46, 333.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>81</sup> In other words, the Arian argument implies that Son “is altogether of an alterable nature.” *Ibid.*

thereby denying his identity as Son by nature and making him a Son by grace as those “men who have received the Spirit by participation.”<sup>82</sup> Does the Son then share in the Spirit of God in any way?

For Athanasius, the Son is “the Giver of grace,” not the receiver of grace.<sup>83</sup> The basic idea behind this anti-Arian contention is that *receiving* God’s grace (even as a human) amounts to an adoptive (in contrast to an essential) view of Christ’s sonship.<sup>84</sup> If the Son is essentially Son (= God), then, he must always be *giving* grace to others (not receiving it from another). Likewise, the Son is, above all, the giver of the Spirit, not the “partaker” of the Spirit as all other creatures are: “All other things partake of the Spirit, but He, according to you, of what is He partaker? of the Spirit? Nay, rather the Spirit Himself takes from the Son... and it is not reasonable to say that the latter is sanctified by the former.”<sup>85</sup> It is acceptable, however, to affirm that *we* are “sanctified by Him in the Spirit.”<sup>86</sup> In Athanasius’s theology, God becomes man so that man can become God (or deified). Now, the Spirit mediates our participation in the Son who is God, but it does so because the Son *as God* supplies the same Spirit to us.<sup>87</sup> In this argument, little attention is given to the *incarnate* Word’s reception of the Spirit from the Father. Therefore, the main question remains: How does Athanasius understand the anointing of the incarnate Son with the Spirit at the Jordan? Does he receive it in his humanity?

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<sup>82</sup> Athanasius also speaks of “a grace by acquisition” in the case of God’s children. Ibid., 11.37-38.

<sup>83</sup> “For though the Word has descended in order to be exalted, and so it is written, yet what need was there that He should humble Himself, as if to seek that which He had already? *And what grace did He receive who is the Giver of grace?* . . . And the term in question ‘highly exalted,’ does not signify that the essence of the Word was exalted, for He was ever and is ‘equal to God,’ but the exaltation is of the manhood” (italics mine). Ibid., 11.40-41, 329-30.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., 11.37-39, 328-29.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid., 5.15, 315.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., 12.46, 333.

<sup>87</sup> Athanasius works under the trinitarian assumption that, just as the Son is begotten from the Father without division in their common essence, so too does the Spirit take from the Son without prejudice to the Spirit’s divinity.

As the psalmist states, the Son does not have a need for the Spirit's anointing "that He may become God, for He was so even before; nor that He may become King, for He had the Kingdom eternally . . . but *in our behalf*" (italics mine).<sup>88</sup> So goes Athanasius's view of the anointing. Just as the Son becomes man for us (incarnation), so his being anointed with the Spirit as man is an act of grace. Athanasius does not put the stress on what the incarnate Son receives from the Spirit of the Father at the Jordan, but rather on what the church receives from the Son through his Spirit in her baptism. He affirms that "the Saviour . . . being God . . . and being Himself He that supplies the Holy Ghost, nevertheless is here said to be anointed, that . . . He might provide for us men, not only exaltation and resurrection, but the indwelling and intimacy of the Spirit."<sup>89</sup> Here the salvific import of the Jordan event for the church comes to the fore in a remarkable way.

Athanasius even goes as far as saying that "when He [i.e., the Son] is now said to be anointed in a human respect, *we* it is who in Him are anointed; since also, when He is baptized, *we* it is who in Him are baptized" (italics mine).<sup>90</sup> Not only are we baptized in Him, but also "by Him"—an apparent move to affirm the Son's identity as giver of the Spirit, "Sanctifier," and even "Lord of sanctification."<sup>91</sup> Despite the strong and articulate connection between christology and ecclesiology, Athanasius seems somewhat hesitant to give too much weight to the Son's reception of the Spirit for himself in his humanity.

What then is the christological (in contrast to the ecclesiological) import of the baptism of Christ? In other words, what does it mean for the *incarnate* Word himself? Using John 17:19, Athanasius argues that at the Jordan "the Son is not sanctified by

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<sup>88</sup> Ibid., 12.46, 333.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., 12.48, 335.

<sup>91</sup> He writes, "And when He received the Spirit, *we* it was who *by Him* were made recipients of It" (italics mine). Ibid., 12.46-47, 333; cf. 12.47, 334.

other, but Himself sanctifies Himself, that we may be sanctified in the truth.”<sup>92</sup> What our theologian means to say is that the Word, viewed or considered as *God* the Word, does not receive sanctification. This much is clear. What is not so clear is if the Word as *man* receives the sanctification (or more specifically, the anointing) of the Spirit at the Jordan.

Athanasius speaks of the Word’s sanctification of his own humanity with the Spirit as a reality that occurs already from the time of the incarnation: “I, being the Father’s Word, I give to Myself, when becoming man, the Spirit; and Myself, become man, do I sanctify in Him [i.e., in the incarnate Word], that henceforth in Me, who am Truth . . . all may be sanctified.”<sup>93</sup> Notice that the anointing does not add anything unique to the incarnate Word’s identity that he did not previously possess *from the incarnation*. Using our author’s own language, one can affirm that at the Jordan *we* share in the anointing (= sanctification) of the Spirit that the eternal Son already gave to himself in his humanity at the incarnation.

Can we say that the Son *in his own humanity* (not for the church) receives the Spirit in a *new* way at the Jordan distinct from his sanctification by the same from the moment of incarnation? I believe not. It is in the Word, who already sanctifies himself with his own Spirit at the incarnation, that *we* are sanctified at the Jordan. This is a crucial point at which Athanasius clearly relativizes the significance of the incarnate Son’s reception of the Spirit of the Father at the Jordan in favor of the Son’s earlier giving of his own Spirit to himself from at the incarnation. Athanasius seems hesitant to distinguish between the Spirit’s presence in the incarnate Word from the first moment of the incarnation and its presence in him at the Jordan. Due to a largely static view of the Spirit’s presence in the

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid., 12.46, 333.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

Son, there is no apparent need to provide a clearer distinction between his sanctification from birth and his anointing later in life.

Another crucial point has to do with the subject of the anointing. Who anoints whom? Does God the Father anoint the Son with his [i.e., the Father's] Spirit? This is the more biblically explicit option. Or does the Son anoints himself with his own Spirit? Our theologian opts for the latter. In a different context, Athanasius also refers to the divinity of the Word as the "chrism" that anoints his humanity: "For I the Word am the chrism, and that which has the chrism from Me is the Man; not then without Me could He [i.e., the Man] be called Christ, but being with Me and I in Him."<sup>94</sup> Here the anointing reaches the level of a metaphor for the incarnation. We may say that, at the incarnation, the Word gives his own divinity to his humanity. At the same time, and in addition to this chrism, we may say that the Word (not the Father) is the preeminent giver of his own Spirit to his humanity. In other words, the eternal Word communicates to his own creaturely reality both his own divinity and his own Spirit. Unlike Irenaeus's use of the term "Christ" to refer to Jesus' anointing at the Jordan, Athanasius uses it to speak of the incarnate Word. The uniqueness of anointing at the Jordan is lost, for it only serves as a *confirmation* of the Son's prior sanctification (= anointing) of his humanity with the Spirit.

The logical priority of the Son's incarnation over his anointing (a move already made by Irenaeus), coupled with the eternal processional (not essential) priority of the Son in relation to the Spirit, leads Athanasius to read the Jordan event in the light of the Son's identity as giver (never receiver) of the Spirit. In this way, the theologian can affirm that the Son sanctifies and even anoints himself with his own Spirit at the incarnation. Yet even if legitimate in his strong opposition to Arianism, Athanasius's interpretation of

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<sup>94</sup> *Fourth Discourse* 36, in *NPNF*<sup>2</sup>, vol. 4, 447.



Christ's baptism pays no attention to the role of God the Father as subject of the incarnate Son's anointing at the Jordan and relativizes the constitutive action of the Father's Spirit in him at different stages of his human life and mission in the economy of salvation.

#### **1.4. Conclusion**

In his engagement with Trypho, Justin Martyr transposes the historical anointing of Jesus at the Jordan to his preincarnational anointing as God (= Christ) and for the purpose of creating the world. Although all Spirit-filled offices cease and are fulfilled in the incarnate Christ, they already have their ground in his eternal anointing as Christ/God. Understandably, then, the Magi worship him from birth as one who has always been in possession of his power. Overall, one notices a lack of sufficient clarification in our theologian between the ideas of preexistence and anointing. These belong so closely together in the realm of preexistence that the historical uniqueness of Jesus' anointing with the Spirit at the Jordan is relativized. Although Justin at one point refers to Jesus' baptism as a "birth," the event appears to serve more as an epiphany of his prior identity as Christ/God for the sake of others' knowledge of salvation than as a new presence of the Spirit of God in him for our sake. Therefore, the event is revelatory and even salvific for others, but not constitutive for Jesus himself in his own humanity.

Although Irenaeus shares Justin's cosmic view of the anointing, this insight does not take away from the significance of the Jordan event for Jesus himself. In reaction to the Gnostic conception of a union between the Christ (= the Spirit) "from above" and Jesus at the Jordan (neither before baptism nor after his passion), our theologian has to posit the union of Jesus and Christ from the moment of the incarnation and defend the non-identity of Christ and the Spirit. Even though a logical priority has to be given to the incarnation

over the anointing, this move does not prevent Irenaeus from giving the Spirit its defining place in the latter. Thus it is at the Jordan (neither before nor after) that the incarnate Word becomes “Jesus Christ” and thus the one anointed by the Father with the Spirit (or unction) so that others (i.e., the church) in turn may share in his own anointing as man.

Athanasius grounds the logical priority of the Word’s self-sanctification of his own humanity at the incarnation over his sanctification (= anointing) of the same at the Jordan for the sake of others in the eternal processional priority of the Son in relation to the Holy Spirit. Since the divine Word is the giver of the Spirit, he obviously does not receive the Spirit in his divinity. But then the Word does not receive at the Jordan the Spirit of the Father in his humanity either. Rather, the divine Word sanctifies himself with his own Spirit as man from the first moment of conception. At the Jordan, the divine Word then sanctifies others in him with the same Spirit with whom he previously sanctified himself in his humanity from conception. The anointing there does not actually touch the Word in his own humanity. Strictly speaking, the Spirit does not descend upon the incarnate Son at the Jordan. For Athanasius, it is enough to point to the static presence of the Spirit in the Son already from birth. The anointing represents only a later confirming instance of a prior reality. Moreover, by placing the emphasis on the divine Word as the subject of sanctification and anointing at the incarnation, the place of the Father as the personal source of the anointing of the incarnate Word at the Jordan with the Spirit does not receive adequate attention. Even the anointing (or chrism) of Christ becomes a metaphor for the incarnation—a move made by other church fathers in subsequent years.<sup>95</sup> All these moves lead to a partial and significant eclipse of the pneumatic and economic-trinitarian aspects of christology.

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<sup>95</sup> See 2.1.2.

In the next chapter, I discuss a particular type of early orthodox Spirit-christology and its interpretation of the incarnation. I also provide concrete examples of the tendency among Greek and Latin theologians to relativize the role of the Spirit in Jesus' life and ministry, including developments from the fourth century onwards. The reader should look for similarities—when these exist—between these later views and those already presented in this chapter. More importantly, in the next chapter, I seek to invigorate or revitalize what I call orthodox Logos-oriented readings of the story of Jesus, which tend to minimize the Spirit's actions throughout the Christ-event (more specifically, in the humanity of the Son) as a personal agent distinct from the Logos, with their biblically legitimate pneumatological dimensions.

## CHAPTER 2

### Reading the Story of Jesus As Receiver, Bearer, and Giver of God's Spirit:

#### Invigorating Classic Logos-Oriented Approaches to the Narrative

In this chapter, I seek to invigorate classic Logos-oriented readings of the biblical story of Jesus with its defining pneumatic—and thus economic-trinitarian—aspects. Logos-oriented readings see major events in the course of Jesus' life as *revelatory*, epiphanic, confirming, declarative, or proclamatory of either his prior identity as God or his prior possession of the Spirit as man from the moment of incarnation. Moreover, Jesus' baptism is typically seen as *exemplary* for the church of her Christian baptism. In short, we can speak of a revelatory and exemplary significance of the Christ-event *for others*, but not of a defining one for the incarnate Word *himself*. Logos-oriented readings also highlight the place of the Logos as the subject of acts in and through his assumed and sanctified humanity from the first moment of the hypostatic union (incarnation).

A Spirit-christology invigorates Logos-oriented readings of christology by placing the person of the Logos in the broader soteriological and trinitarian context of his free acts and relations towards the Father in the Spirit for us. It looks at events in the course of Jesus' life and ministry as special instances of the Father's sending of his Spirit in and upon the incarnate Son in the economy of salvation and, therefore, as *constitutive* (in contrast to accidental) moments for his own humanity in the work of redemption. We may say that a Spirit-oriented reading of Jesus' story strongly highlights the *dynamic* and *relational* presence of the Spirit as an agent in its own right in the Son's human existence as obedient Son, suffering Servant, and risen Lord. It does so while safeguarding the place of the Father as the preeminent giver and *source* of the Spirit to his incarnate Son.

Reading the narrative of Jesus as receiver, bearer, and giver of the Spirit of the Father helps us to look at the mystery of Christ as a series of defining moments that spans from his particular reception and possession of the Spirit for us to his universal giving of the same to us. In God's economy of salvation, Jesus of Nazareth openly receives the Holy Spirit of the Most High at his conception in Bethlehem, then at his baptism at the Jordan, and finally as the risen and ascended Lord seated at God's right hand. Throughout his life and work as God's faithful and obedient Son, Jesus has the Spirit in inexhaustible fullness. In loving freedom, Jesus also pours out this Spirit on us from the time of his glorification onwards, or, in more comprehensive terms, from the beginning of his paschal mystery—i.e., passion and death, resurrection, and Pentecost. At all times, in ever newer ways, and for us, the anointed Son and Servant receives, possesses, and gives to others the eschatological gift of the Spirit who proceeds from the heavenly Father.

Referring to God's gracious plans to save humankind in Jesus Christ, Basil (ca. 330-79) rhetorically asks, "[W]ho will gainsay their having been accomplished through the grace of the Holy Spirit?"<sup>1</sup> With the incorporation of the *homoousious* into the Nicene Creed, the orthodox made a decisive move in their account of Christ from what he *does* in the economy to who he *is* in substance or essence.<sup>2</sup> In other words, with Nicea, a soteriological-economic understanding of Christ's sonship gave way to the more pressing apologetic issue of defending his ontological-immanent constitution as God. This was done in order to combat Arius's ontological subordination of the Son to God the Father. As LaCugna puts it, a historic move from *oikonomia* (God for us) to *theologia* (God in

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<sup>1</sup> *On the Spirit* 16.39, in *NPNF*<sup>2</sup>, vol. 8, 25.

<sup>2</sup> LaCugna distinguishes between pre-Arian (or pre-Nicene) biblical-economic and Arian philosophical (or ontological) types of subordinationism: "Arianism . . . is a form of ontological-theological speculation that construes the salvation-history subordination of Son to Father to be a difference in nature (*ousia*) between God and Christ." *God for Us*, 24.

Godself) takes place at this point in the history of dogma and, consequently, “God’s relationship to Jesus of Nazareth faded in importance to the Father’s relationship to the Son.”<sup>3</sup> If one adds Arian interpretations of Jesus’ baptism to this crucial move towards ontologization, one can see why a post-Nicene bishop like Athanasius might shy away from giving too much weight to the Holy Spirit’s role in Jesus’ earthly mission.<sup>4</sup> Basil, however, does not hesitate to do so.

Although Basil holds to the consubstantiality of the Son with the Father in the spirit of Nicea,<sup>5</sup> such a commitment to the council does not prevent him from reflecting in his theology a keen sense of the pneumatological framework of the Christ-event:

[T]he things done in the dispensation of the coming of our Lord in the flesh;—all is through the Spirit. In the first place He [i.e., the Spirit] was made an unction, and being inseparably present was with the very flesh of the Lord [Basil here cites parts of texts on the baptism, namely Jn 1:33, Mt. 3:17, and Acts 10:38]. . . .

After this every operation was wrought with the co-operation of the Spirit. He was present when the Lord was being tempted by the devil [citing Mt. 4:1]. . . .

He was inseparably with Him while working His wonderful works [citing Mt.

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 42.

<sup>4</sup> See 1.3; Cantalamesa speaks of “ontologization” in Greek culture as a tool used by theologians to define Jesus’ identity in their historical context. His comments must be set against the background of a discussion of the reasons for the theological neglect of Jesus’ anointing: “Added to the nuisance of all these heresies [i.e., Gnosticism, Arianism, adoptionism] there is also an external factor: the strong tendency towards ontologization, characteristic of the Greek culture to which the people of those days, including the theologians, belonged. In this view, what matters, in everything, is ‘what it was at the beginning,’ the *arché* of things, that is to say their metaphysical constitution, not their becoming and their history; what matters is the essence, not the existence.” *The Holy Spirit in the Life of Jesus*, 8; I return to this historic move towards a static ontologization in 3.2.1.1.

<sup>5</sup> See, e.g., *Letter 8.3*, in *NPNF*<sup>2</sup>, vol. 8, 116-17; John Zizioulas argues that Basil did not employ the *homoousios* language of Nicea for the Holy Spirit at Constantinople I because the original function of the term was not to make a positive statement about the divine substance but rather a more modest negative one on the created-uncreated dialectic, namely, that the Son is *not* a mere creature. See “The Teaching of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Ecumenical Council on the Holy Spirit in Historical and Ecumenical Perspective,” in *Credo in Spiritum*, 33-34.

12:28]. . . . And He did not leave Him when He had risen from the dead [citing Jn. 20:22-23].<sup>6</sup>

Like Irenaeus,<sup>7</sup> Basil represents something of an exception in the history of theological reflection on Christ. Both theologians see no conflict between affirming the incarnate Word's preexistence/divinity and his reception of the anointing/unction (= Spirit) from God the Father at the Jordan river. As we shall see, others would not always follow in their footsteps. Thus they minimize to a significant degree the Holy Spirit's place in the doctrine of Christ. In the end, the partial eclipse of the pneumatic dimensions does not simply affect pneumatology but, more broadly, our understanding of God's own loving self-giving in the economy through Christ and in the Spirit for us and for our salvation.

To recover the constitutive role of the Holy Spirit in all major events of Jesus' life and mission, I propose a systematic construction of significant biblical witnesses to the Son's identity as receiver, bearer, and giver of God's Spirit.<sup>8</sup> After introducing the reader to the general pneumatic contours of events in Jesus' story, I show comparative Logos-oriented readings of the same events in the history of dogma and then propose ways to revitalize or invigorate their often-forgotten pneumatic dimensions. As heirs of a partial pneumatic

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<sup>6</sup> *On the Spirit* 16.39, 25; cf. 19.49, 31.

<sup>7</sup> See 1.2.

<sup>8</sup> A few contemporary examples of outlines and proposals in pneumatological christology include Walter Kasper, *Jesus the Christ*, trans. V. Green (N.Y.: Paulist, 1976), esp. 230-74; Yves Congar, "Pour Une Christologie Pneumatologique," *Revue des Sciences Philosophiques et Théologiques* 63 (1979): 435-42 [Eng., *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 3, 165-73] and *The Word and the Spirit*, trans. David Smith (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1986), chap. 6; Luis F. Ladaria, "Cristología del Logos y cristología del Espíritu," *Gregorianum* 61 (1980): 353-60 and "La unción de Jesús y el don del Espíritu," *Gregorianum* 71, no. 3 (1990): 547-71; John J. O'Donnell, "In Him and Over Him: The Holy Spirit in the Life of Jesus," *Gregorianum* 70, no. 1 (1989): 25-45; Joseph H. P. Wong, "The Holy Spirit in the Life of Jesus and of the Christian," *Gregorianum* 73, no. 1 (1992): esp. 59-72; Jürgen Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life: A Universal Affirmation*, trans. Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992), 60-71; Michael Welker, *God the Spirit*, trans. John F. Hoffmeyer (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1994), chap. 4; and Clark H. Pinnock, *Flame of Love: A Theology of the Holy Spirit* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 1996), chap. 3.

weakening of christology in the church's tradition, Christians (especially in the West) will do well to revisit Basil's question. Here I wish to heed that call.

### **2.1. Jesus As Receiver of God's Spirit:**

#### **The Place of the Spirit in the Conception, Anointing, and Exaltation of Jesus**

Three major moments highlight Jesus' reception of God's Spirit. These are his conception and birth in Bethlehem, his baptism or anointing at the Jordan, and his resurrection and session at the right hand of God. Here reception implies givenness. Jesus' receiving of the Spirit from God points at once to God's self-giving in his Spirit to the incarnate Son. God's identity as Father and fountain of gifts is an honorable biblical and patristic theme. To quote a familiar text: "Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change" (Jas. 1:17). What applies to the Father's character as origin of gifts in regard to his children in history applies by analogy to his own personal or hypostatic identity as unoriginate source of the Son and the Holy Spirit. In Greek theology, the Father is origin (*archē*), source (*pēgē*), and cause (*aitia*) of the eternal generation of the Son and procession of the Holy Spirit.<sup>9</sup> In the Latin tradition, the historical missions of the Son and the Holy Spirit find their ground respectively in the Son's passive generation from the Father and in the Holy Spirit's passive spiration from

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<sup>9</sup> John Zizioulas has argued that the Greek teaching on the Father as source and cause of the Son and the Holy Spirit follows from the Cappadocian's move towards the ontological priority of person over substance for defining God's being-in-relation in terms of freedom and love towards another. If the person is the concrete mode of being of divine substance or existence, then, a person in particular (i.e., the Father) must also be the origin of this divine existence. *Being as Communion: Studies in Personhood and the Church* (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary, 1985), 39-41; Zizioulas also points out that the term *aitia*, unlike *archē* or *pēgē* (often used by Augustine in the West), allows for no substantialist notion of person and thus denotes personal freedom in a way that the other two terms do not. See "Teaching," 37, 47.



the Father (principally) and the Son.<sup>10</sup> In both Eastern and Western traditions, we find basic agreement in the teaching that God the Father is sheer and full generosity, both in his intradivine relations and in his acts for us in salvation-history. We get the picture that the Father openly and freely gives to others neither less nor another than himself; in short, that the Father is the first personal cause of all created and uncreated gifts. We can apply this insight to our thinking on Jesus' identity as receiver of the Spirit.

### 2.1.1. Conceived by the Holy Spirit: Early Spirit-Christology and Luke 1:35

If the Father gives all things to his Son and the Son receives all things from his Father, should not this give-and-take apply to Jesus' receiving of the Spirit from the Father?<sup>11</sup> What greater gift could the Father give to his beloved Son? It is not surprising that John should make the case: "He [i.e., the Son] whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for he [i.e., God] gives the Spirit without measure [to the Son]. The Father loves the Son and has placed all things in his hands" (3:34-35). A question arises: When does God initially bestow such an uncreated gift upon his beloved Son in the economy of salvation?

Jesus' conception and perfection in sanctity by the Holy Spirit in Mary's womb comes to mind. The Holy Spirit, "the power of the Most High," comes upon and overshadows the virgin; "therefore (*dio*), the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God" (Lk. 1:35, italics mine). Luke does not ascribe only the birth and holiness of the child to the Holy Spirit, but even his identity as Son for us. The designation "Son of God" does not refer to the child's preexistence in the Father's eternal bosom (cf. Jn. 1:1-

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<sup>10</sup> In Latin theology, John 15:26 and 20:22 illustrate the Son's participation in the sending and breathing (or spiration) of the Holy Spirit. In Greek theology, however, John 15:26 is also a classic text for affirming the unique procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father in distinction from the Latin *filioque*. Significantly, Augustine approaches the Greek teaching by arguing that, although the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son, he proceeds from the Father "principally" (*principaliter*). See *On the Holy Trinity* 15.26.47, in *NPNF*<sup>1</sup>, vol. 3, 225.

<sup>11</sup> See Gary D. Badcock, *Light of Truth & Fire of Love: A Theology of the Holy Spirit* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1997), 28-30.

2, 18), but to his conception by the Spirit as the Davidic Messiah-king (cf. Lk. 1:32-33).<sup>12</sup>

The Spirit is God's dynamic power in history bringing forth God's kingdom in the Son.

The Spirit is neither the mother nor the father of the Son. Mary is Jesus' mother, God his Father. As an act of God's Spirit, however, the conception of "Emmanuel" (= "God with us") in the virgin does not only serve to protect Mary and Jesus against respective charges of adultery and bastardy (see Mt. 1:18-25), but also directs us to Jesus' divine origin from the heavenly Father in that Jesus has no biological father (e.g., 1:16, 2:11, 13).<sup>13</sup> The Holy Spirit comes upon Mary as the power "of the Most High" (*hypsistou*)—a Lukan term for God (cf. 1:32, 76; 8:28; Acts 16:17)—and so her child is the Son "of God" (not "of the Holy Spirit").<sup>14</sup> And yet the Spirit mediates the Father-Son relation in the economy of salvation, for the holy child Emmanuel is the messianic Son of God for us by means of the creative, fresh power in history of God's eschatological Spirit.

An overriding interest in Jesus Christ's inner-constitution as human and divine led early patristic exegesis to relativize the pneumatological dimensions of the incarnation. Interpreting the identity of Christ under the twofold *pneuma/sarx* pattern (especially Rom. 1:3-4), an early type of orthodox Spirit-christology advanced the interests of what later came to be known as "two-natures" christology.<sup>15</sup> Prior to the first two ecumenical councils, one can already find a substantial or essential use of the term "Spirit" that often

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<sup>12</sup> Congar, *Holy Spirit*, vol. 1, 16; and Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel according to Luke, I-IX* (N.Y.: Doubleday, 1970), 351; Luke's theology (1:32-33) finds its roots in the Old Testament's foreshadowing of the coming of the awaited Messiah through the line of David (esp. 2 Sam. 7; cf. Isa. 11:1-2; Ps. 89:3-4, 34-37; 132; and again Isa. 9:6-7).

<sup>13</sup> See W. D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, *The Gospel according to Saint Matthew*, vol. 1 (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1988), 183, 248.

<sup>14</sup> See Georg Bertram, *TDNT*, vol. 8 (1972), esp. 619-20; in the New Testament, "God" (*ho theos*) refers primarily to a person, namely, the Father. See Karl Rahner, "Theos in the New Testament," in *Theological Investigations*, vol. 1, trans. Cornelius Ernst (Baltimore: Helicon, 1961), 79-148, esp. 125 ff.

<sup>15</sup> See Friedrich Loofs, *Leitfaden zum Studium der Dogmengeschichte*, ed. Kurt Aland, 6th ed. (Halle-Saale: Max Niemeyer, 1959), 14, 5a. Cited in Pannenberg, *Jesus—God and Man*, 119. Loofs argues that the Pauline teaching of two stages serves as the basic datum for the subsequent two-natures approach.

takes priority over the more personal (hypostatic) one formally consolidated at Constantinople I (A.D. 381). Thus the biblical term functions as a description for the divine substance in general (i.e., God) or Christ's divinity in particular (especially to refer to the preexistent Word).<sup>16</sup> Raniero Cantalamessa has argued that the Niceno-Constantinopolitan phrase "Incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto ex Maria Virgine" had its origins in the notion that Christ as God was born of "spirit" or of God's substance and as man was born of "flesh" or of Mary's substance.<sup>17</sup> Ignatius of Antioch (ca. 35-ca.107) shows us an early post-apostolic example of this interpretation. He speaks of Jesus Christ as "possessed both of flesh and spirit; both made and not made; God existing in flesh; true life in death; both of Mary and of God; first possible and then impossible."<sup>18</sup> More concretely, in a reference to Luke 1:35, Justin Martyr, for example, argues that "it is wrong... to understand the Spirit and the power of God as anything else than the Word."<sup>19</sup> In the West, Tertullian (ca. 160-ca. 225) speaks of Christ as one who possesses "the two substances, both of flesh and of the Spirit," which respectively signify his "being generated in the flesh as man" and his being "born of God" (i.e., of the Spirit).<sup>20</sup> And, not surprisingly, the same interpretive principle applies to Tertullian's understanding of Luke 1:35:

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<sup>16</sup> See Simonetti, "Note di cristologia pneumatica," 201-32; for Simonetti's groundbreaking study of Luke 1:35, see 217-26; J. N. D. Kelly writes, "It is noteworthy that the all but unanimous exegetical tradition of *Luke* 1:35, equated 'the holy spirit' and 'the power of the Most High' which were to come upon Mary, not with the third person of the Trinity, but with Christ Who, preexisting as spirit or Word, was to incarnate Himself in her womb." *Early Christian Doctrines*, 5th rev. ed. (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1977), 144-45.

<sup>17</sup> See his significant study "«Incarnatus de Spiritu Sancto ex Maria Virgine» Cristologia e Pneumatologia nel Simbolo Costantinopolitano e nella Patristica," in *Credo in Spiritum*, vol. 1, 101-09. He proposes that Luke 1:35 (along with Matthew 1:20) was read through Romans 1:3-4, which in turn was interpreted in the light of John 1:14; however, if we follow Loofs's thesis (see n. 15 above), we may also have to leave some room for the possibility that John 1:14 was read through Paul's twofold framework.

<sup>18</sup> *Letter to the Ephesians* 7 (shorter version), in *ANF*, vol. 1, 52; cf. Hermas, *Similitude Fifth* 6, in *ANF*, vol. 2, 35-36.

<sup>19</sup> *First Apology* 33, in *ANF*, vol. 1, 174.

<sup>20</sup> *On the Flesh of Christ* 18, in *ANF*, vol. 3, 537.

Now, by saying ‘the Spirit of God’ (although the Spirit of God *is God*), and by not directly naming God, he wished that portion of the whole *Godhead* to be understood, which was about to retire into the designation of ‘the Son.’ The Spirit of God in this passage must be the same *as the Word*. . . . For both the Spirit is the substance of the Word, and the Word is the operation of the Spirit, and the Two are One (and the same).<sup>21</sup>

In the history of dogma, there are texts in which the Holy Spirit’s role in effecting the conception, perfection in holiness, and identity of the child as messianic Son in the economy are interpreted as a description of the preexistent Word’s forming, sanctifying, and assuming of the flesh unto himself. In his reading of Luke 1:35 (in combination with Lk. 1:32 and Mt. 1:21), for example, Justin speaks of the Word (not the Holy Spirit) as “this which, when it came upon the virgin and overshadowed her, caused her to conceive, not by intercourse, but by power.”<sup>22</sup> In the East, Cyril of Jerusalem (ca. 315-86) and John of Damascus (ca. 675-ca. 749) sought to distinguish the work of the Word—for them also, “the power of the Most High” in Luke 1:35—in the assumption and formation of the flesh from the work of the Holy Spirit in the sanctification of Mary (although not the fruit of her womb) to receive the preexistent Word.<sup>23</sup> In the latter move, a Spirit-oriented mariology seems to take priority over a Spirit-oriented christology proper.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> *Against Praxeas* 26, in *ANF*, vol. 3, 622; cf. *On the Flesh of Christ* 14, 534.

<sup>22</sup> *First Apology* 33, in *ANF*, vol. 1, 33, 174.

<sup>23</sup> For Cyril, see Carmelo Granado, “Pneumatologia de San Cirilo de Jerusalén,” *Estudios Eclesiásticos* 58 (1983): 446-48; for John, see *An Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith* 3.2, in *NPNF*<sup>2</sup>, vol. 9, 46.

<sup>24</sup> In contemporary Eastern theology, within the framework of reflection on the humanization of God, Serge Boulgakof speaks of a hypostasizing of the Holy Spirit in the virgin Mary correlative to the hypostatizing of the Logos in Jesus. Just as the personal identity between Jesus and the Logos points to divine sonship as a concrete manifestation of God’s humanity through the Logos’s act of incarnation, so does the identity between the Mary and the Holy Spirit point to divine motherhood through the Spirit’s act of sanctifying her humanity in the fullness of grace from the moment of the Annunciation onwards. See *Le Paraclet*, trans. Constantin Andronikof (Paris: Aubier/Montagne, 1946), 236-40; studying the Russian texts, Paul Valliere

In the West, Thomas Aquinas (ca. 1225-74) sees “the power of the Most High” in Luke 1:35 as a reference to the Son, who is according to Paul “the power of God.” He concludes that “the Power of God, which is the Son himself, according to *I Corinthians* [see 1 Cor. 1:24], *Christ the Power of God*, through the Holy Spirit formed the body which he assumed.”<sup>25</sup> Although Thomas does not identify “the Holy Spirit” with the Son (as Justin Martyr and others do), he still wants to read “the power of the Most High” as a reference to the Son who assumes a body at conception. Thus Thomas reads Paul, and indirectly John, into Luke. Admittedly, the Holy Spirit does have some mediating role in the formation of Jesus’ body. Yet in line with a Logos-oriented christology, Thomas finally has to make “the Power of God” (i.e., the Son) the personal subject of actions (including his own body’s formation) taking place through his assumed humanity.

Moreover, Thomas’s Logos-oriented approach posits the full sanctification of Jesus’ humanity through the hypostatic union (or grace of union) effected by the preexistent Logos. Jesus’ reception of grace throughout his life and work (i.e., his habitual grace) may be attributed (or appropriated) to the Holy Spirit but finally depends on the grace of union.<sup>26</sup> The Holy Spirit’s proper work in sanctifying the fruit of Mary’s womb seems to be instrumental at best and accidental at worst within the Thomistic framework of this classic distinction between *gratia unionis* and *gratia habitualis* and the dependence of the latter on the former.<sup>27</sup> We shall have other opportunities to return to this point later on.<sup>28</sup>

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gives us an invaluable summary and analysis of Bulgakov’s theology. On a Spirit-mariology, see Paul Valliere, *Modern Russian Theology: Bukharev, Soloviev, Bulgakov: Orthodox Theology in a New Key* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2000), esp. 320-28.

<sup>25</sup> *ST* 3a, q. 32, a. 1, ad. 1.

<sup>26</sup> “The grace of union is precisely God’s free gift to the human nature of having personal existence in the Word, and that is the term of the assumption. Habitual grace, forming part of the special holiness of this man, is an effect following upon the union.” *ST* 3a, q. 6, a. 6.

<sup>27</sup> Classical Lutheran christology assumes this scholastic distinction in such a way that the divine Logos (= Spirit or divine nature) confers habitual gifts on his own human nature as a result of his power or operations

A Spirit-christology serves as a reminder to a Logos-oriented one that, despite its genuine interest in preserving Christ's individual identity as divine and human, Luke's references to "the Holy Spirit" and "the power of the Most High" function as parallel terms. Evidence for this claim lies in Luke's link between "Spirit" and "power" (e.g., 24:49 and Acts 1:8, 10:38).<sup>29</sup> These terms point to a creative eschatological presence (even an agent) inseparably united to God and yet distinct from the divine nature in general or the preexistent Logos in particular. In the aftermath of Constantinople I, we can speak of the Holy Spirit as a personal agent in its own right, one whose descent upon and overshadowing of Mary makes the fruit of her womb "holy" from the first instance of his existence as the messianic "Son of God" for us. Consequently, the Holy Spirit (and not exactly the preexistent Son) conceives (or creates), perfects in holiness (or sanctifies), and thus constitutes this child in the new age of salvation as messianic "Son of God" (Lk. 1:35), "Emmanuel" (= "God with us," Mt. 1:23, quoting Isa. 7:14), and the *enfleshed* Word (Jn. 1:14). Indeed, the Word alone *assumes* and *becomes* flesh, but he does so *in the Spirit*, namely, in a way that the preexistent Son gladly receives from his Father in the economy of salvation the Spirit who creates and makes holy what he at once assumes.

As Thomas so clearly articulates, in a Logos-oriented reading of Luke 1:35 the preexistent Word is the *personal* subject of acts occurring in and through his assumed humanity. The concern to safeguard the personal or hypostatic identity of Jesus and the

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following from his prior anointing of his own flesh at the hypostatic union with his divine attributes. Here the habitual gifts are ascribed to the divine Logos and the language of anointing is used as a metaphor for the incarnation. In general, both moves relativize the defining actions of the Spirit of the Father in the humanity of the Son. See Martin Chemnitz, *The Two Natures in Christ*, trans. J. A. O. Preus (St. Louis: Concordia, 1971), chap. 20; for theologians who speak of the incarnation as an anointing, see 1.3 and 2.1.2.

<sup>28</sup> I suggest a number of implications that follow from this classic distinction throughout my work. See, e.g., 2.1.3, 3.1.2.1, and 4.2.2.

<sup>29</sup> See Walter Grundmann, *TDNT*, vol. 2 (1964), 300-01, 310-11; in Luke 1:35, *pneuma hagion* and *dynamis hypsistou* function as parallel terms. For example, we see Luke's link between Spirit and power in phrases like *ex hypsous dynamis* (24:49) and *dynamin epelthontos tou hagiou pneumatos* (Acts 1:8).

Logos drives this classic reading. As long as we maintain a proper distinction between the presence of the Logos and of the Holy Spirit in Jesus—a point to which I come back later on<sup>30</sup>—a Spirit-oriented christology can help us greatly to affirm that the Holy Spirit in its own right is also a personal agent of acts in and through this man Jesus who is none other than the incarnate Word. As I have already shown, the first of such acts occurs at conception. Yet other defining ones follow in the course of Jesus’ human existence.

### **2.1.2. Anointed with the Spirit of the Lord: The Revelatory and Exemplary Character of Jesus’ Baptism and the Incarnation As Anointing**

The unique presence of the Spirit of God in Jesus from conception should not take away from Jesus’ new reception of the same at the Jordan. The former event constitutes Jesus as “holy” child and messianic “Son” for us. The latter one points to his anointing for mission as faithful Son and suffering Servant: “. . . and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, ‘You are my Son, the Beloved, with you I am well pleased’” (Lk. 3:22, cf. Ps. 2:7 and Isa. 42:1).<sup>31</sup> The presentation of the event in all four gospels confirms its importance for the earliest church (Mk. 1:9-11, Mt. 3:13-17, Lk. 3:21-22, Jn. 1:29-34). Significantly, Peter includes in his preaching—along with Jesus’ death and resurrection—the baptism at Jordan as a basic datum of the nascent church’s faith: “. . . how God anointed (*echrisen*) Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him” (Acts 10:38).<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> See, e.g., 2.2.2, 3.1.2.1, 3.1.2.3, and 4.2.1.

<sup>31</sup> The Western variant reading (D) quotes Psalm 2:7 in its totality: “You are my Son, today I have begotten you.” This variant allows for the church’s interpretation of Jesus’ baptism as a new birth in his humanity for us. See McDonnell, *Baptism of Jesus*, chap. 6; for its application by Hilary of Poitiers, see 2.1.3.

<sup>32</sup> Given the influence of St. Epiphanius’s shorter creed in the phrasing of the creed at Constantinople I, it seems remarkable to me that the council did not include a reference to the baptism of Jesus from a longer creed of the saint written in his *Ancoratus* as early as A.D. 374. In the third article, Epiphanius’s longer

In terms of the economic succession of events in the Gospels, we may say that Jesus' identity as "Christ" (= anointed one) does not become a concrete reality *for us* until the Father anoints *him* at the Jordan with his [i.e., the Father's] Spirit for mission. Indeed, the child Jesus is announced as messianic King and Savior prior to his baptism (see Lk. 1:32-33, 2:11-12, 25-26). I have already spoken of the Spirit's eschatological role in bringing forth God's kingdom on earth through the creation and sanctification of the Messiah-king from conception. But Luke *never* speaks of Jesus' "anointing" or "chrism" as an event that takes place prior to the descent of the Spirit of the Lord upon him *at his baptism* (4:18-19; again Acts 10:38) or, more specifically, that refers metaphorically to his *incarnation*—a move made by some prominent church fathers.

Basil refers to texts on Jesus' anointing as "Christ" through his baptism (Acts 10:38, Isa. 61:1, and Ps. 45:7) to defend Christian baptism in the name of the triune God: "For the naming of Christ is the confession of the whole, shewing forth as it does the God who gave, the Son who received, and the Spirit who is, the unction [*chrisma*]." <sup>33</sup> It is Jesus' reception of God's Spirit at this moment of his life and work (and not before) that fulfills Isaiah's prophecy (61:1-2) and makes of the event—to use Congar's appropriation of biblical language—a *kairos* that adds something new to Jesus' identity as Son (now also Messiah-prophet) in the economy of salvation. <sup>34</sup> Here the intuition is that Scripture allows for some qualitative distinction between the sanctification of Jesus by the Spirit

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creed gives witness to the Holy Spirit "who descended at Jordan." In *NPNF*<sup>2</sup>, vol. 14, 164. In terms of the pneumatic aspects of Christ's conception, the reader should note that whereas Nicea only spoke of the Son who "was incarnate," Constantinople I (and Epiphanius before that time) spoke of the Son who "was incarnate of (*ek*) the Holy Ghost and the Virgin Mary." *Ibid.*, 162-63 (but see n. 17 above).

<sup>33</sup> *On the Spirit* 12.28, 18.

<sup>34</sup> Yves Congar defines "kairos" as "authentic qualitative moments in which God's communication of himself in Jesus Christ and in a very real sense also *to* Jesus Christ was accomplished" (*italics mine*). *The Word and the Spirit*, 87.



from the moment of conception and his anointing with the Spirit later on at the Jordan.<sup>35</sup> My point is not to deny Jesus the full reception of the Spirit from conception and birth, but rather to acknowledge the Spirit's dynamic or actualizing presence in him throughout the course of his entire life and work.

In a Logos-oriented christology, Jesus' baptism often appears to be only an accidental event that affirms nothing new about his own identity. Since the descent of the Spirit upon Jesus seems to threaten his previous status as preexistent Son or his full reception of the Spirit from conception, the event has significance only either as a *public confirmation* for others of Jesus' prior identity as God and Christ or as an *exemplary prefiguration* of Christian baptism. In order to reconcile Christ's preexistence with his reception of the Spirit at Jordan, we recall Justin Martyr's argument that Christ does not need the Holy Spirit at his baptism because he already fully possessed the anointing as Christ/God from eternity and thus his divine power from birth; therefore, the event only reveals for our sake what Jesus already is.<sup>36</sup> We also recall Athanasius's largely static view of the Spirit in the humanity of the Word; what the Son already has from the time of the incarnation *as man* (not as God), he does not receive for himself in a new way at the Jordan.<sup>37</sup> In their respective struggles and reactions against Arianism and Nestorianism, Athanasius and Cyril of Alexandria (d. 444) basically speak with one voice of Jesus' anointing as a time of self-glorification in which the Word "anoints," "sanctifies," or "glorifies"—all synonyms—his assumed humanity at the incarnation with his own Spirit, who then at the

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<sup>35</sup> See Luis F. Ladaria, "La unción de Jesús y el don del Espíritu," 552-53; as I showed in the last chapter, Athanasius does not make this distinction (1.3).

<sup>36</sup> See 1.1.

<sup>37</sup> See 1.3.

Jordan proceeds from himself for others.<sup>38</sup> Like Athanasius, Cyril is somewhat hesitant to speak of a passive reception of the Spirit at the Jordan by the incarnate Christ, because he conceives of the Word above all as one who “gives” the Spirit *as God* unto others.<sup>39</sup> Overall, the anointing is ultimately more for us than for Jesus himself—unless, of course, the Word actively glorifies himself through it. As giver (not receiver) of the Spirit, the divine Word must be the subject of his own glorification as man, “for it is believed that he who works through his own Spirit is God according to nature.”<sup>40</sup> Cyril’s position that the Word glorifies himself with “his own Spirit” finds its ultimate ground in the idea that the Holy Spirit receives from the Son as third in the order of eternal processions and in the essential notion that the Spirit abides in and with the Son and the Father eternally in the divine unity.<sup>41</sup> In the events surrounding the council of Ephesus (A.D. 431), Cyril is surely influenced by Athanasius’s prior arguments against the Arians in his own debates with Nestorius. Not only do Athanasius and Cyril hesitate to give the incarnate Word’s reception of the Spirit at the Jordan its full christological (not ecclesiological) weight, but they also underplay the personal identity of the Father as the ultimate fountain, origin,

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid. On Cyril’s position, see José Miguel Odero, “La Unción de Cristo según S. Cirilo Alejandrino,” in *Credo in Spiritum*, 203-08, and his more extensive study “La Unción y el Bautismo de Cristo en S. Cirilo de Alejandría,” in *Cristo, Hijo de Dios y Redentor del Hombre: III Simposio Internacional de Teología de la Universidad de Navarra*, ed. Lucas F. Mateo-Seco et al. (Spain: Navarra, 1982), 519-40.

<sup>39</sup> What do I mean when I speak of Cyril as being “somewhat hesitant” on the anointing? An example is in order. Concerning his *Declaratio Septima*, Cyril subtly underplays Jesus’ passive reception of the Holy Spirit by stressing Christ’s identity as *giver* of the Spirit and the implications of the event *for the church*: “But he was named also Christ, because that according to his human nature he was anointed *with us* [then Cyril cites Ps. 45:8]. For although he was the *giver* of the Holy Spirit, . . . nevertheless as he is man he was *called* anointed economically, the Holy Spirit resting upon him spiritually . . . in order that he might abide *in us*” (italics mine). See *The XII. Anathematism of St. Cyril against Nestorius*, in *NPNF<sup>2</sup>*, vol. 14, 214.

<sup>40</sup> *The Epistle of Cyril to Nestorius with the XII. Anathematism*, in *ibid.*, 204.

<sup>41</sup> See Petavius’s comments on Cyril’s ninth anathema against Nestorius, in *ibid.*, 215; the position of the Lutheran confessors on the anointing of Christ’s assumed humanity has deep roots in Athanasius’s and Cyril’s Alexandrian approach. Consider the following argument: “[B]ecause according to his deity Christ is the second person of the Holy Trinity and because the Holy Spirit proceeds from him as he does from the Father (and therefore he is and remains forever the Spirit of Christ and of the Father, never separated from the Son), the entire fullness of the Spirit . . . is imparted to Christ according to the flesh because it is personally united with the Son of God through the personal union.” *FC, SD* 8.73, in *BC*, 630.

source, and personal cause of the Spirit's anointing—a tendency in the Alexandrian approach to the mystery of Christ.<sup>42</sup>

In the West, Augustine (354–430) goes as far as denying that Christ was anointed at the Jordan and instead finds the significance of the event in its prefiguration of the church's reception of the Spirit in baptism.<sup>43</sup> Since Christ had all things—including “the grace of the Holy Spirit”—from the time of the hypostatic union, Thomas argues that he “did not need a baptism in the spirit. . . . Christ wished to be baptized in order to lead us to baptism by his example.”<sup>44</sup> So the baptism of Jesus only has a proclamatory and/or exemplary function *for others*, not a determinative one *for Jesus himself*. Augustine's claim that Jesus was not anointed at his baptism cannot be seen as a denial of the idea of anointing but rather as its transposition to the moment of the incarnation:

But He [i.e., Christ] is understood to have been then anointed with that mystical and invisible unction, when the Word of God was made flesh, *i.e.* when human nature, without any precedent merits and good works, was joined to God the Word in the womb of the Virgin, so that with it became one person.<sup>45</sup>

A clear line of thinking exists in the patristic tradition that places the anointing of Jesus at the moment of the hypostatic union and ascribes such unction to the Logos.<sup>46</sup> In the East, after Athanasius, Gregory Nazianzen (329–89) refers to the preexistent Christ as “the

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<sup>42</sup> Alexandrian theology underplays the Eastern concern to safeguard the Father's unique hypostatic identity as ultimate cause (*aitia*) of the procession of the Holy Spirit. See Zizioulas, “Teaching,” 43–44.

<sup>43</sup> “And Christ was certainly not then anointed with the Holy Spirit, when He, as a dove, descended upon Him at His baptism. For at that time he deigned to prefigure His body, *i.e.* His Church, in which especially the baptized receive the Holy Spirit.” *On the Holy Trinity* 15.26.46, 224.

<sup>44</sup> *ST* 3a, q. 39, a. 2, ad. 1; Thomas represents the classic example of what Congar calls a “non-historical” theology in which “Christ possessed everything from the time of his conception and, in what are reported in Scripture as institutive events, there is simply a manifestation for others of a reality that is already there.” See Congar, “Pour Une Christologie Pneumatologique,” 436 [Eng., *Holy Spirit*, vol. 3, 166].

<sup>45</sup> *On the Holy Trinity* 15.26.46, 224. Note Augustine's language against the seemingly adoptionist (and perhaps Pelagian and even Donatist) principle that human nature requires “merits and good works” to be adopted by God (in the case of christology, to be assumed by the divine Word).

<sup>46</sup> See Luis F. Ladaria, “La unción de Jesús y el don del Espíritu,” esp. 547–53.

Anointing of His manhood.”<sup>47</sup> John of Damascus explains the hypostatic union as an event in which Christ “in His own person anointed Himself; as God anointed His body with His own divinity, and as Man being anointed. For He is Himself both God and Man. And the anointing is the divinity of His humanity.”<sup>48</sup> Unlike Irenaeus and Basil, these fathers use “chrism,” “anointing,” and “unction” as metaphors for the Word, not the Holy Spirit; and, therefore as language pointing to the incarnation of the Logos at Bethlehem and not to the incarnate Logos’s baptism with the Spirit of the Father at the Jordan.

A pneumatological christology reminds a Logos-oriented one that, strictly speaking, its apologetic move to place the anointing at the incarnation and ascribe it to the divine Word cannot be justified on the basis of the Gospels.<sup>49</sup> The Jordan event does not so much point to one instance (along with and resulting from the incarnation) of the Word’s self-glorification or anointing of his humanity with his own Spirit as it points to a unique anointing of the Son by the Father with his own [i.e., the Father’s] Spirit for mission. Even if Jesus receives the Spirit of God from the first moment of the hypostatic union, such a presence of the Spirit in him cannot be thought of solely in static terms.

The presence of the Holy Spirit in the incarnate Son has both dynamic and relational dimensions. The former aspect allows for each descent of the Spirit upon Jesus in God’s economy of salvation to *actualize* (and not simply reveal or proclaim) his identity as Son

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<sup>47</sup> Gregory writes, “He is Christ, because of His Godhead. For this is the Anointing of His manhood, and does not sanctify by its action, but by the Presence in His Fulness of the Anointing One; the effect of which is that That which anoints is called man, and makes that which is anointed God.” *The Fourth Theological Oratio* 21, in *NPNF*<sup>2</sup>, vol. 7, 317.

<sup>48</sup> *An Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith* 3.3, 47.

<sup>49</sup> A point forcefully made in Roman Catholic circles by exegete Ignace de la Potterie, “L’Onction du Christ,” *Nouvelle Revue Theologique* 80 (1958): 225-52.

in a new way.<sup>50</sup> By actualization, I mean an understanding of Christ's identity in terms of his "being-in-act" (or being active) throughout his entire human history. In other words, I am suggesting a more dynamic view of the incarnation—an *incarnating*, as it were—that complements the more static Logos-oriented view in which the term applies only to an event that takes place at a set or absolute point in time (i.e., hypostatic union). Now, the interrelated ecstatic or relational dimension of the Spirit's presence in the incarnate Son points to the intrinsic *pro nobis* character of the incarnation, to its orientation towards all events in Jesus' life and work carried out *in the Spirit*, namely, in loving obedience to the Father and for us.<sup>51</sup> Pneumatology brings dynamism and relationality to the mystery.

Of course, a Spirit-christology does not have to deny the baptism its proclamatory and exemplary character as an event that leads others to Jesus as the Christ. Neither does our approach to the anointing seek to do away with the import of the Jordan event for the church's administration of Christian baptism. However, a Spirit-christology insists in grounding these aspects of Christ's anointing in the significance of the event for the incarnate Son himself. If the baptism serves as an occasion to deny Christ's preexistence or undermine his full reception of the Spirit from conception, then it is appropriate to say that he does not need the baptism according to his divinity or that he does not only receive the Spirit for the first time at the Jordan. Yet too much stress on these points can make us forget the main point of the narrative (especially in the Synoptics), namely, that the event is above all a free, loving, and generous act of the Father towards his incarnate Son through a new descent of his [i.e., the Father's] Spirit in and upon him.

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<sup>50</sup> Congar writes, "God's work takes place in human history. It is achieved in a series of events situated in time, which, once they have happened, contribute something new and bring about changes. . . . There were successive events in which the Spirit descended on Jesus as Christ the Saviour." *Holy Spirit*, vol. 3, 166.

<sup>51</sup> "Christology should not be separated from soteriology. . . . The incarnation has an aim and that aim is Easter, the resurrection, and eschatological fulfillment." *Ibid.*, 165.

Theologians already cited admittedly succeeded in articulating the import of Jesus' anointing for the Christian church, but less so for Jesus himself as the anointed one of the Father in his own right. By grounding the ecclesiological concern in the christological one, a Spirit-oriented approach invigorates the Logos-oriented one with an actualizing and relational orientation to the mystery of Christ.<sup>52</sup> By proposing a needed corrective in Logos-oriented approaches to the anointing of Christ, I do not intend to undermine what church fathers clearly saw, namely, the soteriological significance of Jesus' receiving of the Spirit for the church's receiving of the same. As I shall show, a Spirit-christology can incorporate this genuine concern in a discussion of Jesus' identity as giver of the Spirit.

### **2.1.3. Risen, Ascended, and Seated at the Right Hand of God: The Confirming Character of Jesus' Resurrection and the Transposition of the Exaltation to the Incarnation**

As the risen and ascended Christ and Lord, Jesus receives the Spirit of God the Father once again: "Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received (*labōn*) from the Father the promise (*epangelian*) of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you both see and hear" (Acts 2:33).<sup>53</sup> What Jesus receives from God the Father after his resurrection is the Spirit as eschatological "promise" (*epangelian*, Lk. 24:49, Acts 1:4), namely, as the Spirit whom the Father promises to send unto others through his exalted Son: "for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now" (Acts 1:5, cf. Lk. 24:49). Admittedly, a strong link exists between Jesus' reception of the Spirit at Jordan and his reception of the Spirit as the risen

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<sup>52</sup> In chapter three, I also show that such dimensions place the Christ-event in a trinitarian framework and trajectory—a point that the reader can already gather to some extent from this presentation.

<sup>53</sup> Strictly speaking, Acts 2:33 points to a new reception of the Spirit by Jesus as exalted Messiah, not to the prior reception of the same by him at the Jordan or at birth. See, e.g., George Montague, *Holy Spirit: Growth of a Biblical Tradition* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1976), 286.

Messiah and Lord. The former event serves as the condition for the latter, and in the end both are oriented towards the communication of the eschatological Spirit to others. Jesus receives the Spirit from the Father at the Jordan for his redemptive mission on our behalf, but only upon his completion of such a mission does he, as “Lord” and for us, receive the “promise” of the Spirit from the Father.

In a Logos-oriented christology, Jesus may be said to receive the fullness of grace both in a “personal” manner (i.e., for himself) and in a “capital” manner (i.e., as head of the church) already from the first moment of the hypostatic union. Although personal and capital grace are strictly identical in Christ (as Congar reminds us), the Thomistic system points out that personal grace is still the condition for capital grace just as the grace of union precedes habitual grace.<sup>54</sup> One purpose for this argument is to ground Christ’s communicable grace to and for others (i.e., the church) on his personal and unrepeatable reception of grace at the moment of the hypostatic union. A relativization of Jesus’ reception of the Spirit at the Jordan and then as exalted Lord occurs.

In post-Vatican II circles, Mühlen sought to amend Thomas on this point. Seeing the church as a continuation of Christ’s anointing (not of his incarnation) for others, Heribert Mühlen rightly sought to give habitual grace its complete historical dimension throughout the whole Christ-event.<sup>55</sup> This was a much needed move, even if Mühlen only saw the baptism as a public declaration of a reality already established at the incarnation.<sup>56</sup> He

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<sup>54</sup> Congar, *Holy Spirit*, vol. 3, 166, 172 (citing *ST* 3a, q. 7 and 8); cf. my discussion of Thomas in 2.1.1.

<sup>55</sup> “El acontecimiento Cristo como acción del Espíritu Santo,” in *Mysterium Salutis*, ed. J. Feiner and M. Löhrer, trans. Guillermo Aparicio and Jesús Rey, 3d ed., vol. 3, 2 (Madrid, Cristiandad, 1992), 960-84; for a full treatment of the topic, see *Una Mystica Persona: Die Kirche als das Mysterium der Identität des Heiligen Geistes in Christus und die Christen: Eine Person in Vielen Personen*, 2d ed. (München-Paderborn-Wien: Schönigh, 1967); for a brief study in English, see Congar, *Holy Spirit*, vol. 1, 22-25; in Spanish, see Angel Antón, “El Espíritu Santo y la Iglesia—En busca de una formula para el misterio de la Iglesia,” *Gregorianum* 47 (1966): 101-13.

<sup>56</sup> See, e.g., “Acontecimiento Cristo,” 974.

correctly understands that Jesus' perfect Spirit-led life of obedience to the Father throughout his messianic mission spanning from baptism to glorification is what allows for the extension of his habitual grace to the church.<sup>57</sup> However, Mühlen also seems somewhat hesitant to give the Holy Spirit a proper role in the sanctification of the Logos's assumed humanity, at least in part because of his strong concern for safeguarding the essential unity of God and of the divine operations in the economy of salvation.<sup>58</sup> Like Aquinas, he holds to the notion that Jesus' habitual grace in the Spirit must be the consequence of the Logos's prior sanctification of his assumed humanity.<sup>59</sup>

In a Logos-christology, even if one speaks of the glorification of Christ's humanity as risen Christ and Lord, the exaltation only confirms for or proclaims to others the lordship that Jesus already had from the incarnation. Along classical lines, one can say that Christ "was elevated to the right hand of majesty" according to the assumed flesh, not merely "through the exaltation or glorification" but already "through the personal union."<sup>60</sup> Thus the exaltation of Jesus as risen and ascended Lord and Messiah has an unveiling character *for others*, but not a constitutive one *for Jesus himself*. The net effect of Jesus' unique reception of the Spirit of God at this particular moment in the economy is transposed to the divine Word's elevating of his assumed humanity at the time of the hypostatic union.

If a Logos-christology posits the full communication of the Logos's divine attributes to the assumed humanity from conception, a Spirit-oriented christology complements this view by attending to the particular actualizations of God's communication in the Spirit

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid., 975 ff.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., 963-64.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., 973; Thomas's argument is based on the idea that the Son's procession from the Father logically precedes the Holy Spirit's procession from the Father *and the Son*. Here Mühlen cites *ST* 1, q. 7, a. 13.

<sup>60</sup> *FC, SD* 8.13, in *BC*, 618; consider the immediately preceding statement: "Christ did not only receive this majesty to which he was exalted according to his humanity only after he rose from the dead and ascended into heaven, but he received it already when he was conceived in his mother's womb and became a human being and the divine and human natures were united personally with each other." Ibid., 8.12.



(not in the Logos) to this assumed humanity at distinct stages of the Christ-event.<sup>61</sup> Even though we could affirm that Christ is always Lord according to his divinity just as he is always Lord in his humanity throughout his earthly life (because of the personal union), the biblical data still does not allow us to say that he has been exalted at God's right hand *as risen Lord* prior to his glorification. Perhaps we can say that the preexistent Word's "lordship," communicated to his assumed flesh at conception in a personal way, also becomes actualized (in contrast to only revealed or unveiled) at different moments of his life and work through an act of God through his Spirit in and upon the incarnate Word.<sup>62</sup>

Following Congar, we may say that a Spirit-christology invigorates Logos-oriented approaches to the narrative by seeing the resurrection of Jesus as a new *kairos* in which God has actually made him (not simply proclaimed or declared him as) ascended Lord and Messiah (see Acts 2:32-36 and Heb 1:13; cf. Ps 110:1).<sup>63</sup> Significantly, there is a similar concern for expressing a dynamic christology in the pre-Augustinian Western tradition. Following the New Testament's appropriation of Psalm 2:7 ("You are my son; today I have begotten you") to refer to Jesus' exalted status as ascended Lord (cf. Acts 13:32-33), Hilary of Poitiers (ca. 315-67) interprets God's raising of Jesus from the dead as a new "birth" as Son *in his own humanity* and then at once *for us*. Moreover, the doctor applies the psalm to other events in Jesus' life and work. Hilary speaks of Jesus' four births: 1) in eternity as Son of God, begotten of the Father; 2) in Bethlehem as

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<sup>61</sup> The Lutheran tradition has room for this approach: "Based upon the personal union . . . the human nature (when it was glorified after laying aside the form of a servant and after the humiliation and was exalted to the right hand of the majesty and power of God) *also received, alongside of and in addition to* its natural, essential characteristics (which always remain), special, high, great, supernatural, incomprehensible, indescribable heavenly prerogatives and privileges in majesty, glory, power, and might over all things that can be named, not only in this world but also in the world to come" (italics mine). *FC, SD* 8.51, in *BC*, 625. Should not Christ's reception of *the Spirit* from God as glorified Messiah and Lord effect such additional "prerogatives and privileges" in his own humanity? Possibly (but see also n. 27 above).

<sup>62</sup> A further synthesis of approaches in trinitarian perspective will have to wait until later in chapter four.

<sup>63</sup> Congar, *Holy Spirit*, vol. 3, 168-69.

incarnate Son of God, born of Mary according to his humanity; 3) in the Jordan as Son of God, reborn in his humanity for obedience to God for our sake; and 4) at the resurrection as Son of God, fully reborn in his glorified humanity.<sup>64</sup> The basis for this christological dynamism is Hilary's view of the role of "Spirit" (*spiritus*) in the mysteries of Jesus' life.

Hilary defines "Spirit" essentially as "divinity" and personally as the third member of the Trinity who is "gift" for others. The former use is equally applied to the Father or the Son according to the *pneuma/sarx* pattern of earlier Spirit-oriented christologies; the latter one applies only to the Holy Spirit as God's personal gift to the church.<sup>65</sup> Since Hilary interprets "Spirit" in substantial terms as the divinity of the Son, then, it follows that the incarnation takes place through the descent of the Holy Spirit (= Son) upon Mary (Lk. 1:35).<sup>66</sup> Similarly, the anointing of Jesus for mission occurs at the moment of the Spirit's descent upon him, or in other words, of the Son's descent upon himself with the divine power that he receives from the Father (Lk. 3:22, 4:18).<sup>67</sup> Still the action of "Spirit" (= divinity) in Jesus at each of these moments does not cease to point to a

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<sup>64</sup> Luis F. Ladaria has studied this topic extensively. See, e.g., "El bautismo y la unción de Jesús en Hilario de Poitiers," *Gregorianum* 70 (1989): 283, 287-88, and "El Espíritu Santo en San Hilario de Poitiers," in *Credo in Spiritum*, esp. 250-51. Both articles follow ideas first developed in *El Espíritu Santo en San Hilario de Poitiers* (Madrid, Spain: Comillas, 1977). In the contemporary scene, Yves Congar outlines an approach similar to Hilary's intention: "Jesus is Son on several accounts. He is Son by eternal generation: 'begotten, not made'. He is therefore the *monogenitus* or *monogenēs*. In a theology of the economy of salvation, however, we must take very seriously the texts in which Ps 2:7—'You are my son, today I have begotten you' —is applied to history. It is so applied in the first place . . . to the annunciation by the angel: 'he will be called the Son of God' (Lk 1:35). Later, it is applied to the theophany at Jesus' baptism (Mt 3:17; Mk 1:10; Lk 3:22) and to the resurrection and exaltation of Christ (Acts 13: 33; Heb 1:5; 5:5)." See Congar, *Holy Spirit*, vol. 3, 170.

<sup>65</sup> Ladaria notes that Hilary almost thinks of the Spirit's personal essence solely in terms of gift, so that to be third person of the Trinity amounts to being gift. See the article "El Espíritu Santo . . .," 244. This view seems to be related to the fact that the Holy Spirit is *ex Patre per Filium*, although Hilary does not speak definitively (or appears to be reserved) on articulating the Spirit's *ad intra* mode of procession. *Ibid.*, 244, 246-48. Hilary appears more interested in the Holy Spirit's work *ad extra* in relation to believers as that which is peculiar to his being the third person of the Trinity. *Ibid.*, 245-48 (esp. 247).

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 249.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, 250.

process of sanctification or divinization of his own “flesh” (humanity) that only reaches its final glorification at the resurrection.<sup>68</sup> At that time, he is reborn as the glorified Son.

Undoubtedly, Hilary’s dynamic understanding of “Spirit” in the Christ-event allows us to interpret Jesus’ anointing and resurrection in non-adoptionist fashion as “births” in the sense of Luke’s appropriation of Psalm 2:7 in the Western variant reading (D) of Luke 3:22 (for the baptism) and Acts 13:33 (for the resurrection). Unlike other theologians who lived before, during, and after his own life (e.g., Justin, Athanasius, and Augustine), Hilary sees no conflict between this actualizing form of early Spirit-christology and his strong orthodox anti-Arian commitment. Hilary gives full weight to the active role of “the Spirit” in and upon Jesus during his life and mission as obedient and faithful Son.

An important question remains: Should Hilary’s exegesis be interpreted through the *pneuma/sarx* pattern? The problem of the precise “identity” of the “Spirit” that comes upon Jesus—so common in many of Hilary’s writings—comes to the forefront.<sup>69</sup> We can surely benefit from his insights into the Spirit-oriented dimensions of Jesus’ identity as “Son” in the economy, but this requires a revision of his exegetical basis for such a claim so that the Holy Spirit as such (i.e., as a personal agent) and not simply as “divinity” in general is incorporated into the readings of Luke 1:35 (conception) and 3:22 (baptism).

The active role assigned by Hilary to Jesus’ “divinity” (= Spirit) in the sanctifying and anointing of his humanity must be assigned instead—and this by biblical standards—to the Holy Spirit and not to the Word or to the divine power of the Father. As for the place

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid., 250-51; for a summary, see Carmelo Granado, “El Don del Espíritu de Jesús en san Hilario de Poitiers,” *Estudios Eclesiásticos* 57 (1982): 436-45. Granado, for example, includes Hilary’s view of Jesus’ miracles (e.g., exorcisms) as demonstrations of his divinity (= Spirit)—and thus also as a moment of partial glorification of his flesh (= humanity) on the road to its full glorification at the resurrection—and rarely as instances of his self-giving of the Spirit as the third one of the Trinity unto others. Ibid., 441-44.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., 283; for Ladaria, the multivalent character of the term is what makes Hilary’s theology interesting. See the article “El Espíritu Santo . . .,” 253.

of the Spirit in Christ's glorification, more will be said later.<sup>70</sup> For now, it is enough to remember Paul's teaching that, upon completing his earthly mission, God "established" his Son precisely as "Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness through the resurrection from the dead" (Rom. 1:4; cf. 8:11). At this new time in the economy, God may be said to have begotten his faithful Son to be the receiver of the Spirit as "promise" for us. The imminent implication is that the glorified Son will also give the Spirit to the church from Pentecost onwards as eschatological "gift" (Acts 2:16-21, 38-39).

## **2.2. Jesus As Bearer of God's Spirit: The Dynamic Eschatological**

### **Presence of the Spirit in Jesus—Ministry in the Spirit**

The Spirit whom Jesus openly receives from his Father is the Spirit whom Jesus fully possesses as his own. In various ways, all moments in Jesus' life and ministry as obedient Son underscore this dynamic bearing or possession of the Spirit of God for mission on our behalf. As eschatological preacher, teacher, exorcist, and healer, Jesus acts in word and deed with authority and in the power of God's Spirit. Even though the Spirit's indwelling in Jesus can be traced to his birth, I have also argued that the Spirit's place in the Christ-event is *dynamic*, oriented towards all events in the course of Jesus' human existence (incarnating). To this affirmation, I have added that the character of the Spirit's presence in Jesus is *relational*. This is to say that, in the successive events of his eschatological ministry, Jesus bears the Spirit both in obedience to the Father and for the sake of the neighbor. The purpose of this section is to look briefly at some biblical witnesses to Jesus' identity as the bearer of God's Spirit in the course of his mission and then inquire into some theological issues related to the best way of describing the nature of the Holy Spirit's (in contrast to the Logos's) presence in him.

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<sup>70</sup> See 3.2.1.

### 2.2.1. Biblical Contours of Jesus' Ministry As Bearer of the Spirit

At the Jordan, the Spirit descends anew like a dove “in” (*eis*) him and immediately drives him into the desert to be tempted (Mk. 1:10, 12). There his faithfulness as Son is tested: “If you are the Son of God . . .” (Mt. 4:3, 6; Lk. 4:3, 9). Here Jesus’ bearing of the Spirit’s fullness points to his complete openness to the constant leading of God’s Spirit (Mt. 4:1, Lk. 4:1, 14), which amounts to his openness to doing the Father’s will.<sup>71</sup> If at the Jordan the Father says to the Son, “You are my Son, the Beloved,” it is in the desert that Jesus (in one of many struggles against Satan; see Lk. 4:13) especially reciprocates the Father’s complete love for him through unconditional obedience and faithfulness to him alone. In the desert struggle against the devil, the obedient Son is the new Israel who triumphantly recapitulates Israel’s earlier failure and disobedience to the one and only God (see Deut. 32).<sup>72</sup> The Spirit takes Jesus on a redemptive mission to proclaim good news to the poor, set captives free, and bring sight to the blind (Lk. 4:18; cf. Isa. 61:1, Acts 10:38). His mission in the Spirit also involves teaching his disciples with authority (e.g., Acts 1:1-2). It is a tragedy that Jesus’ preaching and teaching often encounters opposition and finally leads to his death on the cross where his faithfulness as obedient Son of the Father is tested to the fullest. Yet God’s offer of love in his beloved Son is rejected from the start. For example, after Jesus preaches in the synagogue of his own hometown that the prophecy of Isaiah 61 is fulfilled in him and convicts his hearers of their historic rejection of God’s prophets, Jesus’ fellow Galileans become enraged, drive him out of town, and want to throw him off a cliff (Lk. 4:16-30).

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<sup>71</sup> “The Son obeys the Father’s will. The Spirit drives him forth. The two statements describe the same inward compulsion which could not be denied, which had to find expression in word and deed.” J. D. G. Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit: A Study of the Religious and Charismatic Experience of Jesus and the First Christians as Reflected in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1975), 66.

<sup>72</sup> See, e.g., Davies and Allison, *Gospel according to Saint Matthew*, vol. 1, 371-72.

As the anointed Servant, Jesus “cast out the spirits with a word, and cured all who were sick” (Mt. 8:16-17; cf. Isa. 53:4). By the Spirit of God, Jesus delivers others from the oppression of the devil and his demons: “But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come to you” (Mt. 12:28; cf. Lk. 11:20). Dunn sees in Jesus’ words “not so much a case of Where *Jesus* is there is the kingdom, as Where the *Spirit* is there is the kingdom.”<sup>73</sup> However, I see Jesus and the Spirit in a *joint mission* to bring God’s kingdom on earth. For even if the Spirit is particularly active in the Christ-event, we cannot forget that Jesus also commands demons to leave their victims (e.g., Mt. 8:32; Mk. 5:8; Lk. 8:29a). With a word, he casts out tormenting spirits. As exorcist, Jesus stands as the mightier man who ties up “the strong man” (= Beelzebub) in order to take away from his house (or dominion) those people or property in bondage to him (Mt. 12:29, cf. 3.11). At the same time, Jesus clearly warns his hearers against the blasphemy of attributing to Satan what can only belong to the Spirit of God (Mt. 12:29-32). Nothing less than an eschatological inbreaking of God’s kingdom among sinners takes place through the Son who acts in the power of the Spirit. Where God rules both through his Son and in his Spirit, the rule of sin, death, and the devil comes to an end.

Jesus lives his whole life and does all his work in the Spirit, that is to say, as the obedient Son of God and for his neighbor’s sake. For Dunn, Jesus’ consciousness of “Spirit” in his mission means that he knew himself to be God’s appointed end-time exorcist and inspired prophet.<sup>74</sup> Other prophets also possess and are filled with the Spirit in various degrees and even for similar purposes (e.g., Lk. 1:15, 41-42, 67; 2:25-26).

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<sup>73</sup> “Spirit and Kingdom,” in *The Christ & the Spirit*, vol. 2, *Pneumatology* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1998), 140.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 43, 67; cf. Dunn, “Spirit and Holy Spirit in the New Testament,” in *Pneumatology*, 5-8; and Dunn, “Rediscovering the Spirit (2),” in *Pneumatology*, 75.

Significantly, however, while Jesus drives out demons immediately “by the Spirit of God,” his disciples do the same only mediately through Jesus’ authority or in his name (Lk. 10:17).

Even though the language of possession or fullness itself does not suffice to place Jesus above the line of Spirit-filled and Spirit-led prophets and evangelists, the ideas of permanency and inexhaustibility which accompany such language do.<sup>75</sup> John’s Gospel gives us examples. The Father gives his Spirit to the Son in a permanent way: “I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it remained (*emeinen*) on him” (1:32). To this note of permanency, John adds the idea of inexhaustibility: God gives the Spirit to his Son “without measure” (*ek metrou*, 3:34). We may say that Jesus bears the Holy Spirit as uncreated gift in a permanent and inexhaustible but nevertheless dynamic and relational way. We may then also say that Jesus’ particular authority as God’s Messiah, Son, and Servant, which is intrinsically linked to this unique eschatological presence of God’s Spirit in and upon him, is an unparalleled and unrepeatable one.

### **2.2.2. On the Presence of the Spirit in Jesus: A Preliminary Look at Logos- and Spirit-Oriented Concerns**

In a Logos-oriented christology, Jesus’ miracles and wonders (e.g., healings and exorcisms) serve mainly as “proofs of his Godhead.”<sup>76</sup> For instance, to make the divine Son the personal subject of acts taking place through his assumed humanity and to posit

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<sup>75</sup> Felix Porsch, *El Espíritu Santo, defensor de los creyentes: La actividad del Espíritu según el evangelio de san Juan*, trans. Severiano Talavera Tovar (Spain: Secretariado Trinitario, 1983), 1.1.2.

<sup>76</sup> For the Eastern tradition, see Athanasius, *Incarnation of the Word*, §18.2, in *NPNF*<sup>2</sup>, vol. 4, 46; in the West, Leo writes, “For each ‘form’ does the acts which belong to it, in communion with the other; the Word, that is, performing what belongs to the Word, and the flesh carrying out what belongs to the flesh; the one of these shines out in miracles, the other succumbs to injuries.” *The Tome of St. Leo*, in *NPNF*<sup>2</sup>, vol. 14, 256; cf. Leo’s *Letter XXVIII* (to Flavian) 4, in *NPNF*<sup>2</sup>, vol. 12, 40–41; The Lutheran confessors follow a similar approach: “On this basis [i.e., of the personal union] he also performed all his miracles, and he revealed his divine nature as he pleased, when and how he wanted to.” *FC, SD* 8.25, in *BC*, 620.

his possession of the Holy Spirit in an essential way (that is, as God), Cyril of Alexandria interprets the Spirit's glorification of the Son (Jn. 16:14) as the Son's glorification of himself with his own Spirit. The Son glorifies himself with his own Spirit "because he used the Holy Spirit to show forth his own divinity in his mighty works."<sup>77</sup> To separate the Spirit's indwelling in Christ from his indwelling in other saints, Cyril directs us to Christ's substantial (as opposed to adventitious) bearing of the Spirit with whom he shares equal divinity, but he anchors this view (as I have shown) in the Spirit's eternal being from the Son.<sup>78</sup> For this reason, Cyril tends to see miracles as instances that point to the incarnate Word's divine glory more than to the eschatological role of the Spirit in bringing forth God's rule through the messianic Son and Servant.

A Spirit-christology, on the other hand, does not deny that the Spirit of the Son is "his own" insofar as both are inseparably united with the Father in the one divine substance, but seeks a more reciprocal way to describe the relation between the Son and the Spirit who remains on him. To say that the Spirit is the Son's "own Spirit" in the economy of salvation, because the Spirit proceeds from the Son in the order of immanent processions, does not give enough attention to the fact that the Spirit also remains on the Son in the economy and thus is not foreign to the Son's own procession (= generation) from the Father at the immanent level.<sup>79</sup>

Furthermore, the unique eschatological character of Jesus' identity as Son and Servant in and by the power of God's Spirit who leads, fills, and remains in him points to God the Father as a personal subject of acts through his Spirit towards his incarnate Son. In the biblical narrative, the Son surely works through his own Spirit who proceeds from the

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<sup>77</sup> *The Epistle of Cyril to Nestorius with the XII. Anathematisms*, in *NPNF*<sup>2</sup>, vol. 14, 204.

<sup>78</sup> See Cyril's ninth anathema against Nestorius, in *ibid.*, 214-15; also see my earlier discussion in 2.1.2.

<sup>79</sup> I develop this argument in chapter three (esp. 3.1.2.1, 3.1.2.3, and 3.3.1.2).



Father (most clearly, from his resurrection onwards), but the Spirit of God the Father also works in the Son upon whom he rests from Christ's conception onwards. Both aspects of this joint mission of the Son and the Spirit in God's economy of salvation need attention. In any case, the Father remains the final source and cause of the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Another crucial point must be made. Only in the light of the resurrection can Jesus' mission of proclamation, teaching, healing, and exorcisms—all events leading to Jesus' ultimate rejection and death—point to his unique, authoritative, permanent, inexhaustible, unparalleled, and unrepeatably possession of God's Spirit. Only in the light of Jesus' giving of the Spirit as exalted and glorified Messiah, Servant, Son of God in power, and Lord to the church can we affirm today that the bearer of the Spirit is more than a mere human being. Then we can also state that he has the Spirit not only by degree (like other saints) but also by nature (or kind), and therefore, that this man is God. What a Logos-christology affirms *a priori* by proceeding "from above" (i.e., that the preexistent and divine Logos is Jesus the Christ), a Spirit-christology affirms *a posteriori* by proceeding "from below" (i.e., that Jesus the Christ is the preexistent and divine Logos).<sup>80</sup>

Unlike Heribert Mühlen's proposal, which I presented as a qualified revitalization of Thomas's, Walter Kasper's Spirit-christology moves from Jesus' incarnating in history in obedience to the Father and for us to his ontology as the incarnate Logos. To move from incarnation conceived in terms of the whole Christ-event (a dynamic view) to incarnation conceived of as a past event (static view), he argues that Jesus' grace of union actually follows from his habitual grace:

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<sup>80</sup> For a fuller treatment of this topic in terms of the philosophico-theological distinction between the orders of being and knowledge, see 4.2.2.

By wholly filling Jesus' humanity, the Spirit endows it with the openness by which it can freely and wholly constitute a mould and receptacle for God's self-communication. The sanctification of Jesus by the Spirit and his gifts is, therefore, . . . not merely an adventitious consequence of the sanctification by the *Logos* through the hypostatic union, but its presupposition.<sup>81</sup>

Kasper reverses the classical argumentation, by making *gratia habitualis* the condition for *gratia unionis*. For now, suffice it to say that any solution to the issue of the logical priority of the *Logos*'s assumption over the Holy Spirit's sanctification of the assumed humanity must be worked out and reconciled with the distinction between the personal identity of Jesus and the *Logos* and the non-identity of Jesus and the Holy Spirit and the distinction between the orders of being and knowledge.<sup>82</sup>

A *Logos*-christology asserts that the Son had the Spirit in eternity and then, logically speaking, communicated the same to his humanity in time at the incarnation (hypostatic union) after assuming the flesh. Just as the generation of the Son logically precedes the procession of the Holy Spirit in the inner-life of God, so does the economic mission of the Son (assumption or union) logically precede that of the Holy Spirit (indwelling or sanctification). By contrast, a Spirit-oriented christology points out that such conclusions can only follow from Jesus' life and deeds as messianic Son and Servant carried out in the power of Spirit throughout his human history. Here God's raising of his Son according to the Spirit of holiness through the resurrection from the dead holds the central place in the church's confession of the Son's power, lordship, and divinity—

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<sup>81</sup> *Jesus the Christ*, 251; for a comparative summary of Mühlen's and Kasper's Spirit-christologies, see Badcock, *Light of Truth & Fire of Love*, 145-59.

<sup>82</sup> See 4.2.1 and 4.2.2.

attributes that can only be grasped and contemplated in his true humanity through his Spirit-led mission of proclamation, teaching, healings, and exorcisms.

However, the Spirit of God must not be seen simply as an instrument that reveals the Son who always was the Spirit-bearer and Spirit-giver, but rather as the Spirit who also has a part in constituting the eternal and incarnate Son as Spirit-receiver and Spirit-bearer. Just as the Spirit of the Father never exists without his Son, so the Son of God never exists without the Spirit of the Father. If the Son has the fullness of the Spirit prior to and from his assumption of humanity onwards, the other side of this reality is that the Spirit from the Father also rests and remains in and upon him eternally prior to and then temporally from his conception and perfection in sanctity of the humanity onwards.

In a broader and reciprocal trinitarian framework, then, one could argue that logical priority may be given either to the Son's assumption or to the Spirit's sanctification of humanity, depending on the concerns or issues at hand. If the danger of adoptionism looms in the horizon and the divinity of the Son is at stake, then priority goes to the Word's assumption of humanity in order to avoid the idea of a human existence prior to the hypostatic union or an adoption into sonship by the disposition or merit of such a human being. The classic dogmatic notions of *enhypostasis* and *anhypostasis* safeguard respectively the positive existence of the assumed humanity in the person (or hypostasis) of the Logos and its non-existence as a person apart from the hypostasis of the Logos.

However, what if docetic and monophysite tendencies come to the fore and Christ's humanity is merely understood as a mask behind which the preexistent Logos does his real work?<sup>83</sup> Should we then speak of a "reciprocal enhypostasis" of the divine Logos in

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<sup>83</sup> For Karl Rahner, this is the greater danger among Christians. See "Current Problems in Christology," in *Theological Investigations*, trans. Cornelius Ernst, vol. 1 (Baltimore: Helicon, 1961), 156, n. 1.

the man Jesus and of something analogous to this reciprocity for the presence of the Spirit in Jesus?<sup>84</sup> A thorny christological issue arises with the notion of a “reciprocal enhypostasis” of the divine Logos in the man Jesus. Neither a natural nor an accidental difference in grace, Schoonenberg proposes that Jesus’ grace uniquely differs from other saints’ according to a “gradual” difference (or a difference of degree) between full and “partial sanctity.”<sup>85</sup> But then God’s presence (as Logos) in Jesus still seems to differ from other saints only in degree. Schoonenberg correctly seeks to avoid the idea that Jesus’ humanity is unlike ours in a substantial or natural sense. Yet the distinction he proposes between fullness and partiality does not seem able to reach the level of an incommunicable union between the Logos and Jesus’ human reality that only and absolutely applies to the incarnate Word.

On the other hand, we can still speak of a communicable presence of the Holy Spirit in the *incarnate* Logos for us. I have spoken in passing of the church’s sharing in Jesus’ anointing in (not his conception by) the Spirit by grace. Nevertheless, this gracious communication still depends on Jesus’ prior reception and bearing of the Spirit of God in his humanity in a way unlike others. Indeed, Jesus is a true human being like us (as Schoonenberg stresses), but also one unlike us, in that he is without sin.

In anthropological (or hamartological) terms, the unique presence of the Spirit in Jesus from conception differs from its presence in other saints in that the latter remain sinners (although forgiven ones) in this life and thus need the continual descent of the same Spirit

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<sup>84</sup> P. J. A. M. Schoonenberg, “Spirit Christology and Logos Christology,” 364-65.

<sup>85</sup> “The difference at stake could be labeled gradual, but the grade, the measure in which Jesus differs from others is unique. It is the difference of partial sanctity from the fullness which in others was either anticipated or participated. . . .” Ibid., 364.

upon them for the forgiveness of sins.<sup>86</sup> In this sense, Jesus as “holy” child has the Spirit from conception (see Lk. 1:35) in an unrepeatable way that others can neither participate in nor replicate. Of course, I do not mean to say that the presence of the Spirit in Jesus throughout the course of his life and work ceases to be a dynamic one or prevents him from undergoing real temptations. After all, it is the Spirit of God who drives Jesus into the desert to be tested by Satan. Schoonenberg does not seem to touch on how the reality of sin plays into a discussion of Jesus’ possession of the Spirit’s grace in relation to ours.

In trinitarian terms, one can also argue that Jesus’ reception of the Spirit from birth is the historical side of the Son’s eternal openness to God the Father in the Spirit.<sup>87</sup> In this sense, the Son has the Spirit by nature (or more precisely, in his hypostatic uniqueness) as the one person of the Trinity upon whom the Spirit of the Father eternally rests and even as the eternal bearer of the same Spirit. However, such a proposition presupposes a clear ontological distinction between the Son and the Spirit that in turn applies to the economy of salvation. Thus Jesus is the Logos and not the Holy Spirit.

At this point, a second problem in Schoonenberg’s notion of “reciprocal enhypostasis” arises, namely, its trinitarian presuppositions. He suggests that prior to the appearance of Jesus’ human reality in history, the Logos and the Holy Spirit were active “personal extensions” of God towards the world.<sup>88</sup> Only through Jesus’ coming into history can we affirm that the Logos and the Spirit become “persons” enhypostatized in this Jesus respectively from the moment of his incarnation and from his glorification onwards.<sup>89</sup>

According to our author, such a view presupposes a certain functional and ontological

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<sup>86</sup> See my discussion in 5.2.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

<sup>88</sup> Schoonenberg, “Spirit Christology and Logos Christology,” 367-68.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., 368-70; He writes, for example, “My ‘modalism’, if one is pleased to label it that way, is confined to the divine existence of the Logos and the Spirit before the Christ event.” Ibid., 370.

identity between the Logos and the Spirit that is only partially clarified for us in the New Testament at the moment of Jesus' glorification when the Spirit (not here the Logos) is given to the church.<sup>90</sup> Only from that moment of glorification forward can we speak of the Spirit as the fullness of the Logos's self-communication in Jesus flowing to others.<sup>91</sup>

Schoonenberg's reciprocal enhypostasis and trinitarian synthesis of Logos- and Spirit-christologies focus on Jesus' human reality as the final ontological ground for speaking about the Logos and the Spirit, but his proposals seem too close to reducing the mystery of God to the economy of salvation.<sup>92</sup> However, even if we choose not to follow Schoonenberg's revisionary project, should we not give priority at all to the Spirit's sanctification of the fruit in Mary's womb whom the Word assumes at once (of course, I am speaking in temporal terms, for sanctification and union happen simultaneously) in the face of monophysite tendencies? And is this move necessary to give full weight to the perfection of Christ's humanity as obedient Son and suffering Servant in the power of God's Spirit throughout his true human existence and, consequently, to show through this existence that he is indeed the divine Word? If not Schoonenberg's, then, what is the proper trinitarian ground for such an approach? Is it the eternal resting of the Spirit on

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<sup>90</sup> Ibid., 371-74; Ladaria has pointed out that, at least in Paul, there is no passage equivalent to John 1:14 to describe the relation Jesus-Spirit. See "Cristología del Logos y cristología del Espíritu," 356-57, nn. 9-10.

<sup>91</sup> Schoonenberg, "Spirit Christology and Logos Christology," Ibid., 374-75.

<sup>92</sup> I warn against this move in 3.1.2.2; see P. J. A. M. Schoonenberg, "Trinity—The Consummated Covenant: Theses on the Doctrine of the Trinitarian God," trans. Robert C. Ware, *Studies in Religion 5* (1975-1976): 111-16. "The salvation-economy fatherhood of God is the inner-divine fatherhood, and vice versa./ The salvation-economy filiation is the inner-divine filiation, and vice versa./ The Spirit of God at work in salvation history is the inner-divine Spirit, and vice versa./ The missions are the processions, and vice versa./ The salvation- economy relations are the inner-divine ones, and vice versa" (theses 11-15). Some qualification may be seen in the following statement: "Although trinitarian theology presupposes that God really revealed himself, his own being, to us, it must at the same time recognize the ineffability of that being" (thesis 25); Kasper sees Schoonenberg's theses as an example of a collapse of the immanent into the economic Trinity: "In eternity the distinctions between the three persons would be at best modal, and would become real only in history." Walter Kasper, *The God of Jesus Christ*, trans. Matthew J. O'Connell (N.Y.: Crossroad, 1986), 276.

the Son? These are difficult and long-standing issues in christology.<sup>93</sup> While we cannot address them all in this project, it is clear that the dangers of falling into docetic and monophysite tendencies are as real as the dangers of falling into Ebionite and adoptionist ones. For now, let us assert two basic points. First, a Logos-christology affirms that there is a true human nature that subsists in the divine person of the Word. Second, a Spirit-christology affirms that there is no access to the divine Logos apart from the concrete man Jesus of Nazareth who receives, bears, and gives the Spirit of God. In the light of Jesus' resurrection, the eschatological character of his proclamation, teaching, healings, and exorcisms have a defining (even if not exhaustive) role to play in drawing us closer to Jesus as Messiah, Savior, Lord, and finally God the Logos.

### **2.3. Jesus As Giver of God's Spirit:**

#### **The Centrality of the Paschal Mystery in a Spirit-Oriented Christology**

The purpose of this section is to look into the pneumatic dimensions of Jesus' identity as giver of the Spirit through both a look at some biblical passages bearing witness to his paschal mystery and a proposal for invigorating Logos-oriented approaches to atonement

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<sup>93</sup> These issues are hotly debated among proponents of contemporary Roman Catholic Spirit-christologies. The incarnation is, of course, an *ad extra* unified work of all the divine persons grounded in their common divine nature, but the biblical data allows for more *proper* statements, i.e., affirmations that deal with what is unique to each person of the Trinity in distinction from the others. Congar elucidates the sense of Luke 1:35 by ascribing the production (creation) and sanctification of Jesus' humanity to the Holy Spirit and its assumption to the Word. See *Holy Spirit*, vol. 1, 25, n. 6. Yet the matter is far from settled, for the critical question of logical precedence remains. The issue is often framed in terms of the scholastic (Thomistic) distinction between grace of union and habitual grace in Jesus and the priority of the former over the latter. In a review of Ralph Del Colle's *Christ and the Spirit: Spirit-Christology in Trinitarian Perspective* (N.Y.: Oxford, 1994), 120, Thomas Weinandy takes to task a reading of David Coffey, in which Del Colle posits the logical priority of sanctification (habitual grace) over hypostatic union (grace of union) in the Spirit's role in the incarnation. Weinandy believes that adoptionism and Nestorianism will win the day unless this priority is reversed. See *The Thomist* 59 (1995): 656-59. Weinandy prefers to say that "[T]he Father, in one and the same act, brings the humanity into existence, unites it to the person of the Son, and sanctifies it, all by the power of the Spirit" (658). On the other hand, Coffey argues that "[T]he Holy Spirit, in the one act created the humanity of Jesus from nothing, radically sanctified it in the fullness of grace, and united it hypostatically to the preexistent divine Son." *Deus Trinitas: The Doctrine of the Triune God* (N.Y.: Oxford, 1999), 148. In response to Weinandy's review, he states that the Word cannot assume what he does not have: "We cannot conceive a union of divinity and humanity apart from a humanity that already exists, and indeed exists as disposed for union." *Ibid.*, 183, n. 75.

theories in the light of a Spirit-oriented christology. Seen as one theological/liturgical moment, Jesus' suffering and death on the cross (Lent), resurrection (Easter), and pouring out of the Spirit from God the Father upon the church (Pentecost) together constitute the paschal mystery. This series of events directs our minds to Jesus' identity as giver, sender, or dispenser of the Spirit unto us in God's economy of salvation. The Spirit whom the Son openly receives from his Father and possesses as his own in inexhaustible fullness throughout his ministry is the same Spirit from the Father whom Jesus pours out to others in freedom and out of love at the end of his earthly mission.

Through the anointing of his beloved Son and Servant with the Spirit at the Jordan, the Father inaugurates the irruption of God's kingdom among us. Yet the final goal of this eschatological inbreaking of the kingdom in the words and deeds of the Son is nothing less than the universal outpouring of the Spirit of the Father through Jesus to all who call upon his name (Acts 2:17-21; cf. Joel 3:1-5). Only from the moment of his resurrection, ascension, and session at the right hand of God onwards does this particular receiver and bearer of God's Spirit become the universal giver of the same Spirit unto others. What the baptism in the Jordan is for Jesus, Pentecost is for the church. So the baptized one becomes the baptizer, the anointed one becomes the anointing one: "He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit" (Jn. 1:33). Yet the conditional moment in the move from Jesus' bearing to his dispensing of the Spirit is the crucifixion—an act in which the Spirit does not cease to accompany the anointed Son and suffering Servant.<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> Moltmann speaks of a *pneumatologia crucis*, in which the self-emptying or kenosis of the Spirit as "Shekinah" in Jesus' death (esp. Heb. 9:14) serves as the "cost" for Jesus' giving of the Spirit to his people. See *The Spirit of Life*, 60-71.



### 2.3.1. Lent, Easter, and Pentecost: Jesus' Glorification and the Gift of the Spirit

As I have already intimated, the Father's voice at the Jordan River indicates that the messianic mission of his beloved Son will have the characteristics of Isaiah's suffering and exalted Servant.<sup>95</sup> By willingly receiving the baptism in water from a hesitant John the Baptist, Jesus opens himself up to the fulfillment of Old Testament hopes concerning the promised Messiah's activity: "Let it be so now; for it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness" (Mt. 3:15).<sup>96</sup> Jesus' baptism in water eventually leads to his baptism in blood or death (Lk. 12:50). At one point, he asks the sons of Zebedee, who wanted to share in his glory, if they were also willing to "be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with" (Mk. 10:38). Mark relates this event in the context of a pericope that ultimately points to Jesus' giving of his life as the highest act of service (10:45).

Jesus' imminent death on the cross is a baptism of blood that he takes upon himself to fulfill the mission that he willingly accepted at the Jordan. There is a sense in which the pneumatic dimensions of the Christ-event find their point of convergence on the cross. Jesus' anointing at the Jordan finds its fulfillment in the baptism of blood on Calvary, and from the cross Jesus hands over (or gives up) his Spirit to the Father in anticipation of his definitive giving of the same Spirit as risen Lord to the church. Let us now look more deeply into the pneumatological link between Jesus' death on the cross, resurrection, and giving of the Spirit at Pentecost.

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<sup>95</sup> All the Synoptics quote Isaiah 42:1, "with you I am well pleased," the beginning of the first Servant Song (for the other songs, see Isa. 49:1-7, 50:4-11, 52:13—53:12); as far as John's Gospel goes, there are some manuscripts that make an allusion to Isaiah 42:1 through the use of the title "God's chosen one" (1:34). Not at a loss for words to describe the Son's mission of suffering, John in any case refers to him as "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (1:29).

<sup>96</sup> On righteousness in 3:15, see Davies and Allison, *Gospel according to Saint Matthew*, 325-27.

I have referred to the Son's reception of the Spirit *from God* "without measure" (Jn. 3:34).<sup>97</sup> Could this affirmation also apply to the reception of the Spirit *from the Son* by whoever believes in him (v. 36a)? John writes, "For the one [i.e., the Son] whom God (*ho theos*) sent speaks the words of God, for not by measure does he give [*didōsin*] the Spirit" (translation mine). The question is: Who gives [*didōsin*] the Spirit? God or the Son? A number of manuscripts clearly state that "God gives the Spirit" [*ho theos didōsin to pneuma*].<sup>98</sup> If God is the Spirit's giver, then the Son receives and bears it. After all, this give-and-take is consistent with the statement that immediately follows: "The Father loves the Son and has given [*dedōken*] all things in his hands" (v. 35, translation mine). We have assumed this interpretation from the beginning of the chapter. But what if the Son is also the Spirit's *giver* in this passage, the one whom God sent to speak his words and give the Spirit without measure to whoever believes in him?<sup>99</sup> Is this perhaps a case of intentional ambiguity, in which the same passage points at once to two complementary aspects of Jesus' pneumatic identity both in relation to the Father and to us? If so, then, John makes a remarkable theological statement that anticipates a reading of his Gospel from a pneumatological angle, namely, that the Son who gives the Spirit to believers first receives and bears the same Spirit from the Father. John is saying that the Father gives to his Son the Spirit whom the Son then gives to the church upon his glorification.

If this is placing too much weight on this particular passage, John can still arrive at the same conclusion through other pericopes. In the broader context of his Gospel, John's understanding of the relation between the glorified Son, the Spirit, and the church

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<sup>97</sup> See 2.2.1.

<sup>98</sup> Nestle-Aland cites, among others, A, C<sup>2</sup>, Θ, Ψ, D, 086, and f<sup>3</sup>. See *Novum Testamentum Graece*, 27th ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1993), 255.

<sup>99</sup> As I shall soon show, John's statement that on the cross Jesus "gave up his spirit" (*paredōken to pneuma*, Jn. 19:30) can be interpreted from a pneumatological angle in the light of the whole Gospel.

supports the proposition above.<sup>100</sup> Although Jesus specifically gives believers in John 3:36a “eternal life” (not exactly “the Spirit”), he later links the notion of “eternal life” with Jesus’ giving of “water” to the Samaritan woman and other believers like herself: “The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life” (4:14). In chapter seven, John refers to the Spirit “which believers in him [i.e., Jesus] were to receive” at the time of his glorification as “rivers of living water” (vv. 38-39a). The Gospel at once acquires an orientation to Jesus’ coming glorification: “[F]or as yet there was no Spirit, because Jesus was not yet glorified.”<sup>101</sup> John brings together Jesus’ death, resurrection, and breathing of the Spirit on the disciples under one theological conception, that of Jesus’ identity as giver of the Spirit.

Ultimately, Jesus breathes out the Spirit on his disciples as the risen Lord (20:22). Prior to Easter, however, John tells us that on the cross Jesus already “gave up his spirit” (*paredōken to pneuma*, Jn. 19:30), a literal reference to the loss of his life but also probably a symbolic one to his imminent giving of the Spirit to those who believe in him.<sup>102</sup> If this constitutes yet another case of intentional ambiguity, then John has brilliantly brought together anthropological and christological notions of *pneuma* under one conception. In John 19:30, I argue that one can posit such a symbolic sense of the term by extension in the light of at least four relevant passages in the Gospel, namely,

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<sup>100</sup> Some biblical studies on such relation include Antonio García-Moreno, “El Espíritu Santo, fruto de la Cruz,” in *El Espíritu Santo y la Iglesia: XIX Simposio Internacional de Teología de la Universidad de Navarra*, ed. Pedro Rodríguez et al. (Spain: Navarra, 1999), 71-77; Andrzej F. Dziuba, “El Espíritu Santo como don del Señor glorificado,” in *ibid.*, 157-70; and Alcides Pinto da Silva, “L’interpretazione di Giov. 7, 37-39,” in *Credo in Spiritum*, vol. 2, 855-64.

<sup>101</sup> Porsch, *El Espíritu Santo*, esp. 27-34.

<sup>102</sup> “Jesus, in the fourth gospel, ‘breathes out’ over Mary and John, who are, as the Church, at the foot of the cross, and thus hands over the spirit. It is, of course, not possible to say that this is the Holy Spirit. John shows that the Holy Spirit is given on the evening of Easter (20:22). At the symbolic level, however, which is endowed in John’s gospel with such intense significance, however, there is clearly a very close connection between the gift of the Spirit and Jesus’ self-sacrifice. . . . This is, finally, a further example of a term with double intention of the kind that John liked to use. Jesus breathes his last breath and, through his death, which he willingly accepts, hands over the Spirit to his disciples.” Congar, *Holy Spirit*, vol. 1, 52.

4:14, 7:37-39, 20:22, and even 19:34. In the first two passages, as we have already seen, “water” is used as an image for the Spirit; in particular, the second one tells that the same water (= Spirit) will not be given until Jesus’ glorification. In the third passage, Jesus finally gives the Spirit to his disciples, bestowing on them the power to forgive and retain sins. Before, in the fourth one, we learn that from the pierced side of the crucified, “at once blood and water came out” (19:34), thereby uniting the bloody reality of the rejected Messiah’s death with the image of water once again. Between the first two and the last two passages, we find the text under consideration, the assertion that Jesus handed over his *pneuma* at the cross (19:34). At a symbolic level, John can point to an intimate connection between the cross (blood) and the gift of the Spirit (water).<sup>103</sup> This link is not surprising in the light of the Baptist’s reference to Jesus’ coming baptizing with the Spirit (1:33), the placing of Jesus’ giving of the Spirit (= water) at his glorification (7:39), and the significant datum that in the Gospel Jesus’ obedience unto death already points to his glorification (e.g., 13:31-32; 17:1, 5). Moreover, John presents Jesus’ death on the cross as the point of entrance to his glorification, the climax of God’s love for the world (3:16, cf. 1 Jn. 4:9-10), and the fulfillment of the Son’s mission (*tetelestai*, “It is finished,” 19:30). From this angle, he seems especially eager to see the event as a constitutive one for Christ’s giving of the Spirit to the church out of self-sacrificial love. The Holy Spirit may then be seen as the paschal fruit and gift of the crucified Christ to the church. What follows from the painful cross is Jesus’ breathing of the Spirit on the disciples as their risen Lord for the purpose of giving them the authority to forgive sins in the case of the penitent and withhold forgiveness from the impenitent (Jn. 20:23). So we must also see

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<sup>103</sup> For a comparison of this passage with 1 John 5:6-8, see Miguel Ángel Tábet, “El Testimonio «del Espíritu, y del agua y la sangre» (1 Jn 5,8),” in *El Espíritu Santo y la Iglesia*, 79-90.

Christ's words, "It is finished," in the light of the whole paschal mystery, which includes for John both his imminent resurrection and giving of the Spirit to the church. Without the resurrection and the sending of the Holy Spirit, Jesus' death on the cross remains unfulfilled for us and we are left with no hope in the forgiveness of sins.

The Spirit of the Father who remains on the incarnate Son also accompanies him in the midst of rejection all the way to his crucifixion. If Jesus' whole life in the power of the Spirit is an act of loving obedience to his Father for our sake, then his sacrificial self-giving on the cross may be seen as the ultimate unblemished offering to the Father on our behalf made "through the eternal Spirit" [*dia pneumatos aiōniou*] (Heb. 9:14). As in all events of the Son's life of faithfulness, the Spirit mediates the Son's highest act of love offered to the Father on the cross for the sins of the world.

Vanhoye contests the interpretation of Hebrews 9:14 that sees "the eternal Spirit" as simply Christ's divinity on the grounds that such identification is a later notion often read into the letter.<sup>104</sup> Nor is the identification of "the eternal Spirit" with Jesus' spirit (as separate from his body upon death) acceptable; after all, how can a bodiless spirit offer his blood as a sacrifice?<sup>105</sup> Rather, Vanhoye sees the "eternal Spirit" as the animating agent behind Jesus' self-offering and God as the receiver of his sacrificial oblation.<sup>106</sup> The action of the Holy Spirit in Jesus took place by means of an internal force in Jesus that transformed his death into a covenantal act enacted both in perfect obedience to God and in solidarity with human beings.<sup>107</sup> Montague suggests another option. He interprets the "eternal Spirit" as "the sphere of existence in which the exalted Jesus presents his

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<sup>104</sup> A. Vanhoye, "L'azione dello Spirito Santo nella Passione de Cristo secondo l'Epistola agli Ebrei," in *Credo in Spiritum*, vol. 1, 761; cf. my discussion of early orthodox Spirit-christology in 2.1.1.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, 760.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, 771.

sacrifice eternally to the Father . . . [on the grounds that] . . . [t]his identification of the risen Lord with the realm of the Spirit is Pauline (1 Cor 15:45; 2 Cor 3:17-18).”<sup>108</sup> Both interpretations have merits because Jesus lives both his earthly and glorified existence in the eschatological Spirit. The cross stands at the center in the transition from one state of existence to the next and thus from Jesus’ bearing of the Spirit as suffering Servant from Jordan to Golgotha to his giving of the same as exalted Servant and Lord from the time of his glorification.

Paul and Luke see the gift of the Holy Spirit to the church as the gift of the risen and ascended Christ who seats in power at God’s right hand (Eph. 4:7-8; Acts 2:33). As risen Lord and Messiah, Jesus pours out the “gift” (*dōrean*) of the Holy Spirit whom he first received from the Father as promise for the forgiveness of all who call upon his name with a contrite and trusting heart (Acts 2:32-39; cf. 5:30-32). This Spirit is given to the church for empowerment for missionary witness to Jesus (Acts 1:8); in this sense, the Holy Spirit who guides the church’s mission to proclaim the risen Lord is “the Spirit of Jesus” (see Acts 16:6-7). For Paul, the last Adam takes upon himself the sin of the first Adam in order to give us forgiveness and resurrection life through his Spirit (1 Cor. 15:20-23; cf. Rom. 5:12-21). As risen Lord, “the last Adam became a life-giving spirit” (1 Cor. 15:45). This last title may point to a functional identity between the risen Lord and the Spirit from the perspective of the church, for whom living “in Christ” is the same as living “in the Spirit.”<sup>109</sup> Similarly, the church at once experiences in faith and hope both the risen Christ and the eschatological Spirit as “the first fruits” [*aparchē*] of her coming resurrection (1 Cor. 15:20; Rom. 8:23; cf. the term *arrabōn*, e.g., 2 Cor. 1:22).

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<sup>108</sup> Montague, *Holy Spirit*, 317.

<sup>109</sup> James D. G. Dunn, “Rediscovering the Spirit (2),” in *Pneumatology*, 78-79; cf. Congar, *Holy Spirit*, vol. 1, 39.

Thus Schweizer can argue that the risen Christ's identity as *pneuma* is a material one "[i]n so far as Christ is regarded in His significance for the community, in His powerful action upon it...."<sup>110</sup> Without minimizing such functional identity at the level of faith or the blessings of Christ's giving of the Spirit to the church (e.g., the forgiveness of sins, empowerment for witness, and our final redemption or resurrection in the flesh), we must inquire further into the exalted Lord's *own* pneumatic identity as giver of God's Spirit.

God established Jesus, the Son of David "according to the flesh" [*kata sarx*], as Son of God in power "according to the Spirit of holiness" [*kata pneuma hagiōsunēs*] through his resurrection from the dead (Rom. 1:3-4). In his earthly state of existence, Jesus was manifested and put to death "in the flesh" [*in sarxi, mēn sarxi*], but God also vindicated and made him alive "in the Spirit" [*in pneumatī* or *de pneumatī*] (respectively 1 Tim. 3:16 and 1 Pet. 3:18). Exegetes are in general agreement that the parallelism *pneuma/sarx* in all these passages (as in the case of Heb. 9:13-14) refers neither to a distinction between Christ's physical body and soul nor to one between his humanity and divinity.<sup>111</sup> They typically interpret *in pneumatī* or *pneumatī* impersonally as a dative of reference (instead of one of means) to refer to the realm, sphere, or state of eschatological existence into (or according to) which Jesus enters upon his exaltation (above all, his resurrection) after his

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<sup>110</sup> Eduard Schweizer, *TNDT*, vol. 6 (1968), 417-20, 433; J. D. G. Dunn affirms that in passages such as Romans 1:3-4, 1 Peter 3:18, 1 Timothy 3:16, 1 Corinthians 15:45, and Hebrews 9:13-14 the authors appear to use "deliberate ambiguity between Christ's Spirit and the Holy Spirit—precisely because the Spirit which empowered Christ from Jordan onward was now wholly identified with Christ as his Spirit, the Spirit of Christ." See "Jesus—Flesh and Spirit: An Exposition of Romans 1:3-4," in *The Christ and the Spirit*, vol. 1, *Christology* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1998), 152, 165-66. However, Dunn does not interpret 2 Corinthians 3:17-18 in this manner. See "2 Corinthians 3:17 'The Lord is the Spirit,'" in *Christology*, 115-25.

<sup>111</sup> Schweizer, *TDNT*, vol. 6, 417, n. 555; William Joseph Dalton, *Christ's Proclamation to the Spirits: A Study of 1 Peter 3:18—4:6*, 2d. rev. ed. *Analecta Biblica*, vol. 23 (Rome: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1989), 136-41 (hereafter *1 Peter*); Gordon D. Fee, *God's Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1994), 482-83, 764-65 (hereafter *Presence*).

life and work on earth.<sup>112</sup> In the case of 1 Peter 3:18, opting for the notion that Jesus was made alive through or by means of the Spirit—in other words, using a dative of means—can leave us with the odd idea in the first part of the parallelism that he was put to death by means of the flesh.<sup>113</sup> Indirectly, however, Dalton looks for a link between the more impersonal notion of a realm of spirit and the eschatological Spirit itself as a personal agent of actions so that the ideas of personal being, presence, and activity merge.<sup>114</sup>

For Romans 1:4, Fee similarly affirms that “the sphere of spirit life . . . in Paul would be another way of referring to the sphere of our final eschatological existence, which will be Spirit life par excellence.”<sup>115</sup> His instructive comments on 1 Timothy 3:16 also seek to bring together explicit and implicit senses of the phrase “in the spirit/Spirit”:

‘[I]n the spirit’ most likely refers to the new ‘spiritual,’ supernatural realm of existence, entered by Christ through his resurrection. However, this choice of words is scarcely accidental. Whatever else, this new ‘sphere’ is precisely that of the Spirit. Just as Christ when ‘in the flesh’ ministered in the power of the Spirit, so now Christ, by virtue of his resurrection, has entered the spiritual/supernatural realm, the realm of the Spirit, which is the final goal of those for whom the present gift of the Spirit is the . . . ‘down-payment.’<sup>116</sup>

Although Fee sees the link between Jesus’ risen status in the realm of the Spirit and our resurrection through his Spirit (cf. Rom. 8:11), he sees no explicit scriptural reference to

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<sup>112</sup> Schweitzer, *TNDT*, vol. 6, 416-17, 433; Montague, *Holy Spirit*, 204, 230, 314, 317; Dalton, *1 Peter*, 141; Fee, *Presence*, 481-82, 766.

<sup>113</sup> Dalton, *1 Peter*, 141. However, Dalton is open to the idea that 1 Timothy 3:16 may be interpreted through a dative of means.

<sup>114</sup> He suggests that *in pneumati* or *pneumati* “designates not so much the action of the Spirit, but the *sphere* of the Spirit. In a number of Pauline passages, it is difficult to know whether ‘spirit’ should be taken as personal being, or as the new life communicated by the presence and activity of this person. One meaning fuses into the other.” *Ibid.*, 139.

<sup>115</sup> *Presence*, 481.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*, 766.



the Spirit as the agent who raises Jesus from the dead and instead reserves this function for God.<sup>117</sup> While favoring the dative of reference for *pneuma/sarx* passages, Montague, on the other hand, does not hesitate to ascribe Jesus' resurrection to the Holy Spirit as he comments on Romans 1:4 and 1 Timothy 3:16.<sup>118</sup> Dunn has suggested that the functional identity between the risen Lord and the Spirit in the earliest church's experience may have impeded the biblical writers from explicitly making the statement that Jesus was raised through or by means of the Spirit.<sup>119</sup> Whether this is the case or not, I do agree with Dunn's argument that such teaching is implicit in the ideas that our resurrection takes place through the Spirit (Rom. 8:11) and that Christ is the firstfruits of our future resurrection (1 Cor. 15:20).<sup>120</sup> Although Fee rightly wants to speak of God as the ultimate personal agent of Jesus' resurrection—a principle that I also apply to the resurrection of Christians—I argue that this concern for preserving the Father's agency should not exclude the idea that the Spirit actually mediates this action to the humanity of the Son and through his to ours.

A Spirit-oriented christology allows us to affirm that a genuine participation of the saints in the resurrection of Jesus Christ must amount to a full participation in his Spirit-glorified humanity. The affirmation that our bodies will be raised at the last day through the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ, cannot stand unless Jesus himself was raised from the dead by God the Father through the same Spirit. Therefore, we must be willing to ground the future glorification of our bodies in the life-giving work of the eschatological Spirit whom Christ fully possesses as the last Adam in his glorified body and from the

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<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, 484, 553, 765.

<sup>118</sup> *Holy Spirit*, 204, 314.

<sup>119</sup> "Jesus—Flesh and Spirit: An Exposition of Romans 1:3-4," in *Christology*, 152.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*

moment of his glorification forward fully gives to his church. From this perspective, the identity of “the last Adam” as “life-giving Spirit” (1 Cor. 15:45) cannot only be seen as a strictly functional one on the part of the church’s knowledge and experience of faith, but must also point to the risen Lord’s *own glorified humanity* and thus to his pneumatic identity as bearer and especially giver of God’s Spirit to her.<sup>121</sup>

In the light of the paschal mystery, we can return to the Jordan and see in the Father’s unction of the incarnate Son the condition for the communication of the Spirit to his disciples as Lord to make them adopted sons (and daughters) of the Father in the Spirit (Rom. 8:15-16, Gal. 4:4-17). It seems that Jesus’ reception of the Spirit at the Jordan has the character of a new presence of the Spirit in him for others, which his bearing of the Spirit from eternity or his reception of the Spirit from conception per se did not have. As I have pointed out, the evangelists only speak of Jesus’ baptizing of others with the Spirit from the moment of his being baptized with the same at the Jordan. In this sense, Justin’s answer to Trypho and Athanasius’s response to the Arians are correct if seen in such a way that Christ does not need the baptism to be constituted as preexistent Son or Word begotten of the Father in eternity. However, their views must also include the idea that Christ otherwise needs the anointing in his humanity to be constituted as adopted Son born of the Father for us (or as head of the church).<sup>122</sup> In a non-adoptionist sense, then,

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<sup>121</sup> “It is the Spirit, as the content and the end of the Promise and therefore as eschatological gift, who establishes ‘Jesus,’ that is, Christ in his crucified humanity, in his condition as the ‘Son of God in power’ and as Kyrios. The Spirit permeates him and makes him a *Pneuma zōopoion*, a spiritual being giving life. It is therefore not difficult to understand why Paul attributes activities and consequences in the Christian life to either Christ or to the Spirit, to such an extent that he apparently identifies the two.” Congar, *Holy Spirit*, vol. 1, 39; Montague writes, “For while Adam came to *have life* as a result of God’s inbreathing, Christ became a *life-giving spirit*. This apparently implies that Paul sees the Father’s inbreathing into the body of Jesus in the tomb the power of the Holy Spirit . . . and the result was that the risen body of Jesus possessed the Spirit in a way to give it to whoever contacts the risen Lord through faith and sacrament.” *Holy Spirit*, 142.

<sup>122</sup> See, e.g., Orbe, *Unción*, 635-36.

Jesus' rebirth as obedient Son in his anointed and exalted humanity in and through the Spirit serves as the condition for our adoption as sons (and daughters) of God through baptism (anointing) into Jesus' death and resurrection.

Let us review some of these legitimate ecclesiological implications of Jesus' anointing already reviewed in chapter one. By descending upon the incarnate Son, Irenaeus tells us, the Spirit of God becomes "accustomed in fellowship with Him to dwell in the human race . . . working the will of the Father in them, and renewing them from their old habits into the newness of Christ."<sup>123</sup> In other words, God "had promised by the prophets that He would anoint Him, so that we, receiving from the abundance of His unction, might be saved."<sup>124</sup> In the same way, Athanasius reminds us that the Son's baptism "did not take place for promotion of the Word, but again for our sanctification, that we might share in His anointing."<sup>125</sup> We can also add to these witnesses Gregory Nazianzen, who speaks of Jesus' purification at the Jordan river as a mystery of salvation that takes place "for my Purification, or rather, sanctifying the waters by His purification" in order to accomplish "my perfection and return to the first condition of Adam."<sup>126</sup> As I noted earlier on, a Spirit-christology can assume these ecclesiological perspectives as long as it grounds Jesus' giving of the Spirit to the church from the moment of his glorification onwards in his own constitutive (and not only proclamatory or confirming) receiving of the same at the Jordan and then again as Lord upon completion of his mission as obedient Son and suffering Servant on our behalf.

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<sup>123</sup> *Against Heresies* 3.17.1, 444.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.9.3, 423.

<sup>125</sup> *Against the Arians* 1.12.47, 333.

<sup>126</sup> *Oration XXXVIII* 16, in *NPNF*<sup>2</sup>, vol. 7, 350-51; cf. *Oration XXXIX* 15, in *ibid.*, 357; on the patristic theme of the sanctification of the waters as a prefigurement of Christian baptism, see Carmelo Granado, "Pneumatologia de San Cirilo de Jerusalén," esp. 448-56; Luis F. Ladaria, "Jesús y el Espíritu Santo según Gregorio de Elvira," *Gregorianum* 81, no. 2 (2000): 309-29; and McDonnell, *Baptism of Jesus*, 55, 67-68.

### **2.3.2. Anselm, Abelard, and Aúlen on the Atonement: Revisiting Logos-Oriented Approaches in the Light of a Spirit-Oriented Christology Centered on the Paschal Mystery**

By placing the identity and work of Jesus in the context of his acts and relations to the Father and for the neighbor's sake, a Spirit-oriented christology can show that atonement is a work of the persons of the Trinity for us. This is to say, more specifically, that God the Father ultimately reconciles the whole world to himself through his faithful Son and at once in the eschatological power of his Spirit. A Logos-oriented view tends to frame the discussion in terms of the divine-human dialectic expressed in Christ's own inner-constitution as God-man and the place of divinity and/or humanity in reconciliation. In Abelard's case, there is a tendency to stress Christ's atoning work as an example of self-sacrificial love for the church.<sup>127</sup> In providing us with a broader economic-trinitarian framework for understanding Anselmian (Latin), Abelardian, and Aúlenian or classic views of atonement, I argue that reading the story of Jesus' identity as receiver, bearer and giver of God's Spirit can assume the strengths of each one of these approaches or theories. These strengths are respectively and comparatively the central place of Christ's *human* obedience unto death in atonement (Anselm), the affirmation that reconciliation is always and exclusively the eschatological work *of God* against his enemies (Aúlen on the classic approach), and the non-exclusive stress on the church's subjective appropriation of atonement in self-sacrificial Christ-like works of love (Abelard).

In a Logos-oriented reading of Jesus' glorification, his death on the cross becomes the natural outcome of the Word's assumption of humanity unto himself. As God, Jesus *can*

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<sup>127</sup> Similarly, we recall the *exemplary* character of Jesus' baptism for the church, not for himself (see 2.1.2).

make satisfaction for our sins; as man, he *ought* to do so.<sup>128</sup> So goes Anselm's view of the atonement and the answer to his question "Why the God-man?" To arrive at this conclusion, Anselm (ca. 1033-1109) first defines the nature of "God" by ranking the attribute of justice over that of love. Let us frame Anselm's thought in logical fashion. Since the proposition "God's being is supreme justice" takes priority over "God is love," then God must necessarily maintain his honor and dignity whenever sins are committed against him for his own sake, i.e., for the sake of justice.<sup>129</sup> Otherwise, God is no longer just, and thus not God either, for to be just is God's essence.<sup>130</sup> This argument logically requires an infinite satisfaction for sins that only *God* can pay and only *man* must pay. Incarnation must occur so that, in the God-man, satisfaction is made to God for sinners.

If a reversal of priorities occurs and the attribute of love takes precedence over divine justice, then we begin to approach in some measure the thought of Peter Abelard (1079-1142). Because God is ultimately love, God can freely forgive and deliver from punishment precisely because of the forbearance of his infinite mercy (= righteousness or justice) for the sinner in Christ.<sup>131</sup> Should God then necessarily require the death of an innocent man as satisfaction for sins? Even before his passion, Christ forgives the sins of many and delivers them from Satan.<sup>132</sup> Is this not enough for God? Anselm continues:

Indeed, how cruel and wicked it seems that anyone should demand the blood of an innocent person as the price for anything, or that it should in any way please him that an innocent man should be slain—still less that God should consider the

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<sup>128</sup> *Cur Deus Homo?* 2.6, in *St. Anselm: Basic Writings*, trans. S. N. Deane, 2d ed. (Chicago: Open Court, 1962), 259.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.12, 219-20.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.13, 220-21.

<sup>131</sup> *Epistle to the Romans* 2.1, in *LCC*, vol. 10, *A Scholastic Miscellany: Anselm to Ockham*, ed. and trans. Eugene R. Fairweather (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1961), 279.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.2, 282.

death of his Son so agreeable that by it he should be reconciled to the whole world!<sup>133</sup>

Anselm's argument on this point may be more nuanced than Abelard gives him credit for. Indeed, Anselm states that the Father wills or wishes the death of his Son in order to restore to the human race the life and happiness lost in paradise.<sup>134</sup> Yet another crucial statement accompanies this thought. Although Christ obeyed the Father in his humanity, he was not constrained by his obedience to suffer death for sins because—unlike other human beings—he had no sin.<sup>135</sup> Admittedly, in his humanity Christ speaks of doing not his own but the Father's will, but in his divinity his will is really one with the Father's.<sup>136</sup> In the end, Anselm asks us to hold two ideas in tension: 1) the Father wills the death of the Son to restore the human race to its prior condition in paradise, and 2) the Son wills his own death without coercion from the Father. In the same light, Anselm asks us to affirm that the Father is not pleased with the suffering of his Son, but with the choice of the Son to suffer of his own accord for our sake.<sup>137</sup>

Having given Anselm his credit, Abelard rightly wants to understand God's love for humanity in Christ in terms of his righteousness or unconditional love. Here love is the ultimate predicate for God, not retributive justice that requires either the punishment of the sinner or satisfaction in the God-man. Of course, by biblical standards, punishment for sins must be taken very seriously and an unqualified love in the form of universalism is out of the question. But our authors do not frame their discussion in this manner. For

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<sup>133</sup> Ibid., 283.

<sup>134</sup> *Cur Deus Homo?* 1.9.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid. Was Christ's humanity inherently mortal, so that if he had not died by crucifixion he should have eventually died anyway? Anselm says no. For mortality is not inherent in human nature essentially, but only as an accident due to corruption from sin. Since Christ had no sin, he lays down his own life for us. Ibid., 2.11.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid., 1.9.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid., 1.10, 213.

now, suffice it to say that Abelard sees the ground for our justification by the blood of Christ and reconciliation to God in him in God's own great love for us demonstrated in his Son by his incarnation and perseverance unto death.<sup>138</sup>

Through such an "act of grace" —indeed, an exemplary one, but not exclusively so— God "has more fully bound us to himself by love; with the result that our hearts should be enkindled by such a gift of divine grace, and true charity should not now shrink from enduring anything for him."<sup>139</sup> Overall, the theological emphasis falls on the believer's internal appropriation of God's grace and love for us shown in Christ's life and death. As Abelard describes it, "our redemption through Christ's suffering is that deeper affection [*dilectio*] in us which not only frees us from slavery to sin, but also wins for us the true liberty of sons of God, so that we do all things out of love rather than fear. . . ."<sup>140</sup>

Anselm and Abelard respectively stress so-called objective and subjective views of atonement, but they arrive at their conclusions through the same procedure. They define God by prioritizing divine attributes (i.e., justice or love), which then serve as controlling variables into which Jesus and his work are later situated. A Logos-oriented christology is not immune to assuming previously ranked divine attributes that in turn interpret all of Jesus' life and mission.<sup>141</sup> For Anselm, God's justice requires the Son's incarnation and death. From another angle, Christ's inner-constitution as God-man serves as the logical possibility for reading the cross as a payment or satisfaction for vindicating God's justice.

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<sup>138</sup> *Epistle to the Romans* 2.3, 283.

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*, 284.

<sup>141</sup> David P. Scaer, for example, has noted that defining Jesus' identity as the crucified one in terms of *a priori* divine attributes is inevitably susceptible to personal hierarchical classification or philosophical meanings. "Homo Factus Est as the Revelation of God," *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 65, no. 2 (2001): 114-15, 122.

Gustaf Aúlen (1879-1978), Swedish Lutheran theologian, fomented a contemporary revival of the classic or *Christus Victor* view or theory of the atonement as a final victory of “God in Christ” over his enemies.<sup>142</sup> His response to Anselm and Abelard seeks to provide a proper account of the divine-human dialectic in the work of atonement on the basis of a theology of grace. In the framework of this divine-human dialectic, he posits a “thoroughly objective” approach that sees atonement as a “*continuous*” divine act, which in terms of grace amounts to “*a movement of God to man.*”<sup>143</sup> Seen through Aúlen’s eyes, we may say that Anselm’s approach does not seem as “subjective” (or Pelagian?) as Abelard’s but still needs a semi-Pelagian theology of grace as its presupposition. In Abelard’s thoroughly “subjective” view, “no atonement is needed, and all the emphasis is on *man’s movement to God.*”<sup>144</sup> The dominant Latin type stands in the middle of the two views. It represents the option “in which the act of Atonement has indeed its origin in God’s will, but is in its carrying-out, an offering made to God by Christ as man and on man’s behalf, and may therefore be called a *discontinuous* divine work.”<sup>145</sup> Aúlen concludes that “[T]he essential Christian idea of a way of God to man, which dominates the classic type, is weakened in the Latin type, and lost in the subjective type. . . .”<sup>146</sup>

Above all, Aúlen conceives of a theology of grace that applies to all human beings and later situates Jesus into this framework. Since human beings cannot move towards God or pay satisfaction for their sins to God, then the same principle must hold for Christ’s human nature. Aúlen reverses Anselm’s theology of grace, which in the broader context

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<sup>142</sup> *Christus Victor: An Historical Study of the Three Main Types of the Idea of the Atonement*, trans. A. G. Hebert (N.Y.: Macmillan, 1969).

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*, 171.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*, 21-22.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.*, 171-72.



of Aúlen's analysis may be perceived to be strongly influenced by the medieval Roman theology of penance and merit, and therefore to require in some degree a movement from man towards God. In short, Aúlen defines human nature and then proceeds to place God's work in Christ into this scheme. Is this not just the opposite of defining "God" first according to his attributes (as Anselm and Abelard do)? Is first defining "humanity" another way to begin with questions typically asked of the incarnation, i.e., of the *how* of Christ's individual constitution as God-man?

Historically, pneumatology does not appear to have made any significant contribution in views of the atonement. Without denying the possibility of looking at Christ's work through the lens of the divine-human dialectic grounded in the incarnation, I ask if each event in Jesus' life and work as Son in the Spirit must not be taken in itself as the starting point for reflection on its own significance. Is there any way to relate the three types of concerns exhibited by the aforementioned atonement theories, which Aúlen so strongly placed in opposition to one another, through a Spirit-oriented approach to the Christ-event centered on the paschal mystery?

Aúlen's view of reconciliation as a victory of God over his enemies (e.g., sin, death, and the devil) clearly favors an eschatological view of Jesus' whole life and work that allows us to see his death within the broader perspective of what went on before and after Calvary. Within this framework, events like Jesus' temptation, exorcisms, descent into hell, and resurrection become special instances of God's vanquishing of his enemies in Christ.<sup>147</sup> Yet Christ's humanity still appears to have a merely passive role in God's victories, for Aúlen truly fails to see it as genuinely active in the accomplishment of

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<sup>147</sup> The *Christus Victor* theme fits particularly well with Christ's descent into hell. See David P. Scaer, *Christology*, vol. 6 of *Confessional Lutheran Dogmatics*, ed. Robert D. Preus (Ft. Wayne, Ind.: The International Foundation for Lutheran Confessional Research, 1989), 83-88.

atonement. He does not take into full consideration that although the humanity of Christ is like ours, it is also *without sin*. For Anselm, since death does not essentially inhere in the human constitution of Christ (as in the case of sinners), he can freely lay down his life of his own accord for us. Neither does Aúlen take into proper account Anselm's broader christologico-trinitarian assumption that Christ's uncoerced human will is one (or is in harmony) with his divine will and thus one with God the Father's will.

For Anselm, Christ died "of his own accord" for two reasons: 1) his perfect obedience to God as man, whereby he spoke and lived in truth and justice, made him an object of persecution; and 2) God cannot compel an innocent man to die for the sake of guilty sinners.<sup>148</sup> In both cases, Christ's humanity has an active role in carrying out the work of atonement. In classical terms, we can say that Christ's active (and faithful) obedience (*obedientia activa*) to his Father's will finally leads to his passive obedience (*obedientia passiva*) in suffering and death.<sup>149</sup> But since the cross in itself closes the deal that allows for full atonement, the resurrection does not have a place in Anselm's system.<sup>150</sup> Here Aúlen's broader eschatological perspective can help us to incorporate the resurrection (and other events of Jesus' life and work) into a discussion of atonement. In the case of Abelard, we may say that Jesus' cruciform life and work of perseverance unto death for us becomes, through grace, God's love within us. Here the subjective appropriation of God's objective act of grace shown to us and fulfilled in the crucified Christ definitely gets its proper due. How then can a Spirit-christology bring together the strengths of

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<sup>148</sup> *Cur Deus Homo?* 1.9, 206-08.

<sup>149</sup> In chapter five, I apply the idea that Jesus' death is the result of persecution to the task of proclamation, which in part seeks to convict hearers of Jesus' story of their present participation in his innocent death.

<sup>150</sup> See Robert W. Jenson, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 1 of *The Triune God* (N.Y.: Oxford, 1997), 180.

these three major understandings of the atonement? Let us bring some data already presented in previous sections of this essay to bear on this particular question.

A pneumatological christology can assume Anselm's emphasis on Jesus' obedience unto death on the cross as a satisfaction to God for sins, Aúlen's eschatological view of the whole Christ-event as God's victory over his enemies, and Abelard's concern for the effect of Jesus' death in believers. Freely and out of love for humankind, God sends his Son into the world and anoints him with his Spirit to establish the kingdom of heaven on earth through deliverance from the oppression and bondage of sin, death, and Satan. The Spirit of the Lord empowers Jesus to proclaim good news, teach with authority, heal the sick, drive out demons and, in all these ways, to defeat the enemies of God's kingdom. Up to this point, a Spirit-christology already allows us to place Aúlen's theocentric and eschatological view of atonement in its proper economic-trinitarian framework.

From Jordan to Golgotha, from the baptism in water to the baptism in blood, Jesus' sacrificial life of obedience to God for the sake of the neighbor leads to his repeated rejection, persecution, and finally death on the cross. Anselm's concern for preserving Christ's active human obedience on the road that leads to Golgotha can be read from a pneumatological angle. Not only his anointing at Jordan with the Spirit, but also his exorcisms and healings by the Spirit of God, lead to his rejection and point to his role suffering Servant (e.g., Mt. 8:14-17). Without minimizing the guilt of sinners in the Son's death (see Acts 2:23b), we can also assert that Christ's highest sacrificial act is to offer himself as high priest to God "through the eternal Spirit" as an unblemished sacrifice for the sins of the world (Heb. 9:11-15). Jesus dies by his own choice (see Jn. 10:18). Indeed, Jesus foresees the consequences of his radical faithfulness to his Father

at the hands of his accusers, and yet he openly speaks and lives in truth and justice; moreover, he prays for the strength to fulfill the Father's will to the bitter end, even for sinners like us who killed him (e.g., Lk. 18:31-33, 22:42, 23:34). Empowered and led by God's Spirit, the incarnate Son walks the *via dolorosa* leading to Golgotha in the Spirit, namely, in faithfulness to his Father and for us.

Although the biblical witnesses allow us to place the guilt for Jesus' death on all sinners and at the same time to describe his death as his own free act and self-offering for sins, we can also affirm that God alone, not man, was in the end effecting his plan of salvation through his Son's life and innocent death (Acts 2:23a; 1 Pet. 1:20; Rev. 13:8). Indeed, only God has the power to use his own enemies (e.g., sin, death, the devil, the law) as instruments of his wrath to punish all unrighteousness.<sup>151</sup> These insights help us to give proper due to Aulen's interest in preserving God's initiative and agency in the work of atonement. But not at the expense of Christ's true human sacrifice for sins. Both ideas can be brought together. Along with the metaphor of baptism, Jesus uses that of the cup to speak of his own sacrificial death as a ransom for many (Mk. 10:38-39). Significantly, the term cup (*potērion*) can point to God's wrathful judgment for the sins of the world, thus adding a propitiatory character to Christ's true human death as a ransom for many.<sup>152</sup> On the cross, however, God's wrath also gives way to his love, so that his serious and just demand for righteousness becomes an unmerited gift of love for us precisely on account of Christ's death. God the Father reconciles the world to himself in Christ; it is God who makes the sinless one to be sin for us so that we might become in him the righteousness of God (2 Cor. 5:18-21). God is against us in order to be for us.

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<sup>151</sup> See Paul Althaus, *The Theology of Martin Luther*, trans. Robert C. Schulz (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1966), esp. 218-23.

<sup>152</sup> See, e.g., Leonhard Goppelt, *TDNT*, vol. 6, (1968), 149-53 (esp. 153); cf. Scaer, *Christology*, 79.

And yet the incarnate Son goes to his own death of his own will. Even as Father and Son accomplish what is proper to each, there is no opposition of wills and deeds in their common work of atonement.<sup>153</sup>

Furthermore, as I have intimated before, what comes before and follows after the cross plays an important part in God's work of reconciliation in Christ. I have already spoken of events prior to the cross: Jesus' temptation, ministry of proclamation, healings, and exorcisms. What about what follows from the cross? When Christ is vindicated by and made alive in the Spirit after the end of his earthly mission on the cross, then, through the descent into hell, he also proclaims his victory over God's spiritual enemies as exalted Lord in the power of the Spirit (see 1 Tim. 3:16; 1 Pet. 3:18; cf. Rom. 1:3-4, 8:11).<sup>154</sup> Here rings the theme of *Christus Victor*!

For John, the Son's handing over of the Spirit on the cross already anticipates his giving of the same to the disciples as risen Lord. For Luke, it is as the ascended Lord, seated at God's right hand, that Christ dispenses the promise and gift of the Spirit from the Father to all who call upon his name. In both cases, the special object of the giving of the Spirit is the forgiveness of sins. And yet the gift of the Spirit of God to the church presupposes Christ's active and passive obedience. Paul makes this dimension of the mystery clear. For God sent his Son into the world to fulfill the law in order to redeem those oppressed under the law (Gal. 4:4). And it is by hanging on a tree that Christ becomes a curse for us to redeem us from the curse of the law (Gal. 3:13). Those who through Christ's sacrificial life and death are freed from the curse of the law—another one of God's enemies in its function as accusing law—have received “the promise of the

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<sup>153</sup> I return to this point in my discussion of the complementarity of Logos- and Spirit-christologies (4.2.3).

<sup>154</sup> Dalton argues for a victorious proclamation of the ascended Christ to “hostile angelic powers in the heavens.” *1 Peter*, 26.

Spirit through faith” (Gal. 3:14). Into their hearts God has sent the Spirit of sonship and thus the hope of final redemption at the last day (Gal. 4:6; Rom. 8:11, 14-24a). Living in the Spirit of the crucified and risen Christ—the same Spirit in whom Christ lived the course of his entire life and work—God’s children are then free to serve and be faithful to God and love one another. They are free to follow the example of the crucified Christ in their dealings with others even unto death (Phil. 2:4-8; 1 Pet. 2:20-21). Here Abelard’s concern gets its due.

In the move from Jesus’ receiving and bearing of the Spirit to his giving of the same, a Spirit-oriented christology can affirm the main emphases of atonement theories expressed by Anselm, Aúlen, and Abelard. But in distinction from a Logos-oriented christology, our approach does not need to resort to previously established definitions of “God” or “humanity” into which God’s work in Christ is situated in a second moment of reflection. Reading the story of Jesus from a pneumatic angle brings together classic, objective, and subjective dimensions of God’s work of reconciliation in his Son for sinful humanity.

#### **2.4. Conclusion**

I have argued for the constitutive—in contrast to instrumental or accidental—role of the Holy Spirit in all events of Jesus’ life and mission in God’s economy of salvation through a reading of significant biblical passages that bear witness to Jesus’ identity as receiver, bearer, and giver of God’s Spirit. Admittedly, I have relativized to some degree the concerns of Logos-oriented readings of Jesus’ story in order to highlight the partially or totally neglected pneumatic and economic-trinitarian dimensions of the same. Even though I assume the move towards the complementarity of Spirit- and Logos-oriented

christologies, I have only hinted at the manner of their reciprocity. A clearer synthesis of approaches remains to be articulated.

In the meantime, I conclude with the strengths of a Spirit-oriented christology. The presence of the Spirit in Jesus is not only static, but also dynamic and relational. What does this mean? First of all, the Spirit of God in its own right must be seen as a personal agent of actions in and through the man Jesus, who is the incarnate Logos, throughout his whole human existence and history. Second, God the Father is the ultimate personal agent of actions towards his incarnate Son through his own [i.e., the Father's] Spirit. By the power of the Spirit, God makes (not only proclaims, declares, reveals, or confirms) Jesus the holy child, anointed Servant, and exalted Lord respectively at his conception (sanctification), baptism (anointing), and glorification.

We may say that a Spirit-oriented christology invigorates classic Logos-oriented approaches with a dynamic (actualizing) and relational (ecstatic) orientation that places the question of Jesus' identity in its broader soteriological and economic-trinitarian trajectory. It affirms that the irreducible starting point for approaching the mysteries of salvation and of the triune God is Jesus of Nazareth, and, more specifically, Jesus in his being and acting as receiver, bearer, and giver of God's Spirit. In the light of the resurrection, Jesus' eschatological bearing of God's Spirit throughout his mission of proclamation, healings, and exorcisms can point to his power, lordship, and divinity. The full presence of the Spirit of God in the incarnate Son throughout his historic existence serves as the economic condition for affirming the Logos's assumption of a humanity perfected in holiness upon himself from the moment of conception. And the Holy

Spirit's eternal resting on the Son stands as a trinitarian ground for the incarnate Son's reception and possession of the Spirit from conception onwards.

I also argued for a Spirit-oriented christology centered on the paschal mystery. Jesus' particular receiving and bearing of the Spirit from the Father as obedient Son, suffering Servant, and exalted Lord is oriented towards his eschatological and universal giving of the Spirit from the Father to others from his glorification forward so that they can be made adopted sons and daughters of God by grace through faith in Christ. Finally, I showed that pneumatology has a significant place in articulating God's gracious work of reconciling the world to himself in Jesus Christ which is missed in classic views of the atonement.

It is my conviction that Jesus' identity as receiver, bearer, and giver of the Spirit provides an adequate biblical and theological framework for exploring the nature of salvation in Christ, as well as for understanding christology itself, trinitarian theology, and issues related to the proclamation of the story of Jesus in the church today. In the next chapter, I look into the productivity of a Spirit-oriented christology grounded in the economy of salvation for reflection on issues related to the immanent Trinity. In chapter four, I suggest three ways towards a synthesis of Logos- and Spirit-oriented approaches to the Christ-event in trinitarian perspective. In chapter five, I look at the implications of a Spirit-oriented christology for convicting and liberating proclamation of Jesus' story.



## CHAPTER 3

### **The Joint Mission of the Son and the Spirit in God's Economy of Salvation:**

#### **Pneumatological Christology As a Ground for Trinitarian Reflection**

In this chapter, I show how a Spirit-oriented christology places the question of Jesus' identity in the context of his acts and relations to God the Father in the power of the Spirit, and therefore, in a framework conducive for reflection on the economic and immanent Trinity. In particular, I argue that the *in spiritu* model of the Trinity best safeguards the defining place of the Spirit in the human existence of the incarnate Son, in the Son's eternal openness to exist in relation to his Father, and in the Father's generation of the Son. I develop this argument in three stages.

First, on the basis of the Spirit's proper role in the hypostatic union (*incarnation*) and the entire life and mission of Jesus (*incarnating*), I show how a Spirit-christology gives us an economic basis or ground for reflection on immanent-trinitarian models besides the predominant Western *filioque*. I pay most attention to *per filium* and *in spiritu* models. Second, I argue that a Spirit-christology complements Logos-oriented emphases on the Son's eternal consubstantiality with the Father (static dimension) and self-subsistence (individuality) with respective emphases on the Son's eternal openness (dynamism) to exist in a relation to the Father in the Spirit (relationality). Finally, I demonstrate the usefulness or productivity of a Spirit-christology for complementing the processional character of intradivine relations represented by the classical taxis *Father-Son-Spirit* with the social or community-oriented notion of trinitarian perichoresis. Even as the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father through (or and) the Son in the traditional taxis, we may

still affirm that the Father begets the Son and the Son is begotten from the Father “in the Spirit” (*in spiritu*) in whom both exist for each other.

Before entering our discussion, I wish to review previous arguments to set the stage for the move from the Christ-event in its soteriological aspects to the mystery of the Trinity. In the previous chapter on christology, I presented examples of classic Logos-oriented readings of the conception, baptism, miracles, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. To remind the reader, a Logos-christology defines Jesus’ identity in terms of his divine equality with the Father from eternity (against Arianism) and his self-distinction from the same (especially against modalism). In the economy of salvation, a Logos-christology points, above all, to Christ’s individual inner-constitution as God-man and, therefore, as the subject of actions in and through the assumed humanity from the first moment of the hypostatic union. In short, the ontological stress falls on the static and individual aspects of Jesus’ identity as preexistent and incarnate Son, namely, his “being-from-the-beginning” and his “being-in-himself.”

Under the rubrics of Jesus as receiver, bearer, and giver of God’s Spirit, I argued for invigorating Logos-oriented readings with their defining—yet often relativized or even forgotten—pneumatological aspects. Following Yves Congar, I concluded that reading the narrative of Jesus from a pneumatic angle highlights the constitutive (and not simply confirming and exemplary) role of God’s Spirit in each moment of the Son’s life, both *for the Son himself* (i.e., in his own true humanity) and in his redemptive mission *for us* as Christ (= anointed one), obedient Son, suffering Servant, and exalted Lord. In short, I showed that a Spirit-oriented christology’s dynamic (actualizing) and relational (ecstatic) dimensions allow us to think of Christ’s identity respectively in terms of his “being-in-

act” and his “being-for-us.” I have made the argument clear in regards to the incarnate Son, but I have yet to argue it more rigorously in what pertains to the Son’s immanent-trinitarian identity as one who eternally exists in an open and reciprocal relation of love towards his Father in the Spirit.

When a Spirit-christology defines who Jesus is according to his free and loving acts *for us*, then pneumatology offers the link between christology and soteriology (including eschatology and ecclesiology). To speak of the arrival of God’s kingdom on earth in his Son and in his Spirit is to speak at once of Jesus’ redeeming acts for us carried out in the power of God’s Spirit. It is to speak of the messianic Son as receiver, bearer, and giver of God’s eschatological Spirit. As the body of Christ and the temple of the Holy Spirit, the church also reflects on the implications of the entire Christ-event for her own life and mission. As an aspect of christological pneumatology, ecclesiology finds its ground in a pneumatological christology. The church’s participation in the Spirit of sonship has its ground in the incarnate Son’s own filial response to the Father’s love for him concretely expressed in his work for us through his anointing (baptism), death, and resurrection. I have already discussed Jesus’ reception of the Spirit at the Jordan as obedient Son and suffering Servant—an anointing unto death—as the presupposition for his reception and giving, as exalted Lord and Messiah, of the Spirit to the church from Pentecost onwards.<sup>1</sup> In chapter five, I shall also look at the implications of a Spirit-oriented christology for proclamation (an aspect of ecclesiology) that leads to conviction (law) and liberation (gospel) of sinners through a present-day Spirit-led plunging of their old selves in Jesus’

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<sup>1</sup> See 2.1.2, 2.1.3, and 2.3.1; Jesus had already been made holy by the Spirit from conception. Yet Jesus’ anointing unto death makes this unique presence of the Spirit in him transferable to others by grace through the proclamation of his name and through Christian baptism from the time of his exaltation as risen Lord.

anointing, death, and resurrection. In such reflections, I seek to provide some insights into the productivity of a pneumatological christology for ecclesiology.

Notwithstanding the vital link between christology and soteriology, it is also the case that Jesus' whole identity cannot be reduced to his gracious work for us, the fullness of his being to his gratuitous function for others. Surely christology cannot be separated from soteriology, but neither should christology be exhausted in soteriology.<sup>2</sup> A Spirit-christology does not only offer an *economic* christology or trinitarian theology, but also a way of reflecting from the perspective of salvation-history on the mystery of Christ as an immanent-trinitarian event that points to *divine* persons as the ground of our salvation.

When a Spirit-oriented christology looks at Jesus' being and acting in the context of his relating to the Father in and by the power of the Spirit in the economy of salvation, then pneumatology can also allow us to move from christology to reflection on the immanent Trinity. Conception, baptism, death, resurrection, and Pentecost are events that point to God's own triune nature. What is true of Jesus' life and mission of faithfulness to his Father and for us in the Spirit corresponds in some measure to the Son's eternal existence as the only-begotten from the Father in the same Spirit. The general principle at work in such a move from the economic to the immanent Trinity is that the triune God for us is neither *less* nor *another* than the triune God in Godself.

A Logos-christology is also trinitarian, but in a different way. It begins "from above" by stressing what the first and second persons of the Trinity have *in common* in the inner-life of the triune God, or, more specifically, by highlighting the consubstantiality of the Son with the Father. A Spirit-christology, on the other hand, begins "from below" as an

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<sup>2</sup> On the relationship between christology and soteriology and the dangers of reducing the former to the latter, see Pannenberg, *Jesus—God and Man*, 38-49.

economic-trinitarian christology that allows us to speak of the divine persons as they relate to one another at the immanent level according to what is *proper* to each in the economy. It helps us immensely to ground the Logos-oriented ontological-immanent interest in consubstantiality in the one God's twofold self-giving for us in the persons of the Son and of the Holy Spirit to the humanity of Christ in the economy of salvation.

Now, we must not forget the pneumatological condition for our conception of the Christ-event as a trinitarian event. Only in the Spirit does the church share by grace in Jesus' filial relation to his Father and thus in God's fatherly love for his Son (Ro. 8:15-17, Gal. 4:6). And only from this pneumatological horizon, from being and living in the Spirit of sonship, can the church also begin to hear Jesus' story from a pneumatological space.<sup>3</sup> This is to say that the biblical story of Jesus becomes for the church the narrative of the Father's love for her through his Son in the Spirit and of the Son's love to the Father for her in the same Spirit. Moreover, as recipients and sharers of God's love "poured into our hearts" through the Spirit of the crucified and risen Christ (Ro. 5:5; cf. 1 Jn. 4:11-14), we can also come to see the highest act of divine love for us in the Father's self-giving of his anointed Son on the cross (e.g., Jn. 3:16, 1 Jn. 4:8-9) and in the Son's reciprocal self-surrender to the Father "through the eternal Spirit" (Heb. 9:14).

Therefore, the Spirit in whom the Father loves the Son and viceversa for us and for our salvation also mediates—in the order of knowledge and experience of faith—the church's reflection on the Christ-event in its immanent-trinitarian dimensions. Then the church can affirm that Jesus' love for his Father in the Spirit and the Father's love for him in the Spirit in the economy find their immanent ground in the one God's existence

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<sup>3</sup> On the Holy Spirit as horizon and principle of christology (and theological reflection in general), see Heribert Mühlen, "Das Christusereignis als Tat des Heiligen Geistes," in *Mysterium Salutis*, ed. Johannes Feiner and Magnus Löhrer, 3d ed., vol. 3, 2 (Einsiedeln: Benziger Verlag, 1969), 514-17.

as a tripersonal community of love. In the West, Augustine and Richard of St. Victor deserve special mention for exploring the doctrine of the immanent Trinity under the theme of love.<sup>4</sup> In terms of the doctrine's biblical, immanent, and economic dimensions, David Coffey has more recently proposed that the Holy Spirit is the "objectivization" of the mutual love between the Father and the Son.<sup>5</sup> In a sense, all these insights remind us that God's love for us in Christ and in the Spirit truly reveals that God in Godself is love. They also appear to show that although the Holy Spirit is a person in its own right, the one in whom the Father begets the Son and the Son is begotten from the Father, its very personhood may be described as their common "love" insofar as they only exist for each other precisely *in the Spirit*. This is not to deny the place of the Father as cause, source, or fountain of divine love, or of the Son as the manifestation and image of the Father's love, but it does ascribe to the Holy Spirit the completion and fulfillment of their love for one another in the inner-life of God and from them to us in the economy of salvation.

In this chapter, my interest is on the trinitarian side of the church's reflection on the joint mission of the Son and the Spirit in God's economy of salvation—i.e., on the trinitarian implications of a Spirit-christology. Three interrelated issues in contemporary theology serve as the occasion and guide for my explorations: 1) The contemporary turn to the economic Trinity as the basis for reflection on the immanent Trinity, 2) the renewal of the notion of person (or personhood) as the highest ontological principle for trinitarian

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<sup>4</sup> For Augustine, see *On the Holy Trinity*, esp. bk. 9; for an excerpt of Richard of St. Victor's work, see *On the Trinity*, in *LCC*, vol. 10, *A Scholastic Miscellany: Anselm to Ockham*, 324-31; for a brief study of trinitarian thought in Richard of St. Victor, Alexander of Hales, and Bonaventure, see Congar, *Holy Spirit*, vol. 3, 103-15.

<sup>5</sup> "[T]he mutual love theory . . . alone explains exactly what it is that the Holy Spirit receives from the Son, namely, the quality of being the Son's love of the Father, which, completing that of the Father for the Son, constitutes in its objectivization the person of the Holy Spirit." *Deus Trinitas*, 155 (cf. 4-5, 48-52). In terms of method, the reader should note that, following Bernard Lonergan's epistemological order *experience-understanding-judgment*, Coffey sees the economic Trinity (judgment) as a reflection on the biblical or functional Trinity (experience) in the light of the immanent Trinity (understanding). See *ibid.*, 16-19.

reflection and discourse, and 3) the ecumenical interest in trinitarian models besides the Western *filioque* that can advance more perichoretic, community-oriented, or social models of the Trinity.<sup>6</sup>

My argument proceeds in three stages. First, I situate the Christ-event in a trinitarian framework through a study of the correspondence between the economic and immanent aspects of the one and same Trinity. From a look at the proper works of the Son and the Spirit in the “incarnation”—seen both statically as the hypostatic union and dynamically as the whole Christ-event (“incarnating”)—I argue for complementary *in spiritu* and *per filium* (or a qualified *filioque*) models of the immanent Trinity. In classic language, the latter model points to the Holy Spirit’s procession (or spiration) from the Father “through the Son” —or “and the Son,” in the case of the *filioque*—and the former one to the Son’s procession (generation) from the Father “in the Spirit.”

Second, I show how a pneumatological christology invigorates Logos-oriented static and individual emphases on the trinitarian concepts of person and relation with respective dynamic and especially relational dimensions. I arrive at the principle that the person of the Son is most deeply his own self in relating to others freely and out of love both in the economy of salvation and at the intradivine level of trinitarian communion. What is true of the Son’s obedience to the Father in his Spirit-led mission for us finds its immanent ground in the Son’s eternal openness in love to exist in relation to his Father in the Spirit.

Finally, I argue that the idea of trinitarian reciprocity supported by a Spirit-oriented christology requires some qualification in order to safeguard the personal properties of

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<sup>6</sup> As we shall see, in some cases, the contemporary critique of the *filioque* has led to proposals for reading reciprocal economic-based models of the Son-Spirit relations into the immanent Trinity in order to allow for a more correlative triadic view of trinitarian relations that can also serve as a model for ecclesial and societal relations. See 3.3.

each divine person in the order of processions. I assess a number of immanent-trinitarian models (i.e., *per filium, filioque, per spiritum, spirituque, and in spiritu*) in terms of their usefulness for safeguarding: 1) the classic Greek-Eastern concern for the unique personal identity of the Father as cause (*aitia*) of the Son and the Holy Spirit, 2) the classic Latin-Western concern for the consubstantiality of the Son with the Father and for the Son's role in the procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father, and 3) the more contemporary concern (especially in the West) for models of the Trinity that best reflect on the role of the Holy Spirit in the procession (generation) of the Son from the Father.

### **3.1. The Christ-Event As a Trinitarian Event: On the Correspondence between the Economic Trinity and the Immanent Trinity in the Light of the Incarnation**

Like many theologians, I am in basic agreement with the contemporary recovery of the economy of salvation as the ground for reflection on the mystery of the Trinity. The underlying assumption behind this move lies in the conviction that God's threefold self-revelation (Barth) or self-communication (Rahner) in the Son and in the Holy Spirit corresponds in some direct (even if not absolute) manner to God's own triune being as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. What then are the historico-dogmatic concerns (especially in the Western tradition) behind this renewed stress on the correspondence between the economic and the immanent Trinity? Moreover, in the light of God's self-revelation in the incarnate Son, the receiver, bearer, and giver of the Spirit, to what extent or in what way do these two aspects of the one and same mystery correspond to one another? Let us begin with the first question by looking at the critical soteriological concerns behind and enduring significance of Karl Rahner's famous proposal that the economic Trinity is the immanent Trinity and viceversa.



### **3.1.1. The Mystery of the Trinity as a Mystery of Salvation: On the Soteriological Import of the Correspondence between the Economic and the Immanent Trinity**

Before Rahner, Karl Barth had reflected on the problem of the doctrine of the Trinity on the basis of his theology of revelation. Only insofar as Scripture, the written form of the Word, attests to Christ as God's own Revealed Word can the church in turn ask of Scripture: "[W]ho is revealing Himself in it . . . and then also and subsequently, what this God does; and thirdly, what he effects, accomplishes, creates, and gives in His revelation."<sup>7</sup> Even if the reality of revelation initially leads us to ask somewhat abstractly about its subject (Revealer), its predicate (Revelation), and its object (Revealedness), the ground or root of the doctrine of the Trinity is ultimately an actual event of revelation. We can approach the mystery of God's triunity in what God does as Lord in his act of revelation, that is to say, in Jesus Christ.<sup>8</sup> From this christological horizon, the church then arrives at the notion of a self-differentiation in God. In other words, God reveals himself to us in a threefold manner that corresponds to his intradivine antecedent "modes of existence" as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.<sup>9</sup> In the end, it is not revelation conceived of in abstract terms (as subject, predicate, and object) that grounds the doctrine of the Trinity, but rather God's own revelation in Jesus Christ.

God's threefold self-revelation as Lord at once points to God's independent freedom to relate to human beings: "Revelation in the Bible means the self-unveiling, imparted to men, of the God who according to His nature cannot be unveiled to man."<sup>10</sup> None other

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<sup>7</sup> Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, trans. G. W. Bromiley, vol. 1, 1 (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1975), § 8.1, 341.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, § 8.2, esp. 361.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, esp. § 9.2. Barth uses the term "modes of existence" to define the three persons of the Trinity while strongly safeguarding their identity with the one God.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, § 8.2, 362, 368, 373.

than God in Godself (immanent aspect) comes to us in God's self-revelation as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (economic aspect): "[T]he Trinity of God is to be found not only in His revelation but, because in His revelation, in God Himself and of itself; . . . therefore the Trinity is to be regarded not only as 'economic' but also as 'immanent.'"<sup>11</sup> As to the Holy Spirit, for example, Barth states: "What He is in revelation He is antecedently in Himself. And what He is antecedently in Himself he is in revelation."<sup>12</sup> And of course, the same principle applies to the other two persons of the Trinity.<sup>13</sup> Because of the triune God's own freedom as Lord to unveil and impart Godself to us in a threefold way, there is simply no other God behind God for us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Karl Rahner affirms a correspondence between God's self-communication to creatures through the Son and in the Spirit and the one God's three "distinct manners of subsisting" as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.<sup>14</sup> As I stated earlier, he describes such correspondence with the axiom "The economic Trinity is the immanent Trinity and viceversa."<sup>15</sup> Positing some identity between both aspects of the one mystery involves a major shift from the traditional Western (especially neo-scholastic) approach to Trinity as a formal treatise on God's inner-life to a renewed appropriation of the same as a mystery of salvation.

Rahner's proposal is a corrective to mere monotheism in the West,<sup>16</sup> namely, the tendency to think of the one God and its indivisible acts towards the created world as a

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 382.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., § 12.2, 533.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., § 10.2, 448 ff. and § 11.2, 474 ff.

<sup>14</sup> *The Trinity*, trans. Joseph Donceel (N.Y.: Seabury, 1983; reprint, N.Y.: Crossroad, 1997). Rahner's definition of person seeks to safeguard the unity of God against what he conceives as the modern tritheistic notion of person as an individual or subjective center of consciousness and activity (106-07).

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 21-24; the study that serves as background for this work is Rahner's "Remarks on the Dogmatic Treatise 'De Trinitate,'" in *Theological Investigations*, trans. Kevin Smith, vol. 4 (1966), 77-102.

<sup>16</sup> Thus Rahner's well-known judgment that ". . . despite their orthodox confession of the Trinity, Christians are, in their practical life, almost mere 'monotheists.' We must be willing to admit that, should

reality prior to the person of the Father and the twofold differentiation of his own self-giving in the economy of salvation through the Son and in the Holy Spirit.<sup>17</sup> Rahner is quite critical of theologies that read the “Our Father” as an unqualified address to the entire Trinity or interpret the atoning work of the incarnate Logos as an offering of man in general (or conceived of in abstract terms) made to all three persons of the Trinity.<sup>18</sup>

Rahner traces the roots of the Western problem tentatively to Augustine’s stress on God’s undivided essence as the starting point for reflecting on the Trinity (in his *De Trinitate*)<sup>19</sup> and definitely to Thomas’s logical conception of the treatise on the one God (*De Deo Uno*) before the one on the triune God (*De Deo Trino*). Augustine emphasizes God’s essential unity and indivisible manner of relating to creation. At least potentially, such an emphasis on God’s undivided causality in relation to the world relativizes the distinctiveness of God’s self-communication in the Son and in the Spirit revealed in salvation-history. As Rahner rightly sees the problem, God’s threefold self-giving in the economy no longer has to correspond directly to God’s trinity. Trinity and soteriology then become detached from one another, and it becomes difficult to see the relevance of the doctrine of the Trinity for us and for our salvation. Indeed, too much stress on the

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the doctrine of the Trinity have to be dropped as false, the major part of religious literature could well remain virtually unchanged.” Ibid., 10-11.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 11-13.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 12.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 15-21; Christoph Schwöbel’s comments summarize general contemporary agreement on Rahner’s diagnosis: “It would not be a gross exaggeration to see the mainstream of the history of Western trinitarian reflection as a series of footnotes on Augustine’s conception of the Trinity in *De Trinitate*. Augustine’s emphasis on the unity of the divine essence of God’s triune being, his stress on the undivided mode of God’s relating to what is not God and his attempt to trace the intelligibility of the doctrine of the Trinity through the *vestigia trinitatis* in the human consciousness, mediating unity and differentiation, defined the parameters for the mainstream of Western trinitarian reflection.” Christoph Schwöbel, ed., introduction to *Trinitarian Theology Today: Essays of Divine Being and Act* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1995), 4-5.

indivisibility of God in relation to creatures can lead not only to mere monotheism—as Rahner put it—but in some cases to unitarianism.<sup>20</sup> How do we resolve this problem?

In the spirit of Greek-Eastern theology, Rahner prefers to speak of the one self-communicating God as the person of the Father in particular and not as the one divine substance shared by all persons of the Trinity in general and without distinction.<sup>21</sup> The initial move to identify God (*ho theos*) with a particular person of the Trinity (i.e., the Father) constitutes a genuine shift to biblical and creedal language. The Bible and the creeds in turn point to God’s loving self-giving for humanity in his Son and in his Spirit. Arguably, one may say that, after Rahner, the tendency in contemporary theology to arrive at conclusions on God’s indivisible nature apart from reading Scripture and the creeds as the narrative of God the Father’s self-communication to creatures through his Son and in his Spirit has—or at least should—come to an end.<sup>22</sup>

Catherine M. LaCugna finds in Augustine’s stress on the unity of God and of God’s trinitarian acts in the economy a basis for the relegation of the doctrine of the Trinity to the inner-life of God and its separation from the mystery of salvation.<sup>23</sup> For Augustine, strictly speaking, proper distinctions among the persons within the one divine essence only occur in the intradivine life (i.e., in their operations *ad intra*). To use the classical language, we can speak of the axiom *opera ad intra divisa sunt*, which affirms that the internal processions of the persons within the one divine essence are distinguishable in

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<sup>20</sup> Mere monotheism may be interpreted as practical unitarianism. One may believe in a triune God, but live, act, and speak as if God were not triune.

<sup>21</sup> *The Trinity*, 59–60.

<sup>22</sup> If the classic distinction between natural and special revelation leads Christians to conceive of “God” and divine attributes as realities logically prior to the person and work of the Father, then treating the former type of revelation and engaging the issues surrounding it as a separate concern from the latter type may be, strictly speaking, a philosophical (in contrast to a theological) problem.

<sup>23</sup> *God for Us*, chap. 3.

relation to one another.<sup>24</sup> In the West, each person is affirmed precisely through its relation in opposition to another.<sup>25</sup> The Father is not the Son and viceversa. And yet, in their correlative relation in opposition, they at once imply one another. Moreover, since the Holy Spirit is neither the Father of the Son nor the Son of the Father, its only possible relation in opposition is to both the Father and the Son. Within the one God, then, the Father begets the Son and the Son is begotten of the Father; furthermore, the Father and the Son give the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit is given or proceeds from the Father and the Son.<sup>26</sup> In any case, note that distinctions apply to the immanent Trinity.

To safeguard the oneness of God, the external works of the Trinity towards creation are said to be indivisible (*opera ad extra indivisa sunt*): “[T]he Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, of one and the same substance, God the Creator, the Omnipotent Trinity, work indivisibly.”<sup>27</sup> Although Augustine held to this anti-subordinationist principle, he also saw the need to posit relative distinctions between these works through a doctrine of appropriations. While the divine persons are said to share equally in all their operations *ad extra*, they are ascribed (or appropriated) certain functions in particular. To give an example, the Father creates, the Son redeems, and the Holy Spirit sanctifies. Yet by virtue of their common divine essence and activity, they may all be equally ascribed these functions—as seen in the quote above, God the Trinity, not God the Father, is “God the Creator.” Augustine explains the concept of appropriations as follows: “[T]he operation

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<sup>24</sup> A relative distinction is one made of the persons in relation to one another without doing harm to the one divine essence that they ultimately have in common. *On the Holy Trinity* 5.5.6, 89; see also 5.11.12, 93.

<sup>25</sup> Although the axiom *in Deo omnia sunt unum, ubi non obviat relationis oppositio* (Council of Florence, 1442) has its Western roots in Augustine, its conciliar form finds a closer parallel in Anselm’s language. See Congar, *Holy Spirit*, vol. 3, 98.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.12.13, 93-94; 5.14.15, 94; 5.15.16, 95.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.21.30, 85.

of the Trinity is also inseparable in each severally of those things which are said to pertain properly to the manifesting of either the Father, or the Son, or the Holy Spirit.”<sup>28</sup>

LaCugna sees the idea of appropriations as a “compensating strategy” to attribute a proper work (*proprium*) to a particular person of the Trinity—a move demanded by the indivisibility of trinitarian acts in the economy and the relegation of distinctions to the immanent Trinity.<sup>29</sup> It is now a generally accepted thesis that unless a real differentiation among the persons (even in their works *ad extra*) qualifies the theory of appropriations, Augustine’s teaching makes it extremely difficult to speak of a *proprium* for any of the persons in the economy of salvation. As he begins his work, Augustine himself admits that faith must allow for differentiation lest the data of revelation on each person of the Trinity becomes superfluous. Not the Trinity, but only the Son was born, crucified, died, was buried, and ascended into heaven; not the Trinity, but only the Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus at Jordan and upon the disciples on Pentecost; not the Trinity, but only the Father spoke his word and was heard at Jordan and on the mount of transfiguration.<sup>30</sup> To highlight self-differentiation, LaCugna highlights the following *propia*:

The mission of the Son to become incarnate belongs properly to the Son as Son. The Spirit is the one sent to make the creature holy. Each of these is a *proprium*, an identifying characteristic of a unique person, and as such cannot be appropriated. The Father’s role in *sending* the Son and Spirit belongs to the

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 86.

<sup>29</sup> *God for Us*, 100 (also 86, 97-99); “Once the Augustinian axiom that ‘works of the Trinity *ad extra* are one’ is affirmed, and the economy no longer gives access to the distinction of persons, then the corrective of a doctrine of appropriations is needed in order to restore a *proprium* to each divine person.” Ibid., 102.

<sup>30</sup> *On the Holy Trinity*, 1.4.7, 20.

Father alone and cannot indifferently be appropriated either to the Son or Spirit *or* to a generic Godhead.<sup>31</sup>

In the end, the indivisible unity of God cannot be protected to the detriment of the proper (and not merely appropriated) distinctiveness of the three persons of the Trinity.

Thomas further confirms some of the dangers of Western-Augustinian trinitarianism. As I have already intimated, for Rahner, Augustine's emphasis on the one divine essence over the person of the Father prepared the way for Thomas's treatment of the treatise on the one God (*De Deo Uno*) as a topic disconnected from the one on the triune God (*De Deo Trino*).<sup>32</sup> The former deals with the divine attributes and the proofs for the existence of God; the latter becomes a formal treatment of trinitarian relations and processions in the intradivine life apart from God's self-communication in the Son and in the Spirit in salvation-history.<sup>33</sup> When the unity of the divine essence takes priority over the person of God the Father (and the distinctiveness of the divine persons), conclusions on the one God are easily drawn apart from the biblical data on the triune God. It is on this point that Rahner criticizes scholastic theologians like Thomas who claimed that any one of the persons of the Trinity could have become incarnate if God in his will had chosen to do so—admittedly, a conclusion that Augustine does not reach.<sup>34</sup>

As a response to such a highly speculative approach, Rahner posits the incarnation of the Son as a certain dogmatic instance of a reality proper (*proprium*) to the person of the Logos and not merely appropriated to him as any one of the divine persons. He writes,

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<sup>31</sup> *God for Us*, 100.

<sup>32</sup> *The Trinity*, 16-17.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 17-18.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 11; for Thomas's position, see *ST* 3, q. 23, a. 2; at one point, Augustine writes, ". . . not God the Father, not the Holy Spirit, not the Trinity itself, but the Son only, which is the Word of God, was made flesh; although the Trinity was the maker. . . ." *On the Holy Trinity* 15.11.20, 210.

Jesus is not simply God in general, but the Son. The second divine person, God's Logos, is man, and only he is man. Hence, there is at least *one* 'mission,' *one* presence in the world, *one* reality in salvation history which is not merely appropriated to some divine person, but which is proper to him.<sup>35</sup>

The incarnation of the Son in salvation-history constitutes something distinctively unique to the second person of the Trinity (i.e., only the Logos became flesh) and does not just tell us something about God's "efficient causality" operating as indivisible essence in the world.<sup>36</sup> Thus God's self-communication in the Son's proper assumption of creaturely humanity (hypostatic union) proves Rahner's axiom. In terms of his *Grundaxiom*, then, the economic Logos is the immanent Logos and viceversa. There is none other than the Logos himself, the second person of the Trinity, in the incarnate Logos.

As in the case of LaCugna, if we speak in particular of the creature's sanctification, then, Rahner ascribes this as a work proper (and not merely appropriated) to the Holy Spirit.<sup>37</sup> Thus God's self-communication in the Spirit to the graced creature proves the axiom again. Following its logic, we may say that the economic Spirit is the immanent Spirit and viceversa. There is none other than the Spirit itself—i.e., the third person of the Trinity, not just God in general—in the Spirit's own indwelling of the creature, which allows for his/her reception of God's grace "in faith, hope, and love."<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> *The Trinity*, 23.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 86, n. 9.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.* Rahner is aware of the danger of positing a full self-communication of God to the creature in the order of grace. On the one hand, he does not want to speak of God's self-giving to the creature in terms of "efficient" causality because then his twofold self-communication in the Son and in the Spirit as *uncreated* grace (and not merely in created grace) is jeopardized. On the other hand, if God's self-communication is understood in terms of "formal" causality, the distinction between Creator and creature no longer stands. See *ibid.*, 36. In her introduction to Rahner's work, LaCugna explains that he uses the language of "quasi-formal" causality to define God's self-communication to the creature in a way that "the indwelling of the divine persons in grace makes the graced person as close to God as possible without erasing the ontological



What then can we learn from the contemporary move to the correspondence between the economic Trinity and the immanent Trinity? Barth and Rahner remind us that, in the economy of salvation, God does not simply reveal or communicate something *other* than or *less* than Godself, but rather Godself as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God never fools or deceives us, for God is always faithful and trustworthy. Moreover, as Moltmann puts it so well, “There can be no question of half a revelation, let alone a merely fragmentary revelation. This is the truth behind modern talk about God’s self-revelation.”<sup>39</sup> Salvation depends on the condition that the triune God—again, not someone other than or less than God in three distinct and differentiated persons—relates to humanity in a free self-giving to the creature in his Son and in his Spirit.<sup>40</sup> This is especially the case when we ask of Jesus’ identity as God’s incarnate Son and the receiver, bearer, and giver of God’s Spirit.

### **3.1.2. Qualifying the Extent of Correspondence: Exploring the Immanent-Trinitarian Implications of the Joint Mission of the Son and the Spirit in the Incarnation**

Rahner’s axiom posits the incarnation (hypostatic union) as a proper mission of the Son and thus as an instance of God’s self-communication to the creature in the Logos (not God in general), the second person of the Trinity. But given the biblical witness to the conception of Jesus by the Holy Spirit and its subsequent participation in all events of

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distinction between God and creature.” Ibid., xiii. Inquiry into the theology of grace that grounds Rahner’s idea of quasi-formal causality must await a comprehensive study of christological pneumatology. In a Lutheran approach to the issue, God’s gracious self-giving to the creature in the Spirit of Christ will have to be studied further in terms of its justifying and sanctifying aspects.

<sup>39</sup> *The Spirit of Life*, 302.

<sup>40</sup> To preserve the distinction between Creator and creation, we may say that God self-reveals or self-communicates to the creature freely and out of love and, therefore, not out of necessity or dependence on the world (as in process thought). God may not be essentially related to creation (a concern in classical theism), but God is not detached from it either for God comes and relates to us in a concrete way in the life and mission of Jesus of Nazareth. See John J. O’Donnell, *The Mystery of the Triune God* (N.Y.: Paulist, 1999), 2-7, and a fuller treatment in *Trinity and Temporality: The Christian Doctrine of God in the Light of Process Theology and the Theology of Hope* (London: Oxford, 1983), esp. chap. 5.

his life and work, what is the proper mission of the third person in the hypostatic union (incarnation) and in the entire Christ-event (incarnating)?<sup>41</sup> And what does the answer to this question on the joint mission of the Son and the Spirit in God's economy of salvation allow us to say about their intradivine relations? In this case, what is the extent of the correspondence between the economic Trinity and the immanent Trinity? It is now time to reflect on the Christ-event in the broader context of these questions, and, in particular, in the light of Congar's proposal for a qualification of the reciprocity in Rahner's axiom.

### **3.1.2.1. A Preliminary Look at the Immanent-Trinitarian**

#### **Implications of the Incarnation**

Let us begin by saying that the point of departure for reflecting on God's triune self-revelation, self-communication, or self-giving through the Son and in the Holy Spirit is Jesus of Nazareth. Otherwise stated, Jesus' identity as incarnate Son of the Father and as receiver, bearer, and giver of his Spirit reveals the trinitarian dimensions of christology. If we begin with the creedal presentation of the mysteries of Jesus' life, his conception by the Holy Spirit appears as the first moment that can lead us to ask what it means for God to communicate Godself to creaturely reality in the Spirit. On the basis of Luke 1:35, I have already ascribed the sanctification of Mary's unborn child to the Holy Spirit under the rubric of Jesus as the receiver of God's Spirit.<sup>42</sup> Even if the coming upon of the Holy Spirit first touches the virgin Mary, the end result (Luke uses the conjunction *dio*) of this

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<sup>41</sup> The reader should note that the dynamic term "incarnating" denotes the incarnate Son's identity in terms of his "being-in-act" throughout the whole Christ-event. By comparison, "incarnation" denotes the Son's inner-constitution as God-man "from-the-beginning" at a set point in time (hypostatic union). For lack of a better term, I include both static and dynamic senses once again under the general rubric of "incarnation." Karl Rahner only dealt with the static aspect of incarnation in the christological application of his axiom.

<sup>42</sup> See 2.1.1.

overshadowing of the power of the Most High upon her is to make the fruit of her womb “holy” from conception.<sup>43</sup> From that moment forward, the Spirit begins to dwell in him.

If we add to Luke 1:35 the witness of John 1:14 to the mission of the Son, then we can state that God the Father’s self-giving at the moment of incarnation and conception takes place respectively in the preexistent Son’s (= Logos’s) union to human nature (i.e., hypostatic union) and in the Holy Spirit’s perfection of this humanity in holiness from the first moment of conception.<sup>44</sup> Of course, union and sanctification (indwelling) occur at once, so that no temporal distinction severs these differentiated operations or proper works. As a particular event in God’s economy of salvation, the joint mission of the Son and the Holy Spirit in conception already shows that none other than these two persons freely cooperate with one another in distinct ways in God’s self-communication to the humanity of Christ. To sum up, the Holy Spirit, the power of the Most High, descends upon the virgin and makes the fruit of her womb “holy” (Lk. 1:35) even as the Word and only-begotten Son of God “becomes flesh” (Jn. 1:14). Here a twofold differentiated and unrepeatable communication of the one God to Christ’s humanity takes place in time and history. The Spirit rests in or indwells what the Son unites to himself.

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<sup>43</sup> See Ladaría, “La unción de Jesús y el don del Espíritu,” 553, n. 17.

<sup>44</sup> For our purposes in this chapter, it is sufficient to assume the classical interpretation of John 1:14 as the Word’s assumption of a creaturely reality (= flesh) unto himself. In his *Deus Trinitas*, Coffey has recently disputed this interpretation (12-14). He argues that the phrase “to become flesh” does not explicitly mean “to become human” because flesh refers to weakness, “its vulnerability to decay and to sin, and particularly its predestination to death” (13). In John’s Gospel, Son of Man passages also point to Jesus as a preexistent heavenly man in the realm of God’s eternity (ibid.). While I do not question the possible merits of these exegetical insights (although they are not indisputable), I do question Coffey’s conclusion that they do not attain the level of an ontological view of the incarnation (i.e., that the divine Word becomes a human being) and thus only point to a more functional embodiment of the Word in Jesus. Even if the designation “flesh” denotes—and especially, I would add, in a non-pejorative way—the weakness constitutive of every human reality in contrast to God, it is still the case (as Coffey himself suggests) that flesh cannot exist apart from a true human being. And even if, from God’s side, we were to speculate that the Word has always existed as a man, I would rather say that the divine Word exists only in view of his incarnation on the basis of John’s own witness to the identity of this Word as one through whom God creates all things (1:3). If it is as the creative Word of God that the Logos becomes its creaturely counterpart or flesh, then it seems to me that the term flesh must ultimately be interpreted within the framework of the uncreated-created dialectic.

The correspondence between the economic and the immanent aspects of the Trinity helps us to affirm that God as such is fully involved in salvation-history through the incarnate Son in whom the Spirit dwells. To bring out the non-negotiable soteriological significance of the incarnation in its broader trinitarian framework, let us now rephrase Rahner's axiom in negative form while keeping in mind the proper missions of the Son and the Holy Spirit already mentioned. Starting with the first half of the axiom, we can say: If the economic Logos is not the immanent Logos, then the incarnate and sanctified Son is not the preexistent Son in whom the Spirit of the Father rests and thus he cannot save us (for he is no longer true God).

Regarding the reciprocity or second half of the axiom, we can say: If the immanent Logos is not the economic Logos, then the preexistent Son in whom the Spirit of the Father rests is not the incarnate and sanctified Son and thus he cannot save us either. Why? Because then the eternal Son who exists in the Spirit would not have assumed (although freely so) a true humanity like ours that could participate in the Holy Spirit's indwelling of the same.<sup>45</sup> Indeed, Rahner's axiom illuminates the salvific import and trinitarian ground of the proper missions of the Son and the Holy Spirit in the incarnation.

As we have already observed, we may say that the Son's *proprium* is to unite humanity to himself and the Holy Spirit's *proprium* is to indwell that humanity. It is time to bring the Father into the picture. As the origin (*archē*), source (*pēgē*), and cause (*aitia*) of the one God's self-giving to the creature, the Father sends his only-begotten Son into the world to assume a human nature (incarnation) and thus a human history (incarnating). At

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<sup>45</sup> As I pointed out in the previous chapter on christology, the Spirit whom Jesus receives and bears from conception in an unrepeatable way and then at the Jordan in a communicable manner upon completion of his mission in the paschal mystery (i.e., death, resurrection, and Pentecost), believers normally receive in Christian baptism as their new birth in the Spirit.

the same time, the Father sends his Holy Spirit to sanctify the Son's humanity from the first moment of incarnation/conception and to dwell in it dynamically throughout all moments of his life and mission. This sending of the Son and the Holy Spirit is the *proprium* of the Father in the economy. Rahner's axiom helps us in turn to ground this proper mission in the Father's own immanent personal identity as the unoriginate origin of the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Having established the Father's proper work, we can now argue on the appropriate way to think in logical terms the relation between the differentiated missions of the Son and the Holy Spirit. Although union and sanctification take place simultaneously, it should be noted that the former mission *logically* precedes the latter in the economy. It should be acknowledged that the Spirit cannot sanctify what the Son has not united to himself. Otherwise, the idea of a fully sanctified human being who logically exists prior to its assumption by the Son could lead to charges of adoptionism or Nestorianism.<sup>46</sup>

In our introductory study of Irenaeus's response to the Gnostics, I pointed out that his move to place the union of Jesus and Christ at the incarnation (in contrast to the baptism, as the Gnostics often did) paved the way for the priority of the mission of the Word at the incarnation over that of the Spirit at the anointing.<sup>47</sup> At the Jordan, the Spirit descended upon the *already* incarnate Word and anointed him for mission. Later on, others argued for the same priority from the moment of conception. In this regard, I demonstrated that Athanasius and Cyril of Alexandria, in their respective struggles against Arianism and

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<sup>46</sup> Cyril of Alexandria, for example, states that Jesus Christ "was not first born a common man of the holy Virgin, and then the Word came down and entered into him. . . ." *The [Third] Epistle of Cyril to Nestorius*, in *NPNF*<sup>2</sup>, vol. 14, 198; similarly, in the Lutheran tradition, Martin Chemnitz writes, "For the flesh of Christ was not first formed and animated separately in the womb of Mary in such a way that afterwards the person of the Logos was united with this preformed and animated flesh. For this would mean that the human nature of Christ at some time would have had its own proper and peculiar subsistence before and outside the hypostatic union with the Logos." *The Two Natures in Christ*, 101 (cf. 30-31).

<sup>47</sup> See 1.2.

Nestorianism, went further than Irenaeus by making two crucial moves.<sup>48</sup> First, they viewed the chrism or anointing of Jesus by the Spirit at his baptism as merely a revelatory instance of the Son's prior sanctification of himself with his own Spirit from conception. Second, they grounded the Son's glorification of himself with his own Spirit at baptism in the processional priority of the Son over the Holy Spirit at the intradivine level. As Athanasius intimates in one occasion, the Spirit takes from the Son (not viceversa).<sup>49</sup> In the Western tradition, Thomas argued in a similar way. He asserted that the mission of the Son in the incarnation logically precedes that of the Holy Spirit and grounded this reality in the logical priority of the Son's procession (= generation) from the Father over the procession (= spiration) of the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Son.<sup>50</sup> As I stated before, for the same reason, Thomas thought of Christ's habitual grace and capital grace as effects following respectively from the grace of union and personal grace.<sup>51</sup>

At Nicea (A.D. 325), the church fathers implied a free and gracious descent of the Son to become incarnate by assuming his being begotten from the Father before all ages. A reciprocal relation of "begetting" and "being begotten" describes the relationship between the Father and the Son. In the economy of salvation, we can speak of a logical priority of the Father's mission to send the Son over the Son's mission of being sent by the Father. At the level of dogma, however, Constantinople I (A.D. 381) did not actually offer a pronouncement on the *how* of the immanent relationship between the Son and the Spirit. The council only pointed to the Holy Spirit's procession from the Father (a hypostatic statement) and his conglorification with the Father and the Son (a substantial statement).

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<sup>48</sup> See 1.3, 2.1.2, and 2.2.2.

<sup>49</sup> *First Discourse* 5.15, 315. See 1.3.

<sup>50</sup> *ST* 1, q. 7, a. 13.

<sup>51</sup> See 2.1.1, 2.1.3.

Does this conciliar silence mean that there is some room to consider a *reciprocal* priority of either one mission over the other in the incarnation that points to a similar reciprocity of processions in the immanent Trinity?

I raised the question of a possible logical priority for the Holy Spirit's sanctification of the humanity as a corrective to monophysite tendencies in christology.<sup>52</sup> First of all, if the missions of the Son and the Holy Spirit in the incarnation are differentiated and yet "reciprocal" at the same time, must not their immanent-trinitarian relations to one another allow for a more flexible perichoretic way of understanding their intradivine processions? I hinted that, at the very least, assumption and sanctification in the economy must point to and thus find their immanent ground not only in the procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father "and the Son" (Western *filioque*) or the Father "through the Son" (Eastern *per filium*), but also in the generation of the Son from the Father "in the Spirit" (*in spiritu*). The basic trinitarian assumption behind this argument is straightforward: Just as there is no procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father in which the Son does not participate, so also there is no generation of the Son from the Father in which the Holy Spirit does not participate. Second, and more importantly, in the face of a monophysitism that denies Christ's humanity its sanctification by the Spirit throughout his life and work, can such a perichoretic view of trinitarian relations in turn support a logical (of course, not temporal) priority of the Holy Spirit's mission in sanctifying the humanity of the Son over the Son's mission to assume this humanity? After all, do we want to say that the Son unites to himself what the Holy Spirit has not sanctified? Clearly not.<sup>53</sup> Let us first look at the

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<sup>52</sup> See 2.2.2.

<sup>53</sup> Chemnitz can assert that "the Son of God assumed that individual unit (*massa*) [body] from the flesh and blood of Mary, which the Holy Spirit in the act of conception so sanctified and purified from the whole ruin

economic-trinitarian aspect of the problem, leaving aside for a moment its implications for trinitarian models of intradivine relations.

Logically speaking, does the Son's union to a human nature prior to its indwelling by the Holy Spirit necessarily compromise the true humanity of Christ? Here I must answer in the negative. Undoubtedly, the history of dogma has shown us in more than a few occasions that the dynamic presence of the Spirit in Jesus has been neglected. Any number of theologians from Athanasius to Cyril of Alexandria in the East, and from Augustine to Thomas in the West, have posited the logical priority of the incarnation of the Son over his sanctification by the Spirit in ways that made the pneumatic aspects of Jesus' identity merely revelatory of his prior status as God or exemplary for the church. I have already suggested ways to revitalize these partialities.

On the other hand, we must also learn from theologians like Irenaeus, Basil, and Hilary of Poitiers that the move to prioritize the mission of the Son (union) over that of the Spirit (whether sanctification at conception or anointing at the Jordan) does not have to take away from the actualizing role of the Spirit of the Father in the human life and mission of the incarnate Son. Irenaeus can presuppose a real union of Word and flesh at conception as a condition for his anointing with the Spirit of the Father at the Jordan without losing sight of the significance of the event for constituting the incarnate Word as "Jesus Christ" or the link between his anointing and our unction in baptism. While Basil affirms the *homoousios* of the Son with the Father and the Lord's coming in the flesh, he does not hesitate to place the Christ-event in a pneumatological framework. Hilary can speak of the birth of the Son from the Father in eternity (generation) and from the virgin

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of sin that that which was born of Mary was holy. . . ." *The Two Natures in Christ*, 57 (cf. 75; but see n. 46 above for a qualification of this statement).



Mary at Bethlehem (conception) and still speak in a non-adoptionist way of his births for us in at the Jordan and at his resurrection. In each case, we find a christology that gives full weight to the dynamic place of the Spirit of the Father in the human history of the Son. At the same time, these views assume the priority of the Son's mission to become flesh over the Spirit's mission to indwell his humanity at conception, anoint it at the Jordan, and glorify it at the resurrection. Recovering the constitutive (and not merely accidental) character of the Spirit's mission throughout the entire Christ-event—as important as this project is and must be—does not ultimately necessitate a logical inversion in priority.

In the incarnation, then, the trinitarian taxis or order *Father-Son-Spirit* avoids the idea of an already existing humanity disposed for union (a logical, even if not concrete, form of adoptionism).<sup>54</sup> To avoid the danger of a logically opposite monophysitism, however, the order *Father-Spirit-Son* is not necessary, for the actualizing presence of the Spirit in the Son takes place precisely in the assumed humanity of the Son.<sup>55</sup>

To what extent the entire Christ-event confirms this preliminary judgment and in what way the logical priority of the Son over the Spirit at the incarnation touches on their immanent-trinitarian relations has yet to be discussed in more detail. For now, I want to show that the proper missions of the Son and the Holy Spirit in the incarnation already can point to their immanent distinctions in God in three basic ways. First, the Holy Spirit

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<sup>54</sup> Coffey, for example, sees the taxis *Father-Spirit-Son* as a biblical/economic-trinitarian “mission” model that must be clearly distinguished from the classical taxis *Father-Son-Spirit* as an immanent-trinitarian “procession” model. Working with a strict eternity-time dialectic, Coffey finds the ground for such a distinction in “. . . the fact that the Spirit who rests on the Son in the immanent Trinity draws into union with him in the economic Trinity. . . .” *Deus Trinitas*, 164, n. 7. However, the economic order also allows him to say that the Word cannot assume a humanity that has not been already sanctified and disposed for union by the Holy Spirit (183, n. 75).

<sup>55</sup> For a similar judgment on this matter, especially in dialogue with Hans Urs von Balthasar's proposal for an economic “trinitarian inversion” of the classical taxis, see Luis F. Ladaria, *La Trinidad, misterio de comunión* (Spain: Secretariado Trinitario, 2002), 189-201.

who sanctifies the child in the virgin's womb comes upon her as the power "of the Most High" (*hypsistou*, Lk. 1:35) and—following the logical priority of union or assumption over indwelling or sanctification—*through* the Son as well (for the Spirit cannot indwell what the Son has not united to himself). Admittedly, the latter part of the statement awaits further exploration and confirmation in the light of other events in the life and mission of Jesus—above all, the paschal mystery (i.e., death, resurrection, and Pentecost). Second, the Son *in* whom the Spirit rests, remains, or dwells from conception forward is also the only-begotten Son "from the Father" (*para patros*, Jn. 1:14) whom the latter also sends into the world for us (3:16). Notice that I have described the Spirit's presence in the humanity of the Son as an indwelling, a notion that I believe is presupposed in the idea of sanctification but also requires more clarification on the basis on subsequent events in the joint mission of Jesus and the Spirit. Third, and finally, it follows from the two propositions above that the Son and the Spirit are both sent by the Father and thus find in him their origin, source, and cause.

How exactly do these three preliminary reflections show that the economic Trinity is the immanent Trinity? We can tentatively affirm that the incarnation (hypostatic union) as an instance of God's self-communication in the Son and in the Spirit already points in some preliminary way to the Father (the Most High) as the eternal fountain of the Son and the Holy Spirit. We can also affirm in more formal language that the event yields *in spiritu* and *per filium* (one may say *filioque*, but with the Father as principal source of the Holy Spirit) immanent-trinitarian models.<sup>56</sup> Otherwise stated, in the immanent Trinity,

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<sup>56</sup> In the spirit of Augustine's *principaliter*, even the Western *filioque* must give to the Father his unique hypostatic identity as origin and source of the other two persons. *On the Holy Trinity* 15.26.47, 225.

the only-begotten Son exists from the Father “in the Spirit” (*in spiritu*) and the Spirit of the Father exists “through the Son” (*per filium*). I shall return to these models later on.

### 3.1.2.2. Qualifying the Correspondence between the Economic and the Immanent Trinity

A crucial question remains: To what extent can Rahner’s axiom justify the transition from the differentiated missions of the Son and the Holy Spirit in the incarnation to their immanent relations? The issue at hand is the *extent* of the correspondence between both aspects of the same reality.<sup>57</sup> Rahner does not really touch on this question. Although none other than God the Father communicates himself to us in the economy of salvation through the Son and in the Holy Spirit, Rahner still sees the immanent Trinity as the ontological ground for the economic Trinity.<sup>58</sup> Admittedly, even this conclusion follows from God’s self-giving for us in the economy. But even though God for us (economic Trinity) is neither less nor another than God in Godself (immanent Trinity), in the order of being, God in Godself still precedes God for us.<sup>59</sup> To speak *a posteriori* of the immanent Trinity as the *a priori* ontological ground of the economic Trinity is to affirm the element of freedom and graciousness in God’s twofold manner of self-giving in the Son and in the Spirit to the creature.<sup>60</sup> For Rahner, the usefulness of his axiom lies mainly in its capacity to recover the basis for God’s own triunity at the intradivine level in God’s threefold self-communication as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in salvation-

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<sup>57</sup> Of course, the idea is not to ascertain an exact degree of correspondence, but simply to acknowledge that such correspondence is not an absolute one and thus requires some qualification.

<sup>58</sup> *The Trinity*, 101-103; LaCugna criticizes Rahner for ultimately grounding the missions in the processions and, by doing so, moves dangerously in the direction of collapsing the immanent into the economic Trinity or of identifying too closely *oikonomia* and *theologia*. *God for Us*, 221-23.

<sup>59</sup> On a discussion of Jesus’ identity within the framework of the orders of being and of knowledge, see 4.2.2.

<sup>60</sup> See, e.g., *The Trinity*, 83.

history, making it possible to reaffirm the salvific import of the doctrine relativized and at times lost in the West.

In the light of Rahner's main soteriological concern, one can hardly charge him with reducing the mystery of God to a functional or economic trinitarianism. Like Rahner, LaCugna's concern is also from first to last soteriological. There can no longer be in trinitarian theology an unbridgeable separation between God for us and God in Godself, between the mystery of salvation and the mystery of the Trinity. But unlike Rahner, LaCugna, interprets his axiom by arguing for its unqualified identity: "Since our only point of access to *theologia* is through *oikonomia*, then an 'immanent' trinitarian *theology of God is nothing more than a theology of the economy of salvation.*"<sup>61</sup> Is this description of the correspondence between the economic and the immanent Trinity too drastic? Nothing more? Is the mystery of the triune God exhausted in God's gracious self-giving for us? Does the immanent aspect collapse into the economic one? In other words, is the immanent Trinity *always* the economic Trinity without qualification?

There is today much agreement on the first half of Rahner's axiom. Yet a question arises in regard to the reciprocity (or "viceversa") of the axiom. Does the "viceversa" point to an *absolute* or a *qualified* reciprocity of the axiom? And how does the answer to this question affect our preliminary view of the correspondence between the *propia* of the persons in the incarnation and their immanent threefold self-differentiation in God? Walter Kasper, for example, reminds us that the copula "is" in the axiom "must be

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<sup>61</sup> *God for Us*, 223; for Schoonenberg's similar move, see 2.2.2 above (n. 92).

understood as meaning not an identification but rather a non-deducible, free, gracious, historical presence of the immanent Trinity in the economic Trinity.”<sup>62</sup>

In one of the clearest and most articulate presentations of the problem, Congar offers ontological and eschatological reasons for a qualified reciprocity of the *Grundaxiom*. First of all, he desires to safeguard the existence of the triune God prior to that of created reality and the priority of God’s freedom to act towards creation.<sup>63</sup> Second, he wants to affirm that God’s self-communication to the creature takes place “in accordance with a rule of ‘condescendence,’ humiliation, ministry, and ‘kenosis’” that in turn points to the fact that God’s fullest self-communication has yet to take place in the beatific vision at the end of the eschatological era.<sup>64</sup> In these two ways, Congar warns against an absolute identity or correspondence between the economic Trinity and the immanent Trinity.

LaCugna fully recognizes that the distinction between God in Godself (*ad intra*) and God for us (*ad extra*) functions as a strategy “(a) to uphold divine freedom, b) to avoid equating God with the world, and (c) to avoid the agnostic or nominalist perspectives which despair of any real knowledge of God on our part.”<sup>65</sup> Still, LaCugna opts for a reverent negative theology in regard to the immanent Trinity for epistemological reasons. Since we only have access to God’s self-differentiation as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit through our *a posteriori* reality as already created and redeemed humans, we speculate

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<sup>62</sup> *The God of Jesus Christ*, 276; Luis F. Ladaria has recently argued that, strictly speaking, the second half of Rahner’s axiom “prevent us from too much of a univocal interpretation of the first *is*” (translation mine). Why? In the order of being, the economic Trinity cannot constitute in any way the immanent Trinity that precedes it. For the same reason, Ladaria prefers the use of the term “correspondence” only for the first half of the axiom. *La Trinidad, misterio de comunión*, 63-64, n. 133.

<sup>63</sup> “The first half of this statement by Rahner is beyond dispute, but the second half has to be clarified. Can the free mystery of the economy and the necessary mystery of the Tri-unity of God be identified? As the Fathers who combated Arianism said, even if God’s creatures did not exist, God would still be a Trinity of Father, Son and Spirit, since creation is an act of free will, whereas the procession of the Persons takes place, *kata phusin*.” *Holy Spirit*, vol. 3, 13.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

<sup>65</sup> “Re-conceiving the Trinity as the Mystery of Salvation,” *Scottish Journal of Theology* 38 (1985): 13.

too much when we speak of God in Godself apart from God's threefold operations in creation and redemption.<sup>66</sup> Like LaCugna, I acknowledge the limits of our knowledge of God and the apophatic principle that warns against reading the economic into the immanent Trinity "by a kind of extrapolation."<sup>67</sup> However, I also want to allow for the idea that God's self-giving to us in the Spirit leads us to see by grace through faith in Christ as our Lord and Savior that a someone utterly distinct from and *prior to* us—i.e., a loving and gracious God and Father—has freely created and saved us through Christ and in the Spirit. In the order of knowledge and experience of faith, the church's Spirit-led confession of Jesus as her risen Lord (1 Cor. 12:3) leads to her full acknowledgment of Jesus' unity with God the Father and even of his own preexistence and divinity. Standing in awe before the inexhaustible mystery of God in Christ, I believe that the church can fully engage—as she has for centuries—in modest reflection on the immanent-trinitarian ground of her own creation and salvation.

From a pneumatological space, the church can affirm the distinction between God who precedes her as Creator and herself as part of his creation. The distinction prevents the church from reducing or collapsing the mystery of God's triunity to his self-giving in the economy. Congar's first qualification of the reciprocity of Rahner's axiom involves the distinction between Creator and creature. He assumes the uncreated-created dialectic and the concomitant notion of God's freedom to relate to what is not God, namely, the

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<sup>66</sup> LaCugna agrees that asking whether God would be a Trinity apart from his threefold self-revelation (and by implication, his real relation to the world) is purely speculative "because we stand already within the *fact* of creation." *God for Us*, 326 (n. 21), cf. 227, 230; In her argumentation, she follows Schoonenberg's "Trinity—The Consummated Covenant: Theses on the Doctrine of the Trinitarian God," 112 (esp. thesis 8); LaCugna also disputes Thomas's idea that only humans have a real relation to God (not viceversa)—a move Thomas made to preserve God's freedom in relation to the world. See *ST* 1a, q. 13, a. 7.

<sup>67</sup> "To highlight the gracious freedom and the kenotic aspect of the economic Trinity is at the same time to emphasize the apophatic character of the immanent Trinity, that is, the fact that it eludes all language and thought. . . . we cannot deduce the immanent Trinity by a kind of extrapolation from the economic Trinity." *The God of Jesus Christ*, 276.

divine freedom to create and redeem creation. Only from a pneumatological horizon can the church affirm God's essential triunity as a reality that does not ultimately depend on God's self-giving in history—even if the former assumes the latter in some manner.<sup>68</sup>

Congar's second qualification of Rahner's axiom is eschatologically-oriented. God's self-communication to the creature cannot be complete until the creature's eschatological experience of the beatific vision of God in the state of glorification.<sup>69</sup> We may say that God's self-giving to the creature in the Son and in the Spirit in salvation-history has a goal that awaits fulfillment in the final resurrection and the life everlasting. As Bruno Forte has put it so well, "[t]he amount already given in the economy is a pledge of what will be fully revealed in the time of glory."<sup>70</sup> In the light of our present hope in what is yet to come, a qualification of the "viceversa" in Rahner's axiom calls us to distinguish without separating the element of eschatological promise in the revealed Trinity from its fulfillment in the glorious presence of the immanent Trinity.

### **3.1.2.3. A Look at the Immanent-Trinitarian Implications of the Christ-Event (Incarnating) in the Light of Congar's Qualified Reciprocity of Rahner's Axiom**

We can now take up Congar's two insights on the qualification of the second half of Rahner's axiom to God's self-giving in the Son and in the Spirit at the incarnation, and apply it to the question of the immanent Trinity. We may pose the question as follows:

How can Congar's two qualifications apply to the move from the proper works of the Son

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<sup>68</sup> Of course, we must hold to the freedom, love, and grace of the immanent Trinity "in," not "behind," the economic Trinity: "The need is to maintain not only the kenotic aspect of the economic Trinity but also its character of graciousness and freedom in relation to the immanent Trinity and thus to do justice to the immanent mystery of God in (not: behind!) his self-revelation." Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> Similarly, Moltmann has argued that in our present life "the trinitarian doxology" anticipates the eschatological "seeing face to face" of God; but in the end, the immanent Trinity will be worshipped in its own essence and for its own sake and not merely for its saving acts among us in history. *The Spirit of Life*, 301-303.

<sup>70</sup> *The Trinity As History: Saga of the Christian God*, trans. Paul Rotondi (N.Y.: Alba House, 1989), 13.

and the Spirit in God's self-giving for us in the economy to statements regarding their self-differentiation in God? Clearly there is a correspondence between God's self-communication to creaturely reality both in the Son's uniting of human nature to himself and in the Spirit's indwelling of the same at conception (economic aspect) and God's own trinity (immanent aspect). But in what way? What can we say regarding the triune God's immanence on the basis of its free economic manifestation?

As I have previously stated, the incarnate Son in whom the Spirit dwells in history is the preexistent Son in whom the Spirit rests in eternity and viceversa. Of course, the reciprocity of Rahner's axiom requires qualification because the incarnation constitutes a gracious novelty in the economy of salvation and therefore not an absolute reflection of the immanent Trinity. If the immanent Trinity is always the economic Trinity in an absolute sense, the incarnation also has to be seen as an immanent reality in God. Then we might just as well crassly transfer the virgin birth, the anointing, and the crucifixion of Christ to the immanent Trinity! An absurdity!

Indeed, one may speak of God's eternal disposition to send his Son into the world in the flesh to be sanctified, anointed, crucified, and raised for us in the Spirit. Without denying this truth, however, one must also affirm that the dynamic presence of the Spirit of God in the incarnate Son from birth, at the Jordan, unto death, and at the resurrection takes place under the conditions of time and history. Otherwise stated, the Son is always the only-begotten of the Father in the Spirit, but only in the case of the economy can we speak of the incarnate Son's "births" in his sanctified humanity as Son in obedience to the Father and for us at his conception, baptism, and resurrection.<sup>71</sup> Only in the case of

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<sup>71</sup> On the non-adoptionist interpretation of "birth" for events in Jesus' life and mission, see 2.1.3.



the economy can we refer to the Spirit's creating, indwelling, leading, and vivifying the incarnate Son at special moments of his life and mission.

These are some examples of provisos that we must keep in mind as we go through other instances of God's self-communication in the Son and the Spirit to the humanity of Christ *after* conception. Through them, I have briefly applied Congar's first qualification of the axiom's reciprocity to the incarnation (hypostatic union). The general lesson is this: We must avoid a strict identity between economic and immanent aspects of the Trinity. Of course, I do not believe that the preliminary immanent-trinitarian models proposed earlier on (i.e., *in spiritu* and *per filium/filioque*) violate Congar's ontological qualification.

We can now apply Congar's second qualification of the axiom's "viceversa" to the incarnation. Congar sees Thomas's view of the hypostatic union as an example of "non-historical theology" in which Christ's humanity receives everything from conception (including the beatific vision).<sup>72</sup> In his eschatological qualification of the axiom, Congar recognizes that we cannot ascribe the vision of God to Christ's assumed humanity at the moment of conception. God's self-communication in this case is not exhausted in the Son's descent to unite a human nature to himself, but has a dynamic eschatological orientation or goal towards its fulfillment in the resurrection of his sanctified humanity. Since the Spirit has a constitutive place in indwelling what the Son unites to himself, the Spirit must also be seen as an active agent in the actualization of the Son's humanity from conception to exaltation at the right hand of God after his resurrection and ascension.

God's self-communication to the assumed humanity in the Spirit's indwelling of the same cannot be seen merely in static terms but rather in its dynamic actualization until its

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<sup>72</sup> *The Word and the Spirit*, 85. Congar cites *ST* 3a, q. 34, a. 4 (see 97, n. 2).

culmination in Jesus' glorification. After God raises his Son in the power of the Spirit, we can also speak of a fulfilled self-communication of God in the Spirit to the assumed humanity of the Son.<sup>73</sup> We can then affirm the full glorification of this exalted humanity in the presence of the Father, its full participation in the inner-divine life, without erasing the ontological distinction between the divine and human natures in Christ—i.e., without collapsing the immanent Logos into the economic Logos. After conception, what then are the subsequent events in the joint mission of the Son and the Spirit in God's economy of salvation? What do they tell us about the Son-Spirit immanent relations? Do these events support the *in spiritu* and *per filium* (or even *filioque*) preliminary models of the immanent Trinity that I proposed earlier on the basis of the hypostatic union? Do they still support the Father's unique hypostatic property as origin of the Son and the Spirit?

The Father's self-communication in the Spirit throughout the Christ-event is indeed a dynamic one and therefore acquires an orientation from the Spirit's sanctification or indwelling of the Son's human nature to its anointing and glorification of the same. In Mark's Gospel, the anointing of Jesus at the Jordan explicitly points to the Spirit's descent "*in him*" (*eis auton*, 1:10), thus confirming the notion of an actual indwelling already anticipated in Luke 1:35. In the account of the temptation, Luke alludes to the same reality by telling us that Jesus returned from the Jordan "full of the Holy Spirit" [*plērēs pneumatos hagiou*] and was led "*in/by the Spirit*" [*en tō pneumati*] into the desert (4:1). Note that the sanctification of the child from conception (Lk. 1:35) does not

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<sup>73</sup> It is clear that Christ's humanity receives God's full self-communication in the Logos already at the hypostatic union. But is it not too speculative to ascribe the beatific vision to Christ at that time? Here God's self-communication in the Spirit to Christ's humanity complements Logos-christology with a much needed historically-oriented dynamic element. I have hinted at the distinction and complementarity of God's twofold self-communication in the Logos and in the Spirit to the humanity of Christ (see 2.1.3).

prevent the evangelist from giving the Spirit's indwelling in Jesus its economic dynamism at special moments of his life and mission.

In John's Gospel, the language of permanency best describes the anointing of the Son, upon whom the Spirit remained, rested, or dwelled (*emeinen*, 1:32; cf. v. 33). God gives his Spirit to the Son "not by measure" (*ou . . . ek metrou*, Jn. 3:34). After his anointing at the Jordan, Jesus begins his ministry "in/by the power of the Holy Spirit" (*en tē dynamei tou pneumatōs*, Lk. 4:14). He drives out demons "in/by the Spirit of God" (*en pneumati theou*, Mt. 12:28; cf. Lk. 12:28). He rejoices "in/by the Holy Spirit" (*en tō pneumati tō hagiō*, Lk. 10:21). Prior to his ascension, Jesus instructed the apostles "through the Holy Spirit" (*dia pneumatōs hagiou*, Acts 1:2). As high priest, Jesus sacrificially offers his unblemished life "through the eternal Spirit" [*dia pneumatōs aiōniou*] to God (Heb. 9:14). As risen Lord, Christ is vindicated "in/by the Spirit" (*en pneumati*, 1 Tim. 3:16).

Since the incarnate Son does all his life and work in or by the Spirit, the Spirit has an unquestionable mediating role in God's self-communication to the Son's humanity. To some extent, such a role is an instrumental one in the sense that the Spirit is the means through or by which God empowers the Son to carry out his redemptive mission for us. We can ground this economic reality in the Son's generation from the Father in the Spirit (*in spiritu*). On the other hand, the dynamic indwelling of the Spirit in the incarnate Son can also be understood as being mediated unto others through the Son. Upon healing the woman with hemorrhage, for example, Jesus knew that "power"—a term that Luke strongly associates with the Spirit (cf. Lk. 24:49; Acts 1:8, 10:38)—had come out "from him" (*ap' emou*, Lk. 8:46).

Yet the clearest instances of the Son's mediation of the Spirit of the Father unto others are associated with his glorification in the paschal mystery. On the cross, Jesus "handed over the Spirit" (*paredōken to pneuma*, Jn. 19:30). Soon thereafter, blood and "water"—the latter is, of course, a Johannine symbol for the Spirit (cf. 7:38-39, 4:14, and 3:5)—at once "came out from" (*exēlthen*, 3:34) the pierced side of the crucified. In John's Gospel, the cross anticipates Jesus' breathing of the Spirit on the disciples as the risen Lord: ". . . he breathed on them [*enephsēsen... autois*] and said to them, 'Receive [*labete*] the Holy Spirit. . .'" (20:22). In the West, the verb "to breathe" in Latin was rendered "spirare" and served to describe the procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Son in terms of "spiration." The Greeks, on the other hand, have typically pointed to the Johannine passage giving witness to the Spirit of truth, "who *proceeds from the Father*" [*ho para tou patros ekporeuetai*] in a way that is unique to him (15:26). In the same passage, the Son clearly has a mediating role in the procession of the Paraclete from the Father unto the disciples. Jesus refers to the Paraclete "whom I will send to you from the Father" [*hon egō pempō hymin para tou patros*]. Finally, the role of the Son as mediator of the sending or breathing of the Spirit from the Father also appears in Luke's account of Pentecost and the exaltation of Christ at the right hand of God. As risen Lord and Messiah, Jesus "pours out" [*execheen*] the promise of the Spirit "from the Father" [*para tou patros*] to all believers (Acts 2:33).

If we can posit a logical priority of union over sanctification at the incarnation (against adoptionism), it is only in the light of the paschal mystery's witness to the Son's role as mediator in God's self-giving to creaturely reality in the Spirit. This implies again a logical priority of the Son's procession from the Father by generation over the Spirit's

procession from the same by spiration. We can ground this economic reality in the Spirit's procession from the Father through the Son (*per filium*), or from the Father and the Son (*filioque*) as long as the Father is the ultimate source of the Holy Spirit.

In the light of Christ's dynamic "incarnating" throughout all major events of his life and mission, we can now check our earlier preliminary conclusions drawn from God's self-giving to the humanity of Christ in the Son and in the Holy Spirit at the hypostatic union (incarnation). Once again, we can conclude that in the immanent Trinity the Son and the Holy Spirit find their origin, source, and cause in God the Father, that the Son in whom the Spirit remains or dwells is begotten from the Father in the Spirit, and that the Spirit proceeds or is breathed forth from the Father through (or and) the Son. To sum up matters up to this point, what we said earlier of the Son's human nature at an absolute point in time (incarnation as hypostatic union) finds its material basis in the Son's concrete historic human existence in faithfulness to God the Father throughout all major moments of his life and mission in the Spirit (incarnating).

In short, the fullness of God's self-communication in the Spirit to the humanity of the Son at the moment of its glorification yields *per filium* (or a qualified *filioque*) and *in spiritu* models of the immanent Trinity. In the case of the latter model, we are especially reminded of the Spirit's mediating role in the resurrection of Christ. It is "in" or "by" the Spirit that God vindicates his Son (1 Tim. 3:16). In the previous chapter, I even proposed the possibility of affirming that God raised his Son "through" the Spirit on the grounds that our genuine participation in Christ's resurrection (see Rom. 8:11 and 1 Cor. 15:20) must amount to a full participation in his Spirit-glorified humanity.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> See 2.3.1.

Since the Holy Spirit plays a mediating role in the incarnation and incarnating of the Son, should we not speak of a *per spiritum* or even a *spirituque* model of the immanent Trinity instead of an *in spiritu* one? Or do these models amount to the same thing? We have said that in the immanent Trinity the Son is begotten from the Father in the Spirit or that the Son in whom the Spirit rests, remains, or dwells is begotten from God the Father. However, can we also affirm that in the immanent Trinity the Son is also begotten from the Father by or through the Spirit? Or from the Father and the Spirit? Does this not amount to an immanent-trinitarian inversion of the taxis *Father-Son-Spirit*? I shall take up the question of the viability of these other models in the final section of this chapter.

To sum up, Congar's ontological qualification can point out that the Son's uniting of humanity to himself and the Holy Spirit's sanctification of the same occur as a gracious novelty in time and history, and therefore cannot be crassly transposed to the immanent Trinity. The immanent Trinity cannot *absolutely* correspond to the economic Trinity. Regarding Congar's eschatological qualification of the axiom, we must affirm that God's self-communication in the incarnate Son has already attained its goal in his resurrection, ascension, and session at the right hand of the Father in and by the power of the Spirit. In this respect, God's self-communication in the Spirit to the Son's humanity has reached a fulfillment that no other graced creature (saint), including those who have gone before us, can receive until the final resurrection at the parousia. The final redemption of our bodies at the last day takes place by the mediation of the incarnate, anointed, crucified, and risen Son's filial relation to God the Father in which creatures can only participate through the Spirit who sanctifies, anoints, and raises his humanity (and through his, ours).

Finally, on the basis of the incarnation—in its static and dynamic dimensions—as an instance of God’s self-giving to the creature in the Son’s assumption of a human nature and a historic existence and in the Spirit’s logically subsequent sanctification, anointing, and raising of the same for us, I proposed *in spiritu* and *per filium* (or *filioque*) immanent models of the Trinity. The latter model affirms that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father through the Son (or, and the Son). The former one states that the Son is begotten from the Father in the Spirit, namely, as the one in whom the Spirit rests or dwells.

### **3.2. Invigorating Logos-Oriented Approaches to Person and Relation in the Light of the Tradition and a Spirit-Oriented Christology**

In the last section, we learned that with a proper qualification of Rahner’s axiom, a Spirit-christology as a complement to Logos-christology plays an indispensable role in helping us see the Christ-event as a trinitarian event and grounds the mystery of salvation in Christ in the mystery of the immanent Trinity. At this point, the reader should note that I have left two issues for the last section of this chapter.<sup>75</sup> These are the distinction between the *filioque* and *per filium* immanent models of the Trinity and the possibility of a *per spiritum* or *spirituque*—in contrast to the *in spiritu*—complementary to the *per filium* (or *filioque*) model as an immanent ground for the priority of the mission of the Spirit over that of the Son. I explore such issues within the framework of a discussion on the relationship between the reciprocal and processional character of intradivine relations among the persons of the Trinity. A Logos-oriented christology stresses the processional aspect insofar as it assumes the logical priority of the Son over the Spirit in the order of processions. Is there a more reciprocal way of seeing the relation Son-Spirit? Can a Spirit-christology help us to complement the processional aspect with a perichoretic

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<sup>75</sup> See 3.3.

one? Before I enter this discussion, we first have to arrive at some understanding of the trinitarian ideas of person and relation. Such a study can lead us into a more precise understanding of the relationship between the ideas reciprocity and procession. In the end, I shall argue that these are complementary and not contradictory aspects of the mystery of the immanent Trinity.

In this section, I demonstrate the usefulness of a Spirit-christology for strengthening the processional character of intradivine relations represented by the traditional order *Father-Son-Spirit* with the community-oriented notion of trinitarian perichoresis. Concretely, I argue that a dynamic and relational understanding of the trinitarian ideas of person and relation finds its material basis in the Spirit-oriented christology I have been proposing in prior arguments. Even as the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father through (or and) the Son in the traditional taxis, the Father begets the Son and the Son is begotten from the Father “in the Spirit” (*in spiritu*) in whom both exist for each other.

The *static* dimension of a Logos-christology directs us to Jesus’ origins as incarnate Son sent by the Father from the first moment of his conception (economic aspect) and as preexistent Son from the first instance of his eternal begetting in the bosom of the Father (immanent aspect). As I put it earlier, what matters most in this perspective is the Son’s “being-from-the-beginning.”<sup>76</sup> God also acts in his incarnate Son through his Spirit in dynamic new ways at special times in salvation-history. What immanent-trinitarian ground does a complementary Spirit-oriented *dynamic* view of the incarnation (incarnating) of the Son reflect?

Moreover, a Logos-christology’s *individual* dimension defines Jesus’ identity in terms of his personal inner-constitution as God-man from the first moment of the hypostatic

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<sup>76</sup> See the introduction to this chapter and 3.2.1.



union (economic aspect) and his self-subsistence as a preexistent person in distinction from the Father (immanent aspect). Under the individual dimension, what matters most is the Son's "being-in-himself." However, as I have previously argued, the incarnate Son also does all his life and mission in loving obedience to the Father and for us in the power of the Holy Spirit. What immanent-trinitarian ground does a complementary Spirit-oriented *relational* understanding of the person of the Son reflect?

Before finding in a Spirit-christology the material basis for the Son's personal identity in the immanent Trinity in terms of his "being-in-act" and "being-in-relation," a brief look into some of the historico-theological reasons for the Logos-oriented static and individual approaches to person and relation will be helpful. Here I only wish to point to a few key normative influences for the Logos-oriented emphases in the history of dogma. Later on, I shall have to look once again to the Eastern and Western traditions for insights into complementary dynamic and relational aspects of the trinitarian person.

### **3.2.1. Classic Moves Towards Ontologization, Its Static and Individual Dimensions**

Raniero Cantalamessa argues that an external (cultural) factor contributing to a partial weakening of the pneumatic dimensions of the Christ-event was the move towards Greek "ontologization" as a philosophical tool employed by theologians to define Jesus' identity in their historical context.<sup>77</sup> For the Greek mind, "what matters, in everything, is 'what it was at the beginning,' the *arché* of things, that is to say their metaphysical constitution, not their becoming and their history; what matters is the essence, not the existence."<sup>78</sup> The councils of the church provide clear examples of this move in the history of dogma.

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<sup>77</sup> *The Holy Spirit in the Life of Jesus*, 8.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*

### 3.2.1.1. A Look at Councils: Nicea I, Ephesus, Chalcedon, and Constantinople II

The church's historic struggle against Arianism immediately comes to mind. Church theologians clearly turned to the philosophical language of *ousia* to affirm that the Son's generation from the Father did not begin in time and history, but belonged to the eternal essence of God from its very beginning.<sup>79</sup> Through the use of the term *homoousios*, theologians intended to accord the Son his divine dignity with God the Father in their cultural context through the reappropriation of a Greek philosophical category in the light of the biblical witness to the Logos's identity as Creator. Thus the Logos is not merely a human being belonging to the created order—even one greater than the rest of God's creatures. Of the same essence of God, the Logos stands in contrast to the world as the one through whom all things were made. Concerning the church's appropriation of *homoousios* language, Zizioulas concludes:

Its employment by Athanasius and Nicea was not intended to create a speculative or metaphysical theology . . . but to express the *utter* dialectic between God and the world. The *homoousios* is not to be understood so much as a positive statement, telling us something about God's being, but rather as a negative one, indicating what the Logos is *not*, namely a creature.<sup>80</sup>

In the light of Zizioulas's comments, we may say that at first the formal move towards "ontologization" at Nicea did not necessarily foster a positive metaphysics of substance, but rather intended to formulate a kind of apophatic statement on the identity of the Son in terms of the basic scriptural distinction between Creator and creation.

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<sup>79</sup> In this regard, I briefly noted Athanasius's *Defence of the Nicene Definition* (see 1.3).

<sup>80</sup> "Teaching," 32.

At Nicea, nevertheless, there is still a shift from Jesus' relation to the Father in history and for us (*oikonomia*) to the Son's relation to the Father at the level of the intradivine life (*theologia*)—a move necessitated by Arius's ontological-immanent subordination of the Son to the Father.<sup>81</sup> Thus the church has to answer the question of Jesus' being as a concern in itself, as a reality prior to and relatively distinct from the question of his deeds and acts for us in the economy of salvation. Otherwise stated, there was a legitimate reason to ground *oikonomia* in *theologia*. To do so, the church begins to define Jesus' identity in terms of what he is "at the beginning" in eternity, or, to use our categories, the weight of discourse falls on the "static" dimension of Jesus' ontology.

A corresponding shift occurs once church theologians begin to reflect on the creedal affirmation that the Logos came down from heaven and was incarnate. After Nicea, the move towards ontologization eventually (especially from the fifth century onwards) comes to stress the inner-constitution of Jesus Christ in substantial terms, namely, as God-man "from the beginning of time" in the hypostatic union. As a result, Cantalamesa argues, "we see attention being transferred, little by little, from the events and concrete mysteries of Jesus' life (he was born, was baptized, died, rose again) to the moment of the incarnation."<sup>82</sup> Undoubtedly, in the aftermath of Nicea, we begin to see that the ontological emphasis for defining Jesus' identity as Son—whether in eternity as preexistent Logos or in time as incarnate Logos—centers on his "being-from-the-beginning."

Several stages of christological reflection in the history of dogma lead to important ontological conclusions on the question of Jesus' relation to God the Father. But all of

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<sup>81</sup> LaCugna, *God for Us*, chap. 1.

<sup>82</sup> *The Holy Spirit in the Life of Jesus*, 8.

these center on the proper manner of understanding the divine-human dialectic (or the incarnation as hypostatic union) in the person of the Son in and of himself. Already at the council of Ephesus (A.D. 431), the church fathers held to the person of the Word as the one subject in his divine and human operations, especially in reaction to Nestorius's inability to anchor what he defined as the "conjunction" of natures in this one subject.<sup>83</sup> Yet efforts at Ephesus only received a formal dogmatic formulation twenty years later at the council of Chalcedon (A.D. 451) and its witness to Jesus Christ as one person and subsistence in two natures.

By then Eutyches, a sympathizer of Cyril and Apollinaris, had entered the picture, arguing for the post-incarnational existence of one divine nature alone in Christ—a move that the council interpreted as a confusion of natures in the one person of the Son.<sup>84</sup> In a single stroke reaction to Apollinarianism, Eutychianism, and Nestorianism, the Definition of Faith makes an explicit distinction for the first time in christological (in contrast to trinitarian) dogma between the terms nature and person or subsistent being.<sup>85</sup>

This one and the same Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son [of God] must be confessed to be in two natures, unconfusedly, immutably, indivisibly, inseparably [united] . . . without the distinction of natures taken away by such union, but

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<sup>83</sup> On Theodore of Mopsuestia and Nestorius, see Leo Donald Davis, *The First Seven Ecumenical Councils (325-787): Their History and Theology* (Collegeville, MN.: Liturgical Press, 1990), 142-48 (hereafter *Councils*); To Cyril, Nestorius's position (and others' before him) inevitably led to the idea of the Word "taking to himself a person," or "into the error of speaking of two sons" or "two persons." See *The [Third] Epistle of Cyril to Nestorius*, in *NPNF*<sup>2</sup>, vol. 14, 198; cf. *The Epistle of Cyril to Nestorius with the XII. Anathematisms*, in *ibid.*, esp. 202-03.

<sup>84</sup> According to Davis, "He [Eutyches] hated the idea of two natures in Christ after the Incarnation because he understood nature to mean concrete existence. To affirm two natures was for him to affirm two concrete existences, two *hypostases*, two persons in Christ." *Councils*, 171 (cf. 186); Leo criticizes Eutyches for doing away with the existence of Christ's true humanity in the only-begotten Son of God, and in particular, for his famous statement "I confess that our Lord was of two natures before the union, but after the union I confess one nature." See *The Tome of St. Leo*, in *NPNF*<sup>2</sup>, vol. 14, 257-58.

<sup>85</sup> *Councils*, 186-87.

rather the peculiar nature of each property being preserved and being united in one Person and subsistence.<sup>86</sup>

As Zizioulas argued in regard to the use of the *homoousios* at Nicea, one may say that the use of negative adverbs in the Definition safeguards the unity in duality and viceversa of Christ's person against heresies more than it provides a definitive positive theology of the union as such.<sup>87</sup> On the other hand, the Definition's use of the post-biblical or auxiliary rubrics of nature (*physis*), person (*prosōpon*), and subsistent being (*hypostasis*) still opens the door to reconceptualize the scriptural witness to Jesus' identity as the obedient Son of the Father in terms of his individual inner-constitution as God-man from the beginning of time. To the static dimension of Jesus' ontology (first considered at Nicea) we can now add a formal shift towards the question of the incarnate Logos' "individual" make-up or constitution. In other words, the ontological interest does not begin to fall only on Jesus' "being-from-the-beginning," but also on his "being-in-himself" as God-man.

At Constantinople II (A.D. 553), Apollinaris/Eutyches were anathemized for mixing/confounding the two natures in Christ and Theodorus/Nestorius for dividing/relativizing the union of both natures in the one person of Christ.<sup>88</sup> In the aftermath of Chalcedon, however, monophysites were particularly adamant against the language of its Definition and insisted in identifying the concrete hypostatic existence of the incarnate Word with his divine nature (*physis*).<sup>89</sup> In this case, the identity of hypostasis and physis confounded the existence of two natures in the one person of Christ to the particular detriment of the

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<sup>86</sup> *NPNF*<sup>2</sup>, vol. 14, 264-65.

<sup>87</sup> Kasper, *Jesus the Christ*, 238.

<sup>88</sup> See the fourth sentence or anathema of the council. *The Capitula of the Council*, in *NPNF*<sup>2</sup>, vol. 14, 312.

<sup>89</sup> For an account of the development of monophysitism after Chalcedon, see *Councils*, 207-20.

Word's assumption of a true humanity. This leads to further reflection on the *how* of the unity of two unmixed (and also undivided) natures in the person of Christ.

Leontius of Byzantium introduced the notion of a humanity that exists or subsists in the eternal person of the Word (enhypostasis) and thus has no concrete existence apart from this person (anhypostasis).<sup>90</sup> Significantly, this crucial move is predicated on the “individuality” of the hypostasis, and therefore the emphasis of his formulation falls on the individual self-subsistence of the preexistent person of the Logos as the concrete subject of his divine and human actions. Although this argument legitimately anchors the incarnation in the divine initiative to bring into existence and assume a human nature, its understanding of the hypostasis as an individually constituted reality in eternity does not pay attention to the ecstatic dimension of the same. That Jesus' human reality is that of the divine Logos is not actually predicated on the basis of the Son's *relation* to God the Father.<sup>91</sup> To be fair, Leontius simply entered the discussion within an already established ontological framework that focuses on what I have characterized as static and individual.

### 3.2.1.2. A Look at Some Key Influences in the West:

#### Hippolytus, Tertullian, and Augustine

In the West, the origin of the notion of person has deep roots in the church's rejection of modalism, that is, the idea that Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are mere manifestations, modalities, names, or masks of the one absolute monad-God. Such a strong view of the

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<sup>90</sup> See a brief extract of Leontius's thought on the types of union in *LLL*, vol. 3, *Christology of the Later Fathers*, ed. Edward Rochie Hardy and Cyril C. Richardson (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1954), 376-77.

<sup>91</sup> Pannenberg notes that Leontius's position is not incorrect because of what it says as much as for what it leaves unsaid, namely, that the material ground for the identification of Jesus' human reality with the eternal Son is Jesus' own relation of obedience to the Father during his life and mission. Pannenberg hints at the fact that Jesus' dedication to the Father in history is the ground that allows for a relational notion of his person—an insight that, I would argue, does not play a part in Leontius's argumentation because of his starting point in the eternal Logos and his emphasis on the individuality of the hypostasis of the Logos. See *Jesus—God and Man*, 338-39.

unity of God does not allow for a threefold self-differentiation of the one God. Already in Hippolytus (ca. 170-ca. 236), we see a refutation of Noetus's belief that Father and Son are interchangeable names for the one who is born, suffers, and dies.<sup>92</sup> In reaction to a certain Callistus, he criticizes the use of the term person as a nominal concept that refers without differentiation to the one Father and God (= Spirit or Deity).<sup>93</sup> Thus "person" is not a synonym for "substance" (or more generally, for the one undifferentiated Deity). Although Hippolytus regularly speaks of the unity of God in terms of power, and of the threefold manifestation of the one God in the economy, he still wants to refer to Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as three distinct persons.<sup>94</sup>

In a pre-Augustinian context, Tertullian offers a more precise and articulate answer to Hippolytus's anti-modalist concern. Even though Tertullian argues in a similar way to Hippolytus against Praxeas, and also expresses that the Unity (*unitas*) of God is distributed in a Trinity (*trinitas*) of persons according to an economic (or monarchic) order or manifestation,<sup>95</sup> he also points out at times that the economic Trinity has its ground in a threefold self-differentiation *in* God. For example, Tertullian speaks of the Holy Spirit as "the third degree *in the Godhead*, because I believe the Spirit *to proceed* from no other source than from the Father through the Son."<sup>96</sup> As to the existence of the Son before creation, Tertullian writes that God "had within Himself both Reason, and,

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<sup>92</sup> *The Refutation of all Heresies* 10.23, in *ANF*, vol. 5, 148; *Against the Heresy of One Noetus*, in *ibid.*, 1, 223 (hereafter *Against Noetus*).

<sup>93</sup> "[H]e acknowledges that there is one Father and God . . . spoken of, and called by the name of Son, yet that in substance He is one Spirit. For Spirit, *as* the Deity, is, he says, not any *being* different from the Logos, or the Logos from the Deity; therefore this one person, (according to Callistus,) is divided nominally, but substantially not so." *Refutation of all Heresies* 10.23, 148.

<sup>94</sup> *Against Noetus*, 8, 226 and 14, 228.

<sup>95</sup> *Against Praxeas* 1-2, 597-98; I leave aside the question of whether Tertullian understands the notion of person in a metaphysical or a juridical sense. For the former view, see Edmund J. Fortman, *The Triune God: A Historical Study of the Doctrine of the Trinity* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker, 1982; reprint, Eugene, Oreg.: Wipf and Stock, 1999): 113, 115; For the latter view, see González, *A History of Christian Thought*, vol. 1, 178-79.

<sup>96</sup> *Against Praxeas* 3, 599.

inherently in Reason, His Word, which He made second to Himself by agitating it *within Himself*" (italics mine).<sup>97</sup>

Prior to the ecumenical councils, "person" in the pre-Augustinian West points above all to individual distinctiveness in the economy and at times in the Godhead. In terms of the Son's identity, the stress naturally falls on his "being-in-himself"—either from before the incarnation or from the incarnation forward—in distinction from the Father and the Holy Spirit.<sup>98</sup> That one individual person is not another is a necessary point to make in the face of modalism, but this legitimate turn pays little attention to how the persons *relate* to one another. Modalists could interpret the idea of relation in such a way that the persons "simply become so related to themselves, that the Father can make Himself a Son to Himself, and the Son render Himself a Father to Himself."<sup>99</sup>

Tertullian has to argue that a person may have relations but is not constituted as such by his relations: "A father must needs have a son; so likewise a son, to be a son, must needs have a father. It is, however, one thing to *have*, and another thing to *be*" (italics mine).<sup>100</sup> This priority of being-in-itself over being-in-relation (of being over having a relation), as well as the move to anchor the latter in the former, shows again that "person" denotes individuality. Moreover, one could argue that if the person is not constituted in relation to another at the immanent level, then the very idea of "person" becomes static. The mutually dynamic openness to the other among the persons receives no attention. At

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<sup>97</sup> Ibid., 5, 601.

<sup>98</sup> Admittedly, the place of the Spirit in Hippolytus's and Tertullian's formulations is not the clearest in every case. Prior to the fourth century, Spirit can refer to God or Deity in general, the divine principle in Christ (or the preexistent Word), the economic manifestation of God's power in history, or a third person distinct from the Father and the Son in the economy of salvation and even at the intradivine level.

<sup>99</sup> *Against Praxeas* 10, 604.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.



this early stage of the history of dogma, however, we simply observe that it is difficult to bring individuality and relationality together into one synthesis of the person.

After the church's struggle with Arianism, Augustine arises as the most influential figure in the West for centuries to come. Of particular significance for us is his anti-subordinationist turn to the indivisible unity of God as the highest ontological principle for trinitarian reflection and discourse. Since I have already discussed some of the basic highlights of Augustine's trinitarian theology, I will only briefly review some of them to show how his view of relation, because of his overriding emphasis on God's undivided essence, relativizes the radicality of the person as one that openly relates to another.<sup>101</sup>

For Augustine, the concept of relation serves to distinguish between the three persons of the Trinity without doing harm to the one divine essence. The persons are identical with the relations and both are in turn identical with the one divine essence. In the Western tradition, the notion of person is eventually defined according to the principle—with roots in Augustine and more formally in Anselm—that all in the one God is common except for what can be distinguished in the one essence by a logical opposition in relations. In other words, each person is defined in terms of the person from whom it is distinguished as its opposite. The Father is not the Son and viceversa. By *not* being the other, they affirm each other. There is a subtle turn to the individuality of the persons in the sense that they are *logically* constituted in terms of an *opposition* (although of an affirming kind) in relations. Nevertheless, in the broader framework of Augustine's approach, persons and relations are in turn logically subsumed and equated with the divine essence. And this is the greater problem.

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<sup>101</sup> See 3.1.1.

To be sure, the Augustinian idea of a relative—yet non-accidental (for in God there can be no accidents)—differentiation between the persons within the one divine essence has a major strength. By strongly safeguarding God’s unity, this concept does not allow for a subordinationist or tritheistic interpretation of person. But at what expense? What is relativized in the process is a more dynamic and ecstatic view of relation that gives due weight to the eternal openness and freedom (dynamism) of each person of the Trinity to exist for, in, and with one another in their triadic communion or perichoresis (ecstasis or relationality). This requires that person, and not essence, be the point of departure and the highest ontological principle for trinitarian discourse. Moreover, it requires that the idea of person include within itself the biblical notion that God is love, for the ideas of openness, freedom, and relation in themselves are mere philosophical concepts unless they find their meaning in God’s own character as a loving God. As we shall soon see, Augustine himself contributes to the trinitarian theme of love.

### **3.2.2. Revitalizing Logos-Oriented Ontologization: Proposed Moves in Trinitarian Pneumatology, Its Dynamic and Relational Dimensions**

Are there any building blocks in the Eastern and Western traditions that can help us to bring dynamism and relationality into Logos-oriented approaches to person and relation? To answer this question, I shall first review and assess the significance of the Eastern-Cappadocian contributions to the notion of person (especially Basil) in the light of John Zizioulas’s contemporary interpretation of the Greek tradition on this point. Second, I consider two Western insights into what I interpret as attempts towards more dynamic and relational ontology, namely Augustine’s and Richard of St. Victor’s trinitarian reflections under the theme of love. Finally, I look at Walter Kasper’s thoughts on the

contributions that a Spirit-oriented christology in particular can make to revitalize what I call Logos-oriented approaches to the interrelated ideas of person and relation.

### 3.2.2.1. Person and Relation in the Eastern-Cappadocian Tradition

In the Greek tradition, the three persons are the concrete mode of existence of the one God. There is no access to the divine essence apart from the persons. As others have in the past, Congar cites T. de Régnon as an authority on the difference between Latin and Greek approaches: “The Latins regarded the personality as the way in which nature was expressed, while the Greeks thought of nature as the content of the person.”<sup>102</sup> Since the person is the ultimate principle in trinitarian discourse, the Greeks define the concept according to relations of origin from the one God who is Father. In other words, person is defined in terms of the person (i.e., the Father) from whom it originates. The Son is the only-begotten of the Father and the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father. In both cases, the Father is the source of communion (or divine unity) among the persons. As Basil puts it, divine communion (*koinonia*) is derived “from the fact that He [i.e., the Holy Spirit] moreover is said to be ‘of God’ . . . in the sense of proceeding out of God [= Father], not by generation, like the Son, but as Breath of His mouth.”<sup>103</sup>

Basil’s understanding of divine unity as *koinonia* at once highlights the activity and relationality of the persons towards one another in their own right while protecting their differentiation from each other as well as the personal uniqueness of God the Father as the source and cause of such communion. From divine unity as intradivine communion, Basil moves to unified divine outreach to the world from the Father, through the Son, and

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<sup>102</sup> *Holy Spirit*, vol. 3, xvi.

<sup>103</sup> *On the Spirit* 18.46, 29.

in the Spirit.<sup>104</sup> There is a unified operation of the divine persons towards creation, but according to a descending taxis or order among them that highlights what is unique or proper to each. Regarding the economy of creation, Basil states: “For the first principle of existing things is One [= the Father], creating through the Son and perfecting through the Spirit.”<sup>105</sup> What is true of creation is true of the Christ-event and the church.

God’s plan of salvation in Jesus Christ was “accomplished through the grace of the Spirit.”<sup>106</sup> We may say that God sends his Spirit upon the incarnate Son to perfect his humanity in the fullness of grace and accompany him in his mission until its completion. Through baptism, the church is made “spiritual by fellowship (*koinonia*) with Himself.”<sup>107</sup> In the Spirit, the church confesses Christ as Lord and, through the only-begotten Son, is able to call upon the Father in the Spirit of adoption.<sup>108</sup> At this point, we can speak of an ascending taxis in the order of grace from the Holy Spirit, through the Son, to the Father.

Note that the ideas of dynamism and relationality come together in Basil’s system. To speak of divine unity in terms of persons in communion does not lead to the notion of a static and self-enclosed intradivine reality. Instead, the notion of *koinonia* points to God the Father’s open and gracious outreach to the world through the Son and in the Spirit (*a patre*) and to the Spirit’s gracious bringing of sinners into the fellowship of the Father through the Son (*ad patrem*). The actualizing and ecstatic aspects of a Spirit-christology find their ground in an ontology of divine persons in active communion with each other.

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<sup>104</sup> Ibid., 7.16, 10-11; 26.63, 39-40; 27.68, 43.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid., 16.38, 23.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid., 19.39, 25.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid., 9.23, 15.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid., 11.27, 17-18.

But what are the deeper roots behind this Eastern-Cappadocian notion of personhood?  
And do they support the idea of relation as determinative for the person?

Zizioulas argues that, in classical Greek culture, philosophers held to the substantial and non-personal affinity or unity of God with all things in the cosmos (ontological monism).<sup>109</sup> In the classical mind, therefore, the world exists from the substance and not from the will of God; otherwise stated, the world exists out of an ontological necessity in God and not out of God's own free will.<sup>110</sup> In reaction to monism, the Cappadocians identified for the first time in the history of dogma the classical Greek and Roman terms person (*prosōpon*, signifying relation) and substance (*ousia*, *hypostasis*, signifying being itself) to affirm God's being-in-relation to the world by an act of personal freedom and love.<sup>111</sup> Because hypostasis is the concrete mode of being, then person becomes the basic and ultimate ontological category for defining God's being-in-relation to what is not God (i.e., the created world). To be is "to be for another" in open freedom and love.

After the Cappadocians, person (*prosōpon*) is no longer secondary to being (*ousia*) but its hypostasis; therefore, hypostasis (being) is essentially relational (being-in-relation).<sup>112</sup> Since the real existence of substance (*ousia*) is to be found in person (= hypostasis), then the cause (*aitia*) of the divine existence must also be found in a particular person (not in the common divine essence).<sup>113</sup> In other words, God the Father (not God in general) is the personal cause of the generation of the Son and the procession of the Holy Spirit.

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<sup>109</sup> *Being as Communion*, 29-30.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, 31-46.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, 39; the reader should note the difference with Tertullian's position (see 3.2.1) that the person first *is* and then *has* relations.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*, 39-41.

Person cannot be defined solely in terms of its individual self-subsistence, for the notion of person carries with it the idea of relating to another in freedom and love. The idea of openness in freedom and love in turn point to the dynamic perichoresis of persons in communion. Unlike Tertullian's anti-modalist priority of being over relations, person cannot precede relation in the Eastern-Cappadocian system. Unlike Augustine's anti-Arian priority of essence over person, *ousia* cannot precede *hypostasis* among the Greeks. Now, if persons are *a priori* the concrete mode of existence of the one divine substance and there is no access to the unity of God apart from the communion of persons whose source is the Father, then relation for the Greeks does not point so much to that which *distinguishes* within the divine essence (as in Augustine) as much as to that which *unites*.<sup>114</sup> In short, "being-in-act" and "being-in-relation" are constitutive of the person.

### **3.2.2.2. Two Western Insights into the Theme of Love:**

#### **Augustine and Richard of St. Victor on the Persons of the Trinity**

One may ask if there are building blocks to conceive of a more dynamic and relational understanding of the person in the Western trinitarian tradition. A seemingly productive area of inquiry is the theme of love. If God is truly love, this predicate must give us some insight into what it means for God to be triune and thus a tripersonal community of love. Indeed, a biblico-theological understanding of the notions of person and relation in terms of what I have so far characterized as dynamic (or actualizing) and ecstatic ontology—along with its concomitant notions of openness, freedom, and relationality—are mere philosophical constructs unless they find their meaning in God's own character as love.

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<sup>114</sup> In the Western-Augustinian tradition, the idea of relation points to that which distinguishes the persons without prejudice to the unity of God. In the Eastern tradition, the persons are already given realities and thus relation refers, above all, to what unites them. I became acutely aware of this comparative analysis in a conversation with Luis F. Ladaria. Interview by Leopoldo A. Sánchez M., tape recording, 2 December 2002, Università Gregoriana di Roma (hereafter Interview Ladaria).

Based on the analogy of the human mind and its internal faculties of knowledge (intellect) and love (will), Augustine attempted to see the relative distinctions (relations) among the persons of the Trinity in terms of love.<sup>115</sup> The emphasis falls on his view of the one divine essence as an indivisible self-presence who internally knows itself and, in knowing itself, loves itself.<sup>116</sup> He writes, “But love is *of* some one that loves, and *with* love something *is* loved. Behold, then, there are three things: he that loves, and that which is loved, and love. What, then, is love, except a certain life which couples or seeks to couple together some two things, namely him that loves, and that which is loved?”<sup>117</sup>

Within the one divine essence or consubstantial communion of the three persons, the Holy Spirit may be said to be “something common both to the Father and the Son. . . . And therefore they are not more than three: One who loves Him who is from Himself, and One who loves Him from whom He is, and Love itself.”<sup>118</sup> The Father utters the Son in an internal act of knowledge and at once the Father and the Son give the Holy Spirit in a common act of love through which the trinitarian circle of love is closed. In addition to safeguarding the unity of God in the strongest possible way, Augustine’s approach shows that there are only three persons and two processions in the one God and explains the Son’s and the Holy Spirit’s relatively distinct manners of proceeding.<sup>119</sup>

In his proceeding from the Father (principally) and the Son, the Holy Spirit “intimates to us a mutual love, wherewith the Father and the Son reciprocally love one another.”<sup>120</sup> Since love is especially appropriated to the Holy Spirit, we can also speak of the Holy

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<sup>115</sup> *On the Trinity*, bk. 9.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*, e.g., 9.2-4, 126-28.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.10.14, 124.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.5.7, 100.

<sup>119</sup> See John O’Donnell, “The Trinity as Divine Community,” *Gregorianum* 69, no. 1 (1988): 6-7.

<sup>120</sup> *On the Trinity* 15.17.27, 215.

Spirit as gift of love to others in the economy of salvation.<sup>121</sup> From intradivine love, there is a move to divine love towards creatures. As the immanent bond of love between the Father and the Son, the Holy Spirit directs us to a kind of interiority in God, but also of exteriority from God to the world in that, as gift of love, the Spirit of the Father and the Son indwells the saints. As Augustine puts it, “Love . . . which is of God and is God, is specially the Holy Spirit, by whom the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, by which love the whole Trinity dwells in us. . . . love, which brings to God. . . .”<sup>122</sup>

Augustine’s analogy of love applies more directly to the one divine essence and the three persons in their relative distinctions within the same, and then indirectly to the Holy Spirit as bond of love in the order of immanent processions and gift of love unto others through an appropriation in the economy. At the same time, Augustine’s use of the love analogy introduces a certain intratrinitarian dynamism within the divine essence, even if the relational character of divine love among three distinct persons of the Trinity in their perichoretic plurality is eclipsed to some extent by the stronger emphasis on preserving the unity of God. Significantly, the immanent-trinitarian ground for appropriating love to the Holy Spirit in the indwelling of the saints (and in inflaming their love for God and for each other) is his intradivine identity as the bond of love between the Father and the Son.

Assuming the unity of the divine substance, Richard of St. Victor (d. 1173) wants to show that divine love requires a plurality of persons in communion with one another.<sup>123</sup> God is the supreme fullness and perfection of goodness, which necessarily implies that God is “true and supreme charity” (*vera et summa caritas*). At the same time, charity is

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<sup>121</sup> Ibid., 15.17.29, 30 and 15.18.32, pp. 216-17.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid., 15.18.32, 217.

<sup>123</sup> I have consulted Richard de Saint-Victor, *La Trinité*, trans. Gaston Salet, in *Sources Chrétiennes*, ed. H. de Lubac and J. Daniélou, vol. 111 (Paris: Cerf, 1959), esp. 3.2-3, 11; 5.16; 6.14.



never private, selfish, or self-enclosed. It is necessarily “a love that tends to another” (*amor in alterum tendat*) and, therefore, it requires a divine person who is fully deserving of this love. Such a worthy person, the *condignus*, is the divine Son. True and supreme charity, however, does not end with the mutual love between the one who loves and the one who is loved, but rather with their sharing of their mutual love with a third. This third is the Holy Spirit, the *condilectus*, who is the overflow of the mutual love between the Father and the Son. From duality in God, Richard finally arrives at a Trinity.

Richard still defines person in terms of its individual, reasonable, and incommunicable dimensions, but he does so within a “personalistic perspective.”<sup>124</sup> These aspects of the divine persons must be seen within his broader interpersonal approach to their relations (and immanent processions) under the theme of charity, which points to the divine love that is given (*gratuitus*), is both received and given (*debitus et gratuitus*), and is received (*debitus*).<sup>125</sup> Similarly to Augustine, it is through the Spirit of the Father and the Son as gift that intradivine love is communicated to and received by creatures.<sup>126</sup> Undoubtedly, one of Richard’s strengths is to take the language of charity as the driving principle for his reflections on the self-differentiation of the persons within the divine substance. It is an immensely helpful vantage point to articulate the open and ecstatic character of love among the persons of the Trinity and in the economy of salvation, although the economic aspect per se does not receive much attention in this approach.

In Augustine, we find a certain dynamism and interiority in the image of the Holy Spirit as the intradivine bond of love between the Father and the Son and as the *ad extra* gift of both the Father and the Son to the saints. In Richard, we find a complementary

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<sup>124</sup> Congar, *Holy Spirit*, vol. 3, 104; for Richard’s definition of person, see *La Trinité*, 4.24.

<sup>125</sup> *La Trinité*, 5.16.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.14.

emphasis on the interpersonal nature of this intradivine dynamism among a plurality of persons in their own right. Moreover, Augustine's note of interiority is also invigorated by Richard's stress on the ecstatic overflow of divine love from the Father and the Son to the Holy Spirit and from the Holy Spirit as the *ad extra* gift of both the Father and the Son to the saints. We begin to see the significant place that the Holy Spirit plays in the notions of person and relation in these Western approaches to the mystery of God.

In post-Vatican II Roman Catholic theology, Heribert Mühlen provided a synthesis of these Western approaches. He expresses the relationship between the Father and the Son not so much in terms of their consubstantiality (Augustine's starting point) as much as in terms of their interrelatedness (closer to Richard's intuitions) as the "I-Thou-Agreement" (Ich-Du-Begegnung).<sup>127</sup> In proceeding from the Father and the Son, the Holy Spirit may be seen as the bond of love between the "I" and the "Thou," namely, the "We-union" (Wir-Vereinigung).<sup>128</sup> The closest human analogy to the mystery is that of the child who, being the fruit of the common marital love between his father and mother, does not cease to be a being distinct from his/her progenitors.<sup>129</sup> As the "We-union," the Holy Spirit is neither the mathematical sum nor the merely external manifestation of the other two, but rather the overflowing and yet distinct fruit of the love between the "I" and the "Thou" who can be described as being a person in two other persons.<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>127</sup> *Der Heilige Geist als Person: In der Trinität, bei der Inkarnation und im Gnadebund: ICH-DU-WIR*, 2d. ed. (Münich: Aschendorff, 1966), 82.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*, 195-97 (cf. 157, 164).

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, 76.

<sup>130</sup> David Coffey does not think that Mühlen's use of terms like "We in person" or "We-relation" accurately affirms such distinctiveness of the Holy Spirit "over against" the Father and the Son [i.e., the actual 'We']. He writes, "the Holy Spirit is not the 'We,' but the one who stands *over against* the 'We' (therefore in a relationship of opposition to it [them]), as the *objectivization* of its (their) notional (i.e., person-producing) activity. . . . the fuller and more exact expression would have to be that the Holy Spirit is the objectivization, or hypostasization, or personalization, of this mutual love [between the Father and the Son], and hence in this sense its product or outcome." *Deus Trinitas*, 134-35.

What the person of the Holy Spirit is eternally in the intradivine life, the Holy Spirit is also at the economic level in the sense that he is oriented towards a plurality of persons. To use previous categories, there is a correspondence between the economic Trinity and the immanent Trinity. Using the image of the church as the mystical body of Christ, and attaching the greatest importance to Jesus' anointing at his baptism in view of others, Mühlen defines the church as one person (i.e., the Holy Spirit) in many persons (i.e., Christ and Christians).<sup>131</sup> While strongly maintaining the unity of God, our author still wants to find in the interpersonal character of the Holy Spirit's personhood the link between Trinity, christology, and the mystery of the church.

### **3.2.2.3. Walter Kasper: Person and Relation in the Light of a Spirit-Oriented Christology**

Neither the conciliar nor the Eastern-Cappadocian nor the Western approaches thus far examined take as their starting point and material basis for trinitarian reflection the life and mission of Jesus in his open and free (i.e., loving) relations to the Father and for us in the power of the Spirit. Kasper recognizes the councils' contributions to the definition of Jesus' ontology in terms of his inner-constitution from the moment of the incarnation, but also desires to complement the static and individual ontology of a Logos-oriented christology with a more dynamic and ecstatic view of the incarnation. In this basic intention and point of departure, my own approach shares much with Kasper's work. He writes, "If the divine-human person Jesus is constituted through the Incarnation once and for all, the history and activity of Jesus, and above all the cross and the Resurrection, no longer have any constitutive meaning whatsoever. . . . God assumed not only a human

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<sup>131</sup> *Una Mystica Persona*, 196-200.

nature but a human history.”<sup>132</sup> Kasper finds dynamism and relationality in a Spirit-oriented christology, which places Jesus in the soteriological and trinitarian context of his free and loving relations to the Father and the neighbor in the Spirit.

Because the Spirit mediates the relation between the Father and the Son in eternity and then also for us in salvation-history, he often speaks of the Spirit as “freedom in person, the superabundance of God’s love.”<sup>133</sup> The Holy Spirit is both overflowing freedom and love. Only in the Spirit does God’s free self-giving in love to the Son takes place. And only in the Spirit does the Son freely open himself back to the Father’s love. At the immanent level, this points us to the Western-Augustinian teaching on the Holy Spirit as the mutual love between the Father and the Son that itself closes the trinitarian circle of communion among the divine persons within the one divine essence. In the Latin view, Kasper argues that “the Spirit is, as it were, what is innermost and most hidden in God,” or, in somewhat less precise terms, that the Spirit is “God’s innermost essence.”<sup>134</sup>

The Western emphasis on interiority is wholly intratrinitarian and does not yet touch on God’s self-giving in freedom and love (i.e., in the Spirit) to the Son in the history of salvation. For this, Kasper draws on the Eastern trinitarian tradition, in which “the Spirit is, as it were, the excess, the overflow of the love [of God the Father] manifest in the Son.”<sup>135</sup> The Spirit is the “surplus and effusion of freedom” in history of the mutual love between the Father and the Son in the inner-divine life.<sup>136</sup> Otherwise stated, as “God’s outermost and uttermost,”<sup>137</sup> the Spirit is “the theological transcendental condition of the

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<sup>132</sup> *Jesus the Christ*, 37; in chapter five, and on the basis of a Spirit-christology, I argue for the centrality of the paschal mystery for reading and proclaiming of the story of Jesus as a death-and-life event for us.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, 259.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*, 250, 257.

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*, 258.

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*, 250.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*, 258.

very possibility of a free self-communication of God in history.”<sup>138</sup> Here Kasper brings together Latin and Greek theologies of the Trinity in order to argue for the openness in relation of the Holy Spirit in the inner-life of God and in history.

How does Kasper see the incarnation in the light of a Spirit-christology? First of all, he assumes Rahner’s view of the hypostatic union as the definitive expression of God’s self-communication to the creature and the creature’s self-transcendence to God. Second, Kasper interprets Rahner from a pneumatic angle, arguing that the Holy Spirit mediates the incarnation by bringing God’s loving self-communication to fruition in a creaturely reality (= Jesus) which at the same time is endowed by the same Spirit to respond in reciprocal love and obedience to God’s self-communication in him. He writes, “the Spirit is thus in person God’s love as freedom, and the creative principle which sanctifies the man Jesus in such a way as to enable him, by free obedience and dedication, to be the incarnate response to God’s self-communication.”<sup>139</sup> For Kasper, this amounts to a logical priority of the *gratia habitualis* over the *gratia unionis* and, therefore, to an implied economic order *Father-Spirit-Son*—a move that has been both praised and criticized.<sup>140</sup> It is on the basis of Jesus’ relation to God in the Spirit that Kasper argues for the personal identity of Jesus and the Logos and, by implication, for the consubstantiality of the Logos with the Father and the Spirit. I have already pointed out

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<sup>138</sup> Ibid., 250.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid., 251.

<sup>140</sup> For example, Ladaria has provided criticism of Kasper on this particular point in “Cristología del Logos y del Espíritu,” 357, and *La Trinidad, misterio de comunión*, 198, n. 73; Kasper also finds support and a much more detailed trinitarian articulation in Coffey’s ascending or return economic model of the Trinity in which the Spirit creates and sanctifies or disposes for union the humanity of the Son. See *Deus Trinitas*, 164, n. 7. However, even Coffey ultimately places what he calls “mission” (descending order *Father-Son-Spirit*) and “return” (ascending taxis *Father-Spirit-Son-Spirit-Father*) biblical/economic models of the Trinity within the wider umbrella of their respective correlative “procession” (*Father-Son-Spirit*) and “return” immanent models (*Father-Son-Spirit-Son-Father*). Ibid., 33-65. Coffey even warns that “[e]gregious errors are made when the ascending [economic] data . . . are forced into some kind of integration with the procession model” (45).

that, in the order of being, an economic inversion of the traditional order of processions *Father-Son-Spirit* is not necessary to give full and adequate weight to the Holy Spirit's constitutive (although often relativized) role in the actualization of the humanity of Jesus Christ throughout his life and mission.

#### **3.2.2.4. A Preliminary Synthesis on the Person of the Son in the Light of Logos- and Spirit-Christologies**

The incarnate and sanctified Son's free obedience and open faithfulness to the Father in the Spirit in some way points to an immanent reality in God, namely, the only-begotten Son's eternal openness in freedom to his Father in the Spirit. If openness and freedom to be for another is ultimately "love," then a look at the Christ-event under this theme can help us to find an economic basis and an immanent ground for the biblical teaching that "God is love." My previous categorization of Spirit-christology under the rubrics of Jesus as receiver, bearer, and giver of God's Spirit hinted at the theme of love, but I did not develop these insights then for the sake of reflection on the immanent Trinity.

Briefly put, the incarnate Son receives all things from the Father who loves and gives him all things (above all, his Spirit). In the same Spirit, the Son reciprocates the Father's love for him by carrying out his mission in faithfulness to the Father even unto death on the cross. At that moment, God's greatest love for us is manifested in his Son, and the Son offers his unblemished life to the Father through the Spirit. Then the Spirit of the Father and the Son can be given to the church as their common gift of love. In the case of the Father and the Son, then, to openly love one another is at once to coexist in the Holy Spirit. Yet the Spirit is distinct from the Father and the Son. One can speak of a Spirit-led mission of the Son in obedience to the Father and at the same time speak of the

Son's love for the Father in the Spirit. These two propositions amount to the same thing, although the first one emphasizes the Spirit's distinct activity *over against* that of the Son and the Father and the latter one stresses the personal space or horizon *from/in which* the Son acts in relation to his Father and viceversa. There is a certain elusiveness to the Spirit's personhood in the latter proposition in the sense that the Spirit (though a distinct person) remains to some extent anonymous. If we follow Augustine, there is also a similar anonymity in the idea that the Spirit is a certain communion between the Father and the Son; and yet this view does not take away from his intuition that the Holy Spirit is in some way the ground and completion of the reciprocal relations between Father and Son in the intradivine circle of love.

David Coffey may be the only theologian who has concluded from a Spirit-christology grounded in the economy of salvation that the Holy Spirit is "the objectivization of the mutual love between the Father and the Son."<sup>141</sup> This is a very precise and helpful way of putting what I have simply referred to as the Son's existence "in the Spirit." Coffey even speaks of the love of Jesus for the Father and the neighbor as an "'incarnation' of the Holy Spirit" in the Son: "[I]n an analogous way to the Incarnation of the divine being in human being in the person of Jesus, there is an incarnation of divine love in human love in the love of Jesus, this latter incarnation being the Holy Spirit."<sup>142</sup> Whether or not "incarnation" language is appropriate to refer to the Spirit's presence in Jesus, I obviously resonate strongly with Coffey's explicit reading of the biblical data under the theme of love.<sup>143</sup> He goes on to develop in depth the trinitarian implications of this approach.

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<sup>141</sup> *Deus Trinitas*, 4.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*, 39.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.* 41. Strictly speaking, incarnation typically refers either to the hypostatic union or to the whole human existence of the incarnate Son (incarnating). However, notice that Coffey distinguishes between the

Coffey proposes that, as the “objectivization,” “hypostasization,” or “personalization” of the mutual love between the Father and the Son in the economy,<sup>144</sup> the Holy Spirit remains “a distinct person” without having “a personality distinct from the Father or the Son.”<sup>145</sup> To put the same thought in my own terms, there is a certain—as I have said before—“anonymity” or “hiddenness” of the Holy Spirit that does not threaten its person. As far as the immanent Trinity goes, Coffey concludes that the mutual love theory “alone explains exactly what it is that the Holy Spirit receives from the Son, namely, the quality of being the Son’s love for the Father, which, completing that of the Father for the Son, constitutes in its objectivization the person of the Holy Spirit.”<sup>146</sup> To affirm that the Son exists in the Spirit does not take away from the Son’s individuality (or the Spirit’s), but it places the same in the context of his relations to the Father both in the economy of salvation and at the immanent level (i.e., from eternity).

Moreover, to assert that the Spirit is the ground and completion of the inner-divine circle of love does not mean that the Spirit is the personal origin, source, and cause of such trinitarian communion. In the economy of salvation it is the Father who sends his beloved Son into the world to unite a human nature unto himself. It is also the Father who sends his Spirit into the world to dwell in the Son’s humanity throughout his human history. In the light of economy, we can gather from the Eastern-Cappadocian tradition that the Father is the personal cause of love and communion among all divine persons.

In a Spirit-oriented christology, the incarnate Son’s particular reception and bearing of the Spirit from the Father prior to his death is oriented towards his giving of the same

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incarnation of divine “being” in the humanity of Christ (a mission proper to the second person or Logos) and the incarnation of divine “love” in the same (a mission proper to the third person or Holy Spirit).

<sup>144</sup> See n. 130 above.

<sup>145</sup> *Deus Trinitas*, 41.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.*, 155.



Spirit unto others from the moment of his paschal mystery forward. To use Kasper's language, we may say that the Spirit now clearly appears as the overflowing surplus of the divine love and freedom that finds its personal cause in the Father (not in the divine essence in general) and is manifested in his Son and mediated to others through him.

Here we can also bring in Richard's idea that the fullness of charity implies a plurality of persons in which the mutual love of the Father and the Son for one another must perfect itself by going beyond its own duality to a third, and from this third (= Spirit) to others.

What a Spirit-oriented christology adds to the Logos-oriented one—in terms of its immanent-trinitarian implications—amounts to the basic idea that the immanent Logos's personal response to the Father's love as his only-begotten Son always happens in or is mediated by the Spirit who proceeds from the Father. Otherwise stated, the immanent Logos's individual existence as the Father's only-begotten Son from the before time is at once a dynamic and ecstatic existence in the Spirit of the Father. The other side of this statement is that the Father's own existence towards the Son is also an existence in the Spirit. If we follow Coffey, insofar as this mutual love is in its "objectivization" the person of the Holy Spirit, then the same Spirit is common to both the Father and the Son (although from the Father principally and from the Son in some mediated form).

Seeking to bring Spirit- and Logos-oriented dimensions of the mystery of Jesus Christ into a single conception of the person of the Son, I propose the following christological-trinitarian synthesis: The deepest truth regarding the Logos's distinct self-subsistence (individual aspect) from the very beginning (static aspect), whether in the intradivine life as God the Son or in the economy of salvation as incarnate Son (God-man), is that he

exists in openness (dynamic aspect) and in relation (ecstatic aspect) to God the Father and to us freely and out of love in the Spirit without ceasing to be himself.

### **3.3. Essence, Person, and Perichoresis: On the Processional and Social Character of Trinitarian Relations in the Light of a Spirit-Oriented Christology**

In the first section of this chapter, a study of God's self-giving through the Son and in the Holy Spirit in the incarnation event (both as hypostatic union and as the entire Christ-event) led to two basic proposals for immanent-trinitarian models, namely *per filium* and *in spiritu*. Jesus' identity as receiver, bearer, and giver of the Spirit of God in salvation-history (economic Trinity) yielded two ways of understanding the intradivine relations between Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (immanent Trinity).<sup>147</sup> In formal terms, I did nothing else than ground the proper missions of the divine persons for us and for our salvation in their immanent processions within the inner-life of the triune God. Thus the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father "through the Son" (*per filium*), and the Son is begotten from the Father "in the Spirit" (*in spiritu*). I left the issue of *filioque*, *per spiritu*, and *spirituque* immanent models of the Trinity for this section.

My study of Logos-oriented static and individual approaches to person and relation in the councils and in the West led to a proposal for their invigoration with respective dynamic and relational dimensions in the light of a Spirit-christology. I wanted to see how we might speak of the person of the Son not simply as a self-subsistent and self-enclosed individual from eternity, but also as one who from eternity actively opens himself to exist in a free and thus loving relation to the Father in the Spirit. Following

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<sup>147</sup> The reader will recall that I arrived at these immanent models without, in my estimation, reading the economic into the immanent Trinity by a kind of rationalistic extrapolation. In more technical terms, I do not think that these models compromise the need to maintain a qualified reciprocity of Rahner's axiom. For this very reason, I must also hold to the mystery that ultimately attaches to any model of the immanent Trinity and the apophatic principle that prevents us from reducing the immanent to the economic Trinity.

Kasper, I argued that such reflections ultimately find their material basis in Jesus' own life and mission of obedience to the Father and for us in the power of the Spirit.

Moreover, I briefly attempted to ground in a Spirit-christology other moves towards revitalizing dynamic and relational views of person and relation already developed in the Eastern-Cappadocian tradition and in two significant Western reflections on the Trinity under the theme of love. In the spirit of Greek theology, we found the source of divine love in the Father, its manifestation in the Son, and its perfection in the Spirit. In the spirit of Latin theology, we found the source of divine love in the mutual love between the Father and the Son and its completion in the Holy Spirit as their bond of love that brings to full circle the interior life of the Trinity. Following Coffey, we also looked into the economic basis for this Augustinian mutual love theory of processions. Finally, we studied Richard of St. Victor's reflections on the Spirit as the ecstatic overflow of the mutual love between two other persons of the Trinity in a third. This insight brings an interpersonal complement (not replacement) to Augustine's emphasis on interiority.

Our study of the joint mission of Jesus and the Spirit in God's economy of salvation has served so far to support a certain way of understanding intradivine processions. It has also reminded us to bring to our reflections on the immanent Trinity the defining note of dynamism, relationality, communion, and reciprocity in which the three divine persons exist. However, a question still remains: How should we understand more precisely the relationship between the processional and community-oriented (social or perichoretic) character of trinitarian relations?

My thesis is that a Spirit-oriented christology yields models of intradivine processions that do not contradict the equally important notion of intradivine perichoresis among the

persons of the Trinity. Another way to put the argument is that the idea of trinitarian reciprocity requires some qualification to safeguard the unique personal properties of the divine persons in the order of processions. More concretely, I assess some immanent-trinitarian models (i.e., *per filium*, *filioque*, *per spiritum*, *spirituque*, and *in spiritu*) in terms of their usefulness for safeguarding: 1) the Greek concern for the identity of the Father as ultimate cause (*aitia*) of the Son and the Holy Spirit, 2) the Latin concern for the consubstantiality of the Son with God the Father and the Son's role in the procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father, and 3) the contemporary Western concern for other immanent models of the Trinity that reflect on the constitutive role of the Holy Spirit in the procession (by generation) of the Son from the Father.

### **3.3.1. Essence, Person, or Perichoresis? Starting Points and Their Implications for Defining Intradivine Processions (*Filioque*, *Per Filium*, and Other Models)**

Let us begin our discussion with a question: What should be the point of departure and in fact the highest ontological principle for trinitarian reflection and discourse? Should the Western-Augustinian stress on the indivisible divine *essence* frame the issues and discussion? If so, then the ultimate referents in the system are the unity of God, the indivisible (but also appropriated) operations of the one God towards creation, and the idea of relation as that which relatively distinguishes the persons within the one divine essence. Here all forms of tritheism and subordinationism are avoided, but the radicality of the person as a unique instance of the one divine essence in its own right logically takes second place. Such a strong emphasis on substance has led in the past to the conception of "God" as a reality prior to any particular person of the Trinity—a problem

I discussed in the first section of this chapter. The danger of a unitarian view of God (modalism) arises in the horizon.

Or should the Eastern-Cappadocian emphasis on the *person* drive our trinitarian thinking and language? If so, then the ultimate referents become the hypostases as concrete instances of the divine essence, the proper (not merely appropriated) acts of each divine hypostasis in the economy, and the idea of relation as that which unites the hypostases to each other and particularly the Son and the Holy Spirit to the one God who is Father. In this system, the genuine plurality of the hypostases and the hypostatic uniqueness of the Father as cause (*aitia*) of the Son and the Holy Spirit are given proper due, but the closer identity between the hypostases and the one divine essence does not receive the stress it does in the Western-Augustinian tradition. Since the Son and the Holy Spirit receive the divine essence from the one God who is Father, there is a danger of subordinationism.

Or should communion (*koinonia*) or *perichoresis* be the ultimate ontological principle for reflection on the mystery of God? In contemporary theology, perichoresis (in contrast to substance or person as subject) has been proposed as the highest category for trinitarian discourse. The idea of community serves as the primary human analogy for the mystery of God, seeing in the mutual dependence of three equal and unique persons and their indwelling in one another the trinitarian ground for a social project in which human relations can reflect the full communitarian character of trinitarian relations.<sup>148</sup>

Due to the stress on the correlative triadic communion between all persons, this option at

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<sup>148</sup> Two major figures suffice: Leonardo Boff, *Trinity and Society*, trans. Paul Burns. Theology and Liberation Series (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1988), esp. chap. 7; and Jürgen Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom: The Doctrine of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), "The Fellowship of the Holy Spirit—Trinitarian Pneumatology," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 37, no. 3 (1984): 287-300, and "The Unity of the Triune God," *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, 28, no. 3 (1984): 157-88.

times gives occasion to the danger of tritheism by its relativization of the unity of essence among the persons.<sup>149</sup>

### 3.3.1.1. Western *Filioque* and Eastern *Per Filium* Models

Each corresponding starting point has implications for understanding the processional character of intradivine relations. The Western-Augustinian approach to the Trinity can support a *filioque* model, the Eastern tradition can do the same for a *per filium* one, and the contemporary move towards perichoresis seeks any number of complementary models such as the *spirituque* and *per spiritu*. I have already argued in a preliminary way for the *in spiritu* model of the Trinity as the best complement to the Western *filioque* and Eastern *per filium*. Briefly put, my proposal makes more explicit the dynamic role of the Holy Spirit in the intradivine life without inverting the order of processions *Father-Son-Spirit*. Let us look more closely into the theological systems behind each particular approach to immanent-trinitarian models.

In the Latin tradition, the one God is the Holy Trinity. Within the divine essence, the Father begets the Son and the Son is begotten from the Father in one act of knowledge. At once, in a common act of will, the Father and the Son together breathe forth the Holy Spirit who proceeds from them so that the circle of love in the intradivine life of communion is closed. In short, the Son is begotten from the Father (generation) and the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son (spiration). Persons are differentiated from each other by their opposition in relations within the undivided divine essence, thus

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<sup>149</sup> For example, Moltmann's eschatological ontology, in which the future determines the past and the present, understands the essential unity of God as something yet to be achieved by the Holy Spirit in "the total unification of the world with God and in God." See "The Trinitarian History of God," *Theology* 78 (1975): 643. Eschatological unification relativizes essential unity. Although superabundant love (and not a deficiency of being) is what makes God leave room within Godself for the whole world (see pp. 643-45), the charge can still be made that such a panentheistic view makes the unity of the triune God depend on world history and thus compromises divine transcendence.

safeguarding the oneness of God in the strongest possible way. Father affirms Son and viceversa as logical opposites (i.e., in begetting and being begotten), but in the case of the Holy Spirit, its only logical opposition is to the Father and the Son in common (i.e., in the Father and the Son spirating it and in the Holy Spirit being spirated by both).

What are the advantages of the Latin framework? First of all, since the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father “and the Son” (*filioque*), a clear distinction emerges between the processions of the Son and of the Holy Spirit from the Father.<sup>150</sup> Second, the Latin approach highlights the consubstantiality of the Son with the Father—the anti-Arian concern that in the first place led to the inclusion of the *filioque* clause in the West.<sup>151</sup> Third, and closely related to the first point, the Western approach shows that there can only be three persons and two divine processions within the divine circle of life.<sup>152</sup> Yet the question still remains as to whether this view adequately addresses the Greek concern to preserve the hypostatic uniqueness of God the Father as the ultimate origin, source, and cause of the procession of the Holy Spirit.

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<sup>150</sup> Congar explains, “In the community and unity of substance, the hypostases are distinguished by the mutual relationship which opposes them by affirming them. That relationship is and can only be a relationship of origin, or of principle or beginning and end. On the one hand, spiration of the Spirit does not bring about any opposition in relationship between the Father and the Son and, on the other hand, the Spirit proceeding from the Father and the Son can be distinguished hypostatically from the Son only if he has a relationship of procession or origin with that Son. He is, in many scriptural texts, Spirit of the Father and Spirit of the Son and for this reason he must be confessed as proceeding from the two by a single common act of active spiration.” *Holy Spirit*, vol. 3, 73.

<sup>151</sup> Against Arianism, the *filioque* functions primarily as a *substantial* statement regarding the unity of the Father and the Son. Jenson is correct in saying that “[t]he West’s initial motive for the creed’s insertion was not so much to say something about the Spirit as to say something about the Son” (*The Triune God*, 150); Congar argued the same: “Historically, the *Filioque* was introduced as a measure against Arianism, by Augustine and by the Hispano-Visigothic councils” (thesis 7, *Holy Spirit*, vol. 3, 213); but Congar also writes, “In the West . . . we have always been conscious of the principle that, in God, everything is common, apart from what is distinguished by an opposition in relationship. . . . [T]his principle is not a defined article of faith. It does, however, express a very acute sense of consubstantiality within the Trinity.” *Ibid.*, 202. Congar traces the axiom *in Deo omnia sunt unum, ubi non obviat relationis oppositio* to Anselm (*ibid.*, 98).

<sup>152</sup> O’Donnell, “The Trinity as Divine Community,” 7.

In the Greek tradition, the one God (*ho theos*) is the Father. From the unoriginate God and Father, the Son is begotten and the Holy Spirit proceeds. Because the Eastern view anchors the cause of the divine essence in a concrete hypostatic mode of existence (i.e., the Father), from which it is then logically given to the other two hypostases (i.e., the Son and the Holy Spirit), it tends to be more linear and causal than the Latin approach to the processions in which the hypostases are identical with the divine essence.<sup>153</sup> No less significant is the fact that the Latins use *procedere* to refer both to the generation of the Son from the Father and the procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Son. This is not permissible for the Greeks, since for them the term *ekporeusthai* conveys a relation of origin between the Holy Spirit and the Father as cause that is non-transferable to the Son. Although there is a generation and a procession from the Father, no answer is given on the manner of distinguishing the former from the latter (as in the West). The closest model is what I have called the *per filium*, which allows the Son a mediating role in the procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father.<sup>154</sup> Thus the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father uniquely, but also “through the Son.”

A solution to the *filioque* problem requires of the West to take seriously the unique hypostatic identity of the Father as only cause of the procession of the Holy Spirit (e.g., with Augustine’s *principaliter*). But it also requires of the East to recognize that the Son

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<sup>153</sup> Congar summarizes the basic differences between East and West as follows: 1) In the East, the divine hypostases are seen as relatively autonomous or independent principles of existence in that they can be spoken of either in terms of their relation to the divine essence or as divine hypostases as such; and 2) In the West, the divine hypostases are seen as identical (in the strongest possible sense) with the divine essence. *Holy Spirit*, vol. 3, 72, 200, 202.

<sup>154</sup> On the Son as mediator, but not the source of the Spirit’s procession, see Zizioulas, “Teaching,” 42-45.



who is begotten of the Father is not foreign to the procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father.<sup>155</sup> Congar believes that Latin and Greek theologies share these basic concerns.<sup>156</sup>

We must clarify that what is called the *per filium* differs from the *filioque* in that the latter sees the Father *and* the Son as the single principle of the Holy Spirit's procession by spiration. The *per filium*, on the other hand, is identified with a number of proposals that, while safeguarding the identity of the Father as the ultimate principle of the Holy Spirit, point in the direction of either a mediation of the Son in the procession of the Spirit or a resting of the Spirit on the Son.<sup>157</sup> I prefer to call the latter option the *in spiritu*

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<sup>155</sup> Here the *how* of the procession is what is at stake. Jean Garrigues's ecumenical formula is particularly insightful in its attempt to answer concerns in both traditions: "I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who, issued from the Father (*ek tou Patros ekporeumenon*), proceeds from the Father and the Son (*ex Patre Filioque procedit; ek tou Patros kai tou Huiou proion*)." Cited in Congar, *Holy Spirit*, vol. 3, 200. As Congar notes, Garrigues's formula uses the verb *ekporeusthai* exclusively for the Father and the verb *proienai* for the Father and the Son: ". . . the Father is the original source and the Son is associated or a participant....The Latin only has the verb *procedere* to cover the meanings of both Greek verbs. The aspect of the Son that is recognized in the procession of the Spirit is his eternal being." *Ibid.*, 201. Thus, one could interpret Garrigues's formula to mean that the Spirit is issued from the Father *hypostatically* and proceeds from the Father and the Son *essentially*; Garrigues discusses his proposal in "A Roman Catholic view of the position now reached in the question of the *filioque*," in *Spirit of God, Spirit of Christ: Ecumenical Reflections on the Filioque Controversy*, Lukas Vischer, ed., Faith and Order Paper No. 103 (Geneva, Switzerland: WCC, 1981), 149-63; on the Orthodox side, however, Dumitru Staniloae does not see this proposal as acceptable on the grounds that whatever the Holy Spirit receives from the Son must be better distinguished from what the Holy Spirit receives from the Father in order to safeguard the monarchy of the latter. Instead of the *filioque*, it would be better to use patristic expressions such as the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and "goes out from," "shines out from," or "is manifested by" the Son. See D. Staniloae's "The procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father and his relation to the Son, as the basis of our deification and adoption," in *Spirit of God, Spirit of Christ*, esp. 174-78 (hereafter "The procession of the Holy Spirit"); on the Protestant side, Moltmann proposes that the Spirit receives his hypostatic existence from the Father and his relational (interpersonal) form (*Gestalt*) from the Son. See "Theological proposals toward the resolution of the *filioque* controversy," in *Spirit of God, Spirit of Christ*, esp. 169-71. Since in the East the intratrinitarian (interpersonal) relations are dependent upon the existence of the hypostases, it is not difficult to grasp Staniloae's further criticism (in his article quoted above) of Moltmann's proposal: "The personal character of anyone cannot be separated from his/her existence," 184; on the Catholic side, Congar rightly notes that in Latin trinitarian theology the strong identity between hypostases and essence that arises from defining persons in terms of their opposition in relations within the one undivided divine essence does not make Garrigues's proposal acceptable to the Western position either. *Holy Spirit*, vol. 3, 201.

<sup>156</sup> Congar summarizes the basic points of historical agreement: "For both, 'the Spirit is confessed as the third Person-hypostasis of the one divine nature-essence and consubstantial with the Father and the Son.' Both confess the Father as the Principle without principle or beginning of the whole divinity. Both profess the Son as not unrelated to the Father in the production of the Holy Spirit." *Holy Spirit*, vol. 3, 201.

<sup>157</sup> As examples, consider the following expressions: The Spirit proceeds from the Father "through (by means of) the Son" (e.g., Maximus the Confessor, Gregory Palamas), "and receives from the Son" (e.g., St.

model. Suffice it for now to say that both Western *filioque* and Eastern *per filium* immanent-trinitarian models follow the taxis of processions *Father-Son-Spirit*.

### 3.3.1.2. *Spirituque, Per Spiritum, and In Spiritu* Models

In the contemporary scene, theologians have pondered on other ways to describe the relations between the Son and the Holy Spirit at the intradivine level of processions. The reality of trinitarian perichoresis, in which the unity of the Godhead is expressed by the reciprocal interpenetration and indwelling of all persons in one another, serves as the ultimate justification for this consideration. From this perspective, all relations within the Trinity are seen as fully triadic in that all three hypostases always act towards each other in a correlative fashion. There is no procession of the Holy Spirit in which the Son does not participate (*per filium, filioque*) but also—and this is where the stress falls—no begetting of the Son in which the Holy Spirit does not participate.

Paul Evdokimov was among the first Orthodox theologians who proposed a *spirituque* model complementary to the *filioque*.<sup>158</sup> He argued that the “causal” approach to trinitarian relations had only served to foster the “filioquism” of the West and the “monopatrim” of the East (represented by Photius) to such an extent that it was necessary to return to a more perichoretic view in which all relations between the persons are seen as fully triadic.<sup>159</sup> Just as the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father “and the Son”

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Epiphanius), “and rests (reposes) on the Son” (e.g., Pseudo-Cyril, John of Damascus, Pope Zacharias), and “shines out through the Son” (e.g., Athanasius), or the variation “conjointly with the Son on whom he rests.” The Greek fathers’ variety of images for speaking of the Son’s place in the eternal (not only economic) procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father suggests, as Congar says, that the Son’s share in the production of the Spirit has not been precisely defined in the Eastern tradition (thesis 4). *Holy Spirit*, vol. 3, 213.

<sup>158</sup> Another one is Sergius Bulgakov (Serge Boulgakof), who argues only in passing for the inseparability of the Son-Spirit relations along the lines of complementing the *filioque* with a *spirituque*. See *Le Paraclet*, trans. Constantin Andronikof (Paris: Aubier/Montaigne, 1946), esp. 140-43.

<sup>159</sup> *L’Esprit Saint dans la tradition orthodoxe* (Paris: Cerf, 1969), 49-78, esp. 59-60, 70-72, 75; the ecumenical impulse from the Orthodox side for a reconsideration of the *filioque* problem came from

(*filioque*) or “through the Son” (*per filium*), so does the Son may be said to be begotten from the Father “and the Spirit” (*spirituque*)<sup>160</sup> or perhaps “through the Spirit” (*per spiritum*). The latter two models underlie an inversion of the taxis of immanent processions (*Father-Spirit-Son*).

Any number of theologians has followed Evdokimov’s argument. In addition to the *per filium* and *filioque*, Boff, for example, arrives at a *spirituque* and even a “patreque”:  
“So the Son through his begetting receives the Holy Spirit from the Father and is then, in his being, eternally inseparable from the Holy Spirit; the Son is then begotten *ex Patre Spirituque*. . . . Even the Father’s unbornness involves the participation of the Son and the Holy Spirit, who witness to it by the fact of deriving from the Father as their only

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Bolotov’s famous twenty-seven theses, in which he concluded that the Western *filioque* was not an impediment for reestablishing communion between the Eastern Orthodox and the Old Catholic Churches. For a summary and discussion of these theses, see Congar, *Holy Spirit*, vol. 3, 194-95.

<sup>160</sup> Initially, Congar showed some concern that a *spirituque* would necessarily imply a transposing of the incarnation to the realm of eternity (see *Holy Spirit*, vol. 3, 16, 75). Karl Barth showed the same concern earlier in his *Church Dogmatics*, vol. 1, 1, pp. 554-56. But Congar later reconsiders his earlier reservations on this matter and interestingly enough builds on Karl Barth’s connection between the eternal deity of the Son of God and the historical existence of the Son of Man on the basis of the doctrine of election—i.e., the idea that the Son of God as the first object of God’s election is eternally *destined* to be the Son of Man and thus the preexistent God-man Jesus Christ who is in turn the ground of our election (*Church Dogmatics*, vol. 2, 2, pp. 94-194, esp. 110)—in order to arrive at the preliminary idea that “the Word was conceived *incarnandum* and even *crucifigendum, glorificandum, caput multorum Dei filiorum* . . . in such a way that the Word proceeds *a Patre Spirituque*, from the Father and the Spirit, since the latter intervenes in all the acts or moments in the history of the Word *incarnate*. If all the *acta* and *passa* of the divine economy are traced back to the eternal begetting of the Word, then the Spirit has to be situated at that point” (*The Word and the Spirit*, 93). In other words, there is a sense in which one could speak of an eternal begetting of the Son in the Spirit and therefore of an eternal existence of the Son *in view of or as destined to be* the incarnate Son of God conceived by the Holy Spirit and led by the same on his way to the cross and glory. Congar also briefly considers Cullmann’s exegetical insights on a Son of Man christology, which seeks to identify Jesus as a preexistent heavenly man in perfect likeness to God and in this way also to bypass the eternity-time dialectic in a two-natures christology (*The Christology of the New Testament*, 137-92), but eventually settles the issue brought up by Pierre Benoît of whether the incarnation should be thought of as an “absolute beginning” [see “Préexistence et Incarnation,” *Revue Biblique* 77 (1970): 5-29] by approvingly quoting Louis Bouyer’s judgment: “It is in time that God makes Himself man, i.e., it is in a definite moment of time that our humanity is assumed. But as far as He is concerned, He assumes it eternally. Then the Father eternally generates the Son, not only as before His incarnation but also as the Word made flesh” [See *The Eternal Son: A Theology of the Word and Christology* (Huntington, Ind.: 1978), 401]. The flow of the argument for this rather speculative approach to the question of the *spirituque* can be found in Congar’s *The Word and the Spirit*, 93-97. Correspondence between the economic and immanent Trinity at this point should probably not have been sought after in such an absolute manner.

source.”<sup>161</sup> Here Boff does not actually attempt to reach his conclusions on the basis of the life and mission of Jesus Christ, but simply wishes to describe in a general way the mutual interdependence or communion of the persons in and with one another.

Xabier Pikaza, on the other hand, provides the basic direction and programmatic challenge for finding the material basis of a *spirituque* in the Christ-event:

It seems to me that the decision to complement the Filioque with the Spirituque is absolutely defensible. But I am convinced that the Filioque and the Spirituque must arise precisely from the economy of salvation (conception of Jesus by the spirit, effusion of the spirit by the risen Jesus), thus revealing in this same economy the root and reality of the immanence. I believe that this vision, of biblico-theological character, has not been sufficiently accentuated (translation mine).<sup>162</sup>

Within this framework, I resonate to some extent with Thomas Weinandy’s basic thesis that “within the Trinity the Father begets the Son in or by the Holy Spirit, who proceeds from the Father as the one in whom the Son is begotten.”<sup>163</sup> Unlike Boff, Weinandy finds support for his reciprocal view of trinitarian relations in the economy of salvation, seeing events like the birth of Jesus as an icon of an immanent reality: “The depiction of the Father begetting his Son in the womb of Mary by the Holy Spirit becomes, I believe, a temporal icon of his eternally begetting the Son by the Holy Spirit.”<sup>164</sup> Although I hold to an *in spiritu* model of the Trinity and support it on the basis of a Spirit-christology, I disagree with Weinandy’s presuppositions for making the same move, and in particular

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<sup>161</sup> *Trinity and Society*, 205 (cf. 145–47, 236)

<sup>162</sup> *El Espíritu Santo y Jesús: Delimitación del Espíritu Santo y relaciones entre Pneumatología y Cristología* (Salamanca, Spain: Secretariado Trinitario, 1982), 17.

<sup>163</sup> *The Father’s Spirit of Sonship*, ix (cf. 17).

<sup>164</sup> *Ibid.*, 42.

with his understanding of the Father's role in the Greek view and his dismissal of the logical priority between the processions of the Son and the Holy Spirit from the Father.

Weinandy argues that neither the Greek nor the Latin view of processions give the Holy Spirit an active personhood.<sup>165</sup> In the Greek view, the Spirit is third in the order of processions; in the Latin view, the Spirit is simply the bond of the other two persons. He finds the philosophical basis for this problem in the remaining influence of "Neo-Platonic emanationist sequentialism" in the Eastern view and "Aristotelian epistemology" in the Western one.<sup>166</sup> Are these criticisms justified and necessary to give the Spirit its due?

In regards to the Greek view, it appears that Weinandy follows the same thinking as Evdokimov in his criticism of a linear or causal view of the processions. Here Weinandy has not taken into account Zizioulas's argument (precisely in reaction to Evdokimov) that the idea of cause (*aitia*) among the Cappadocians pointed above all to personal freedom and love (contra Greek monism), and not to some ontological priority of the Father over the Son and the Holy Spirit.<sup>167</sup> Zizioulas's comments on the basic concern behind the Constantinopolitan teaching that the Spirit proceeds from the Father are illuminating:

The concern . . . is not simply to keep the traditional idea of the *Monarchia*, since that could be done by simply keeping the notion of « Source » to describe the one « Principle » or *archē*. It is rather to safeguard the faith that the *person precedes substance and « causes » it to be*. The Spirit, therefore, is not simply a power issuing from divine substance; he is another personal identity standing *vis-à-vis*

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<sup>165</sup> Ibid., 7-9.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid., 10-15.

<sup>167</sup> "Teaching," 42 (cf. 37).

the Father. He is a product of love and freedom and not of substantial necessity.<sup>168</sup>

In the Eastern view, the Father can actually share the monarchy with the other two persons of the Trinity without ceasing to be the cause of intradivine communion and love. The Father gives himself to the Son and the Holy Spirit without remainder. Significantly, the argument for the non-subordinationist view of processions that the Cappadocians apply in the midst of the pneumatomachian controversy also applies to the Arians at Nicea. Both of these heterodox groups shared an emanationist view of the processions, one that actually implied ontological subordinationism. Does the generation of the Son from the Father imply such subordinationism? And is the Son no longer person if we say that he proceeds from the Father by being begotten? Why, then, if the procession of the Son from the Father does not imply subordination, should we argue that the Holy Spirit's procession from the Father through the Son does? Why should an argument no one makes against the *genitus* now apply to the *per filium* (or the *filioque* for that matter)?

To borrow Durrwell's terms, if the Spirit is third in the order of processions, this does not mean that it is "last" in the order of being,<sup>169</sup> just as the Son is not second-to-last in the order of being because he is second in the order of processions. It is too easily assumed (rather than proved) that a processional view of trinitarian relations necessarily amounts to some imagined or real ontological subordination among the persons that impedes their true reciprocity in each other. In the Eastern view, the Holy Spirit actually brings to perfection the love of the Father manifested in the Son, thereby allowing for creatures in the economy to participate by grace in the intradivine communion of love

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<sup>168</sup> Ibid., 37-38.

<sup>169</sup> *Jesús Hijo de Dios en el Espíritu Santo* (Salamanca, 1999), 100. Cited in Ladaria, *La Trinidad, misterio de comunión*, 215.

between the persons. In the ascending order of grace, the Spirit is actually the one who brings creatures to the Son and through him to the Father. If the Spirit is first and the Father third in the order of grace, does this mean that now the Father (or the Son) is in the end subordinated to the Holy Spirit? No one argues this way. In short, one does not need to affirm an inversion of the taxis to show the reciprocity between the persons.<sup>170</sup>

Weinandy also sees the Western view of relations as a by-product of Aristotelian epistemology in which a person's intellect (knowledge) logically precedes his/her will (love). While this is true of human persons, Weinandy argues that the analogy does not apply in the same way to the immanent Trinity:

While in human beings something must first be known before it is loved, in God the knowing and loving are simultaneous — the begetting and spirating come forth from the Father as distinct, but concurrent, acts. The Father does not, *even logically*, first beget the Son and the love the Son in the Spirit. The begetting of the Son and the proceeding of the Spirit are simultaneous and, while distinct, mutually inhere in one another. The Father is the Father because, in the one act by which he is eternally constituted as the Father, the Spirit proceeds as the Love . . . in whom the Son is begotten of the Father (italics mine).<sup>171</sup>

While I agree that analogies do not provide an *absolute* correspondence between temporal reality and the mystery of God, I still want to affirm that they provide a *direct* correspondence. I have already argued for a logical priority of the mission of the Son

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<sup>170</sup> This point became very clear to me after a conversation with Luis F. Ladaria (see Interview Ladaria). He argues that reciprocity does not imply a rupture of the traditional taxis of processions. If the Father gives to the Son everything he has and is according to essence, should we compensate the fact that the Father begets the Son? Is this necessary? No. Why? Because the Son's procession from the Father by generation does not imply subordination. According to Ladaria, the move towards complementary models that invert the trinitarian order of processions often assumes that this order constitutes a degeneration or a diminution.

<sup>171</sup> *The Father's Spirit of Sonship*, 71-72.

over that of the Spirit on the basis of the hypostatic union (incarnation) and the entire Christ-event (incarnating) that does not take away from the constitutive role of the Spirit in the humanity of the Son. If the economic Trinity is the immanent Trinity, then this logical priority must find its ground in a similar immanent reality. Of course, this does not mean that the missions or the processions cease to be simultaneous with one another. Union and indwelling happen at once; so do begetting and spiration. No one denies this. I do not think that Weinandy's hesitation about the issue of priority is necessary to protect the person of the Holy Spirit from being subordinated to the other two.

My proposal for an *in spiritu* model of the Trinity does not necessitate a relativization of the classic taxis of processions *Father-Son-Spirit* supported in distinct ways by both the Eastern and Western trinitarian traditions. A *per spiritum* model, which Weinandy also alludes to in speaking of the Son's generation from the Father "by" the Spirit, more readily implies an inversion of this taxis (i.e., *Father-Spirit-Son*). At the same time, the *in spiritu* model gives the Holy Spirit an active mediating (although somewhat anonymous) role in the Father's begetting of the Son. I spoke of a coexistence of the Father and the Son in the Holy Spirit that can be expressed as their reciprocal love for one another. Here the Spirit is, as it were, the hypostatic space or horizon *from/in which* the Son openly acts in a reciprocal relation of love to his Father and viceversa. Is the Spirit who grounds and brings to completion this intradivine communion of love between the Father and the Son less of an active person because in the order of processions the same Spirit is their mutual love? An *in spiritu* model does not require that the Western *filioque* be compensated with a *spirituque* or a *per spiritum*. As in the Eastern *per filium*, the *in spiritu* simply brings out in a more explicit manner the dynamic and ecstatic role of



the Spirit in the intratrinitarian life without doing away with the taxis. Once again, I do not think that the *filioque* has to imply a subordination of the Holy Spirit to the Father and the Son in the Western approach to trinitarian relations.

Some final considerations on trinitarian models are in order. It seems to me that the *spirituque* runs into the same problems as the *filioque* does because it is open to the Eastern criticism that the begetting of the Son from the Father and the Spirit as from a *single* principle ultimately destroys the begetting of the Son from the Father as the only source of this generation. In this sense, the *per spiritum* may then serve as a more viable model because of its acknowledgment of the Father's hypostatic identity as the only source of the Son's generation. Its use, however, would imply a trinitarian inversion of the taxis of processions that the Eastern fathers have not traditionally endorsed. Basil, for example, maintains a descending order of processions, even though he affirmed the divine unity in communion (*koinonia*) of all the persons and found its ultimate source in the person of the Father (in contrast to an impersonal divine substance).

A *spirituque* or a *per spiritum* cannot stand in the West. In differentiating the persons according to opposition in relations, both models can logically allow for *two* Fathers of the Son—as if the only-begotten of the Father could also be related to the Holy Spirit as Son. There is only one Father and one Son who are correlative to one another. Both *spirituque* and *per spiritum* models do not seem to take into full account the biblical datum that whereas the Spirit is referred to in the Scriptures as the Spirit of the Father (or of God/of the Lord) and the Spirit of the Son (or of Jesus/of Jesus Christ/of Christ), nowhere do the Scriptures actually refer to the Son as the Son of the Spirit but only as the

Son of the Father (or of God). This is the case even if the Son exists in the Spirit, even if the Spirit mediates the sonship.

I have noticed that the Eastern *per filium* often appears to include within itself the *in spiritu* model among the fathers and in some contemporary literature, but I believe that its use must be limited to the idea that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father through the Son.<sup>172</sup> It is more precise to think of the idea that the Spirit proceeds from the Father and rests or remains in the Son as another manner of expressing that the Son is begotten from the Father in the Spirit. Most importantly, however, these models are complementary since the Spirit's procession from the Father through the Son (*per filium*) is inseparable from the Son's generation from the Father as the one in whom the Spirit rests (*in spiritu*). The Spirit who rests in the Son shines forth from the Son. In other words, the *in spiritu* brings out more clearly the role of the Spirit in the Son's generation from the Father within the taxis supported by the *per filium*.

In conclusion, the *per filium* and *in spiritu* models best satisfy: 1) the Eastern concern for preserving the hypostatic uniqueness of the Father as the cause of divine communion and perichoresis in contrast to the principle of a single spiration inclusive of the Son (as in the *filioque*); 2) the Western requirement of the East for a more precise description of the place of the Son in the procession of the Holy Spirit besides the *filioque*; and 3) more recent calls for other models more representative of trinitarian communion that allow for

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<sup>172</sup> For example, Staniloae's discussion of the active repose of the Holy Spirit in the Son is seen as a *per filium* model, and therefore, as being in support of the order of processions *Father-Son-Spirit*. See "The Procession of the Holy Spirit," in *Spirit of God, Spirit of Christ*, esp. 180-82; In contrast to D. Staniloae's treatment of the patristic idea of the Spirit's repose in the Son, Boris Bobrinskoy seems to see the Spirit's resting on the Son as a separate model than the *per filium*, but in doing so also posits the taxis *Father-Spirit-Son*. See Bobrinskoy, "The filioque yesterday and today," in *Spirit of God, Spirit of Christ*, esp. 143-45. Bobrinskoy comments, "The descent of the Spirit on Jesus at the Jordan . . . appears in the Orthodox trinitarian vision as an icon, a manifestation in history of the eternal resting of the Spirit of the Father on the Son" (144).

a description of the Holy Spirit's own place in the Father's begetting of the Son. On the other hand, I must still conclude with Congar that the Western *filioque* expresses the consubstantiality of the Father with the Son and distinguishes the processions of the Son and the Holy Spirit from the Father within the one divine essence in a way that the *per filium* does not. In this case, theological differences are not an impediment to unity, for neither approach to the mystery of God is ultimately antithetical to Scripture or tradition.

### 3.4. Conclusion

I have shown the productivity of a Spirit-christology for reflection on the mystery of the Trinity in three ways. First, I demonstrated that God's self-giving in the Son and the Holy Spirit to the humanity of Christ at the hypostatic union (incarnation) and throughout his entire life and mission (incarnating) yielded *per spiritum* (or a qualified *filioque*) and *in spiritu* economic and immanent models of the Trinity. Second, I showed that a Spirit-christology brings key elements of openness (being-in-act) and relationality (being-in-relation) to Logos-oriented respective static (being-from-the beginning) and individual (being-in-itself) emphases on the interrelated trinitarian notions of person and relation. Thus the Son exists in a reciprocal relation of openness and freedom (i.e., of love) to the Father in the Spirit. Finally, I proposed that the idea of trinitarian reciprocity strongly supported by a Spirit-christology and its concomitant *in spiritu* model of the Trinity does not necessitate the inversion of the classic order of processions in the economic or the immanent Trinity. Briefly put, the *in spiritu* model of the Trinity serves to bring out more clearly the dynamic and ecstatic role of the Holy Spirit within the framework of either *per filium* or *filioque* views of intradivine relations. Thus the Father begets the Son and the Son is begotten from the Father in the Spirit. They coexist in the Spirit. To say

that the Holy Spirit is the surplus of the Father's love manifested in the Son (Eastern view) or the communion of the mutual love between the Father and the Son (Western view) does not take away from its constitutive place respectively in the *perfection* of the Father's love for the Son and in the *completion* of their reciprocal love for each other.

## CHAPTER 4

### **Jesus the Christ Is the Logos and the Logos Is Jesus the Christ:**

#### **Towards the Complementarity of Logos- and Spirit-Oriented Christologies**

The purpose of this chapter is twofold. First, I provide a brief comparison of Logos- and Spirit-oriented christologies based on my discussion in the previous chapters. To achieve this objective, I have designed a table to present the various themes, concerns, and arguments that have already been dealt with under a few relatively clear and concise headings. Second, I argue for the complementarity of these approaches—a matter that I have anticipated often but not fully explored in systematic fashion—under three of what I call higher-order categories. These categories are: 1) the trinitarian distinction and relation between the personal or hypostatic “identity” of Jesus and the Logos and the personal “non-identity” of Jesus and the Holy Spirit, 2) the philosophico-theological distinction and relation between the order of knowledge (*ordo cognoscendi*) and the order of being (*ordo essendi*), and 3) the conciliar distinction and relation between the human and divine wills and operations in Jesus Christ.

#### **4.1. A Brief Comparative Summary of Logos- and Spirit-Oriented Christologies**

Before dealing with the issue of complementarity, I would like to recapitulate previous arguments by comparing the most salient differences between the two approaches to the Christ-event discussed so far. To do so in a brief manner, I have distributed the distinct concerns and contributions of Logos- and Spirit-oriented christologies into seven categories: 1) locus of reflection, 2) primary definition of identity, 3) defining states and/or events, 4) point of departure, 5) function of the biblical narrative, 6) view of the incarnation, and 7) understanding of the person (see table 1).

TABLE 1

Category	Logos-Christology	Spirit-Christology
1. Locus of reflection	The character of the relation between Jesus and the Word	The character of the relation between Jesus and the Spirit
2. Primary definition of identity	Jesus as the eternal Word made flesh or as God-man	Jesus as the receiver, bearer, and giver of God's Spirit
3. Defining states and/or events	Preexistence of the divine Word in eternity, temporal incarnation (personal union)	Conception, anointing or baptism, and glorification—the mysteries of Jesus' life
4. Point of departure	Assuming the true divinity and true humanity of Christ, this approach begins "from above." It argues from the divinity of the Word to his humanity. It asks, "How is the divine Word a particular and true human being?"	Assuming the true humanity and true divinity of Christ, this approach begins "from below." It argues from the human reality of Jesus to his divinity. It asks, "How is this particular man, Jesus of Nazareth, true God?"
5. Function of the biblical narrative	Jesus' story as an epiphany, confirmation, revelation or proclamation for others of his prior identity as God; or as example for the church	Jesus' story as the drama of God's saving deeds for us in and through Jesus by the power of the Spirit in him—one in which we participate
6. View of the incarnation	The preexistent Word unites to himself a human nature (hypostatic union) at a set point in time ( <i>chronos</i> )—a static and individual view of the incarnation	God acts in Jesus and for us by his Spirit at special times ( <i>kairoi</i> ) in the economy. So the Word assumes a human history—a dynamic and ecstatic view (incarnating)
7. Understanding of the person (of the Son)	The Word is self-subsistent from eternity. At the time of incarnation, this Word is inner-constituted as God-man. Here the emphasis falls on the Son's "being-from-the-beginning" (static dimension) and "being-in/to-himself" (individual dimension).	Jesus does his life and work in loving obedience to the Father and for us in the Spirit. So the Word exists in a free and open relation to the Father in the Spirit. The stress falls on the Son's "being-in-act" (dynamic aspect) and "being-in/with-another" (ecstatic aspect).

## 4.2. Towards a Synthesis of Logos- and Spirit-Oriented Christologies in Trinitarian Perspective

To recover the pneumatological and, therefore, the economic-trinitarian aspects of the Christ-event partially eclipsed in the history of dogma, I relativized—as a methodological strategy—its otherwise legitimate Logos-oriented ontological-immanent dimensions. Complementarity calls for a synthesis that honors the basic concerns of each approach. Yet due to the intrinsic emphases and demands of each one, a measure of tension is likely to remain in any attempt to bring them together.<sup>1</sup> On the one hand, the interests of a Spirit-christology may be incorporated under those of a Logos-oriented one. Yet the question of whether in this approach the understanding of the incarnation and the person of the Son can retain dynamic and relational dimensions remains an issue for discussion. On the other hand, Logos-oriented interests can be incorporated under those of a Spirit-christology. But the question of whether in this move static and individual dimensions of the incarnation and the person of the Son will remain intact is also a matter of debate. Without attempting to be exhaustive or remove tensions that simply point to the inexhaustibility of the mystery of God in Christ, I present three ways of approaching the complementarity of Logos- and Spirit-oriented christologies. In doing so, I often refer the reader back to prior arguments in the light of the new concern. Here I do not intend to provide a grand synthesis as much as to make some modest proposals towards a synthesis.

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<sup>1</sup> In the case of a Logos-christology, for example, what is constitutive is the immanent ground for the Son's free action in the world, but there is also in this legitimate concern a natural tendency to undervalue the Son's economic actions per se as fully constitutive (even for his humanity). See Olegario González de Cardedal, "Un problema teológico fundamental: la preexistencia de Cristo. Historia y hermenéutica," in *Teología y mundo contemporáneo: Homenaje a K. Rahner en su 70 cumpleaños*, ed. A. Vargas-Machuca (Madrid, Spain: Universidad Pontificia Comillas y Ediciones Cristiandad, 1975), 179-211.

#### 4.2.1. Identity and Non-Identity As a Starting Point: Jesus Is the Logos, Jesus Is Not the Holy Spirit

As Manlio Simonetti has taught us, early orthodox Spirit-christology often identified Spirit (*pneuma, spiritus*)—and even “Holy Spirit” in the case of Luke 1:35—as the divine element of Christ and, more specifically, as the name of the preexistent Logos.<sup>2</sup> I argued that such identification ultimately weakened the particular agency of the Spirit in all events of Jesus’ life and mission, since its activities were now ascribed to the Logos. It seems quite remarkable, however, that in spite of this relativization and even confusion between Spirit and Logos in interpreting various biblical passages, pre-Augustinian theologians like Tertullian and Hilary of Poitiers can still leave room for the notion that the Holy Spirit is a person distinct from the Father and the Son.<sup>3</sup> At the very least, it is quite possible to argue that the partialities of early orthodox Spirit-christology are not necessarily detrimental to the church’s trinitarian faith—as Simonetti puts it, they did not lead to a binitarian concept of God.<sup>4</sup> The story is another in contemporary attempts at a Spirit-christology as a substitution for—and thus not as a complement to—the classical Logos-christology of the church formally consolidated at Chalcedon.

In biblical studies, Dunn has spoken of Jesus’ self-consciousness of his unparalleled eschatological role in history and uniquely intimate relation to his Father (*Abba*) during his mission as an experience of the Spirit’s presence in him. Initially, he concluded “that Jesus’ possession and experience of the Spirit is that which later dogma has called his divinity. The ‘deity’ of the Jesus of history is a function of the Spirit — is, in fact, no

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<sup>2</sup> “Note di cristologia pneumatica,” esp. 203-17.

<sup>3</sup> For Tertullian and Hilary, see *ibid.*, 227, 229; for Hilary, see Ladaria’s article “El Espíritu Santo . . .,” 245-46.

<sup>4</sup> “Note di cristología pneumatica,” 226-32.



more and no less than the Spirit.”<sup>5</sup> In order to recover the “dynamic” pneumatological character of Jesus’ human experiences, Dunn felt compelled to reinterpret the two-natures Chalcedonian approach to Jesus’ identity under the *pneuma/sarx* pattern typically used in early Spirit-christologies: “[I]t would be better to express the theory of the two natures in the Pauline terms of flesh and Spirit . . . and recognize that what we call the deity of Jesus was no more and no less than the Spirit of God in him.”<sup>6</sup>

Later on, Dunn moved away from identifying “the Spirit with experience [i.e., of Christ] quite so crudely”<sup>7</sup> and preferred to speak of its presence in Jesus under the category of prophecy or, more specifically, in terms “of empowering for exorcism, of inspiration for proclamation.”<sup>8</sup> One cannot, as some early church fathers did, use the *pneuma/sarx* pattern of Romans 1:3-4 to support exegetically “an incarnational Spirit christology,” that is, the “concept of Christ as the incarnation of the Spirit.”<sup>9</sup> In the end, Dunn suggested that a Spirit-christology that sees Jesus as pre-Easter prophet and then functionally identifies him with the life-giving Spirit (1 Cor. 15:45) in the church’s post-Easter experience can help us to synthesize incarnational Logos/Wisdom and Adam/Lord NT christologies.<sup>10</sup> Significantly, Dunn moved away from substituting the presence of the Spirit in Jesus for that of the Logos and instead moved towards recognition that a complementarity of approaches is the best option. Others have not done the same.

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<sup>5</sup> James D. G. Dunn, “Rediscovering the Spirit (1),” in *Pneumatology*, 50.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 51.

<sup>7</sup> Preface, in *ibid.*, ix.

<sup>8</sup> “Rediscovering the Spirit (2),” in *ibid.*, 75; earlier in “Spirit and Holy Spirit in the New Testament,” in *ibid.*, 5-8; see also *Jesus and the Spirit*, where Dunn adds to Jesus’ self-consciousness as end-time exorcist and inspired prophet his unique “Abba” experience of sonship: “*Jesus thought of himself as God’s son and as anointed by the eschatological Spirit, because in prayer he experienced God as Father and in ministry he experienced a power to heal which he could only understand as the gospel of the end-time*” (67).

<sup>9</sup> “Rediscovering the Spirit (2),” in *Pneumatology*, 74-76.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 76-80; I have already discussed the functional identity between the risen Lord and the Spirit (see 2.3.1).

G. W. H. Lampe exemplifies the shift towards replacement in two ways. First, he does not consider the Spirit as an agent distinct from God in the biblical sense or as a divine person in the conciliar sense. Consider the author's definition of God as Spirit:

In speaking now of God as Spirit we are not referring to an impersonal influence, an energy transmitted by God but distinct from himself. Nor are we indicating a divine entity or hypostasis which is a third person of the Godhead. We are speaking of God himself, his personal presence, as active and related.<sup>11</sup>

Neither a divine power nor a concrete hypostatic expression of the divine substance, the designation "Spirit," to our author, is a way of describing "God" in terms of his dynamic and ecstatic "presence" in the world. Thus "Spirit" is at once God's transcendent (other-worldly) and yet active immanent (worldly) presence in and towards creation.<sup>12</sup>

Second, and therefore, Lampe is not interested in speaking of Jesus' divinity in terms of the Logos's presence in him, opting instead for a definition of his divinity according to

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<sup>11</sup> *God as Spirit*, 208; in his work *The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit* (Richmond, Va.: John Knox, 1964), Hendrikus Berkhof had already argued that the Holy Spirit "is not an autonomous substance, but a predicate to the substance God and to the substance Christ. . . . the way of functioning of both" (28). He writes, "[i]n creation he [the Spirit] is the acting Person of God, in re-creation he is the acting Person of Christ, who is no other than the acting Person of God. . . . The Spirit is Person because he is God acting as Person. However, we cannot say that the Spirit is a Person distinct from God the Father." (116). Berkhof robs the Spirit of its personhood, but Christ suffers the same fate: "Jesus Christ is not a Person beside the Person of God; in him the Person of God becomes the shape of a human person" (ibid).

<sup>12</sup> In a similar way, Haight conceives of Spirit as a biblical symbol qualitatively equal to all other biblical metaphors (such as Logos and Wisdom) for describing God's *ad extra* energy at work in creation: "[A]ll these symbols are basically the same insofar as they point to the same generalized experience of God outside of God's self and immanent in the world in presence and active power. . . . When the metaphorical character of personification is not respected, when it becomes hypostasized, i.e., conceived as objective and individual, in the same measure the power of the symbol tends to be undermined" (Roger Haight, "The Case for Spirit Christology," 267-68). John O'Donnell interprets Haight's proposal as a "kind of *either/or*" approach to complementarity because of the leveling of metaphors to the same plane of function—in the sense that one can choose *either* one model *or* the other depending on the demands of one's historical context. Interview by Leopoldo A. Sánchez M., tape recording, 4 December, Università Gregoriana di Roma. Although Haight at first seems to allow for both approaches to stand *alongside each other*, I think that in the end no true synthesis occurs and in fact a Spirit-christology only stands *in place of* a Logos-christology. One approach replaces the other. See, for example, "The case for Spirit Christology," 259, 266 (n. 16).

what the human being Jesus does in cooperation with God's Spirit. He distinguishes between substantival, adjectival, and adverbial definitions of Jesus' divinity:

Spirit christology must be content to acknowledge that the personal subject of the experience of Jesus Christ is a man. The hypostasis is not the Logos incarnate but a human being. Spirit christology cannot affirm that Jesus is 'substantivally' God. . . . It does not follow that Jesus is only 'adjectivally' God, that is to say, *God-like* or 'divine' in the sense of being a man who possessed to an excellent degree the qualities that we attribute to God. An interpretation of the union of Jesus with God in terms of his total possession by God's Spirit makes it possible, rather, to acknowledge him to be God 'adverbially.' By the mutual interaction of the Spirit's influence and the free response of the human spirit such a unity of will and operation was established that in all his actions the human Jesus acted divinely.<sup>13</sup>

To make the human being Jesus a legitimate subject of experiences and actions, Lampe feels compelled to leave behind the possibility of speaking of his divinity in terms of the Father's self-communication in the Logos to him. It is enough to speak of the Spirit's presence in him, but then neither Logos nor Spirit are anything more than interchangeable terms for God's self-presence as experienced in his works in creation.<sup>14</sup> Is this enough to posit the unity of the divine and the human in Jesus Christ? I cannot see how saying that the man Jesus is God because he acts "divinely" is finally any different from saying that

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<sup>13</sup> "The Holy Spirit and the Person of Christ," 124, for a critique of this view as a hindrance to proclamation, see 5.2.

<sup>14</sup> See, e.g., *God as Spirit*, 37, 115-16. Similarly, Haight can define his approach as follows: "By a Spirit Christology I mean one that 'explains' how God is present and active in Jesus, and thus Jesus' divinity, by using the biblical symbol of God as Spirit, and not the symbol Logos" ("The Case for Spirit Christology," 257; see also 274-77).

he is God because he acts in a “divine” manner.<sup>15</sup> Jesus’ being and acts as one in whom God as Spirit dwells fully may make him significantly and even uniquely distinct from other saints, but still only in intensity or degree.

Dunn and Lampe share a basic concern for understanding the divinity of Jesus in such a way that his true humanity—e.g., its self-consciousness, experiences, historical deeds, relationships, and will—does not lose its character in the process. To the extent that the classical Chalcedonian christology allowed for the Logos’s full communication of divine attributes to his assumed humanity at the hypostatic union, subsequent events in Jesus’ life and mission naturally became more epiphanic of his prior identity as God than constitutive for his own humanity as Christ (= anointed one), suffering Servant, Savior, and risen Lord. I think that it is this lack of dynamism and relationality that Dunn and Lampe seek to recover in their studies of the Spirit’s place in Jesus’ human experiences.

In Lampe’s case, however, the recovery of pneumatology leads to a denial of the classical approach’s static view of the incarnation as hypostatic union and individual understanding of the incarnate Word as an internally-constituted person (subject) distinct from the Father and the Spirit. In fact, Lampe turns early orthodox Spirit-christology on its head by using the notion of Spirit to relativize (instead of affirm) the Logos’s unique presence in Jesus. If some of the early patristic writers weakened the pneumatic aspects of christology by subsuming the Spirit under the divine element of Christ, Lampe does the opposite by subsuming the Logos under the general idea of Spirit as God (or divinity). Unlike early orthodox Spirit-christology, Lampe does away with a trinitarian framework

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<sup>15</sup> Neither could Olaf Hansen in his discussion of Lampe. See “Spirit Christology: A Way Out of Our Dilemma?” in *The Holy Spirit in the Life of the Church: From Biblical Times to the Present*, ed. Paul D. Opsahl (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1978), esp. 193-95.

that supports a distinction between the persons of the Logos and the Spirit and thus their proper relations to the humanity of Christ.

Holy Scripture gives us a basic witness to what theologians have formally referred to as a differentiated unity of Father (God), Son (Word), and Holy Spirit in their works for us in history and in their relations to one another at once. On the one hand, Ladaria correctly points out that no passage in the New Testament says of the Spirit what John 1:14 says of the Logos.<sup>16</sup> This is the basic danger of a Spirit-christology that describes the divinity of Jesus exclusively in terms of his possession of Spirit and leaves aside the issue of the identity of Jesus as the Logos made flesh. On the other hand, the active presence of the Spirit as a distinct person in Jesus is not merely something “accidental or secondary” to his identity.<sup>17</sup> This is the basic danger of a Logos-christology that does not give full weight to the special times (*kairoi*) of Jesus’ life and work in which God’s Spirit descends in him. How does one bring together both of these important affirmations?

Ladaria is hesitant to speak of Logos- and Spirit-oriented christologies as two discrete “models” because such terminology could lead to the misconception that either approach can carry the whole weight of Jesus’ identity on its own. An exchange with Ladaria on this point gives us a basic trinitarian starting point and framework for complementarity.<sup>18</sup>

Sánchez: Well, here we have two models, alongside one another. These are complementary in the sense that one is next to the other. But where is . . .

Ladaria: . . . the integration . . .

Sánchez: . . . the integration, the cohesiveness. You see? What would you say?

Ladaria: These are not two models. The aspects must be integrated.

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<sup>16</sup> “Cristología del Logos y cristología del Espíritu,” 356, n. 9.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 354.

<sup>18</sup> Interview Ladaria (translation mine).

Sánchez: The aspects . . .

Ladaria: And the point of departure is the personal identity of Jesus. Jesus is not the Holy Spirit. Jesus is the Son of God. Jesus is the Logos. He is the Son. This is his personal identity. And on him descends the Spirit.

Sánchez: The non-identity of Jesus [and the Spirit] . . .

Ladaria: That they are not the same.

Sánchez: Yes. In that sense, these are not simply two models. I see.

Ladaria: These are two aspects of one reality for bringing us close to Jesus who personally is the Son, not the Spirit.

What seems like such a basic distinction between the “personal identity” of Jesus and the Logos (Son) and the “non-identity” of Jesus and the Spirit can never be appreciated in its fullness unless one understands both the historic relativization of the pneumatological aspects of Jesus’ identity in early orthodox Spirit-christology<sup>19</sup> and, conversely, the more recent relativization of the Logos-oriented dimensions of his identity in what may be seen as “post-Chalcedonian” Spirit-oriented christologies.<sup>20</sup> By identifying “Spirit” with the divine element or name of the preexistent Logos, early orthodox Spirit-christology tended to deny the person of the Holy Spirit its active place in the Christ-event (incarnating). By replacing the metaphor of Logos with that of Spirit, the post-Chalcedonian type of Spirit-christology denies the Logos its unique assumption of a human nature or his becoming flesh at the hypostatic union (incarnation).

In the light of these shortcomings, the issue of identity and non-identity provides a framework for distinguishing what is proper to the Logos and to the Holy Spirit in the

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<sup>19</sup> A topic I have covered at length in chapters one and two.

<sup>20</sup> I first came upon this term for describing Lampe’s approach in Del Colle, *Christ and the Spirit*, 161-64.

humanity of Christ in such a way that dynamic and static views of the incarnation are preserved. This is the way I interpret the function of Ladaria's helpful distinction. Let us hear Ladaria himself:

If we cannot speak of an identity between Jesus and the Holy Spirit, we must on the other hand affirm that the Holy Spirit is the one who acts in Jesus during all the stages of his life, and not precisely the Logos or the Son. Nowhere in the New Testament are we told that the Son descended upon Jesus at Jordan or raised him from the dead. Therefore, upon this Jesus, personally identical with the Logos, the Holy Spirit acts in distinct moments of his existence towards the realization of his life as Son, for the perfecting of his filiation, already certainly possessed from the beginning (cf. *Heb 5:9*). If Jesus' divine filiation has its foundation in the fact that he is the Logos of God, the historical realization of his filial life for the salvation of humankind appears to have to be ascribed according to the New Testament to the action of the Spirit of God in him. . . . What a Logos-christology sees realized once and for all in the incarnation is seen from the perspective of a Spirit-christology as a historical process that finds its goal in the resurrection.<sup>21</sup>

We can now assess the significance of this initial approximation to complementarity in its historico-theological context. First, since Ladaria assumes a logical priority of the incarnation over the anointing that still gives the Jordan event its proper weight, his words echo Irenaeus's statement—already cited once before—that “inasmuch as the Word of God was man . . . in this respect did the Spirit of God rest upon him, and anoint

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<sup>21</sup> “Cristología del Logos y cristología del Espíritu,” 355-56 (translation mine).

him to preach the Gospel to the lowly.”<sup>22</sup> Second, Ladaria wants to stress the trinitarian picture of events in Jesus’ life in contrast to, for example, the Alexandrian interpretation of his anointing and exaltation as glorifying instances of the Logos’s prior sanctification of himself with his own Spirit at conception.<sup>23</sup> Athanasius and Cyril of Alexandria advocate the latter move which does not take full account of the Father as personal cause of acts in and through Jesus by the power of the Spirit or of the distinction between sanctification at birth and anointing at Jordan due to their static view of the Spirit’s presence in Jesus.<sup>24</sup> Finally, one can note the underlying influence of Hilary of Poitiers’ idea of the incarnation, anointing, and resurrection as economic “births” of the Son which point to a process of sanctification of his humanity that reaches its goal in its glorification at the moment of the incarnate Son’s return to the Father’s glory upon his resurrection.<sup>25</sup>

What, then, can we gather from Ladaria’s insights?

Briefly put, we can affirm both the incarnate Logos’s individual inner-constitution as God-man at an absolute point in time and the Spirit’s dynamic and ecstatic presence in the incarnate Logos throughout his life and mission in obedience to the Father and also for us and for our salvation. In the economy of salvation, then, a Spirit-christology’s dynamic and relational dimensions complement, without replacing, Logos-oriented static and individual aspects of the identity of Jesus—and viceversa. This is the basic truth that I have anticipated and conveyed at various times in my own proposal for a Spirit-oriented

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<sup>22</sup> *Against Heresies* 3.18.1, 446 (see my discussion in 1.2); also Interview Ladaria.

<sup>23</sup> Ladaria develops this insight in “La unción de Jesús y el don del Espíritu,” 562-64.

<sup>24</sup> For Athanasius, see 1.3; for Athanasius and Cyril of Alexandria, see 2.1.2.

<sup>25</sup> See 2.1.3. For Hilary, the glorified humanity retains its properties and thus is not divinized in the sense that it is swallowed up in divinity. What is left aside after Jesus’ resurrection is the corruptible nature of the body in death. In an economic sense, the resurrection is a rebirth unto immortality or participation in the glory of the Father, a glory that Jesus always had from eternity as the Logos, but now fully receives as incarnate Logos at the resurrection. For a fuller treatment, see Ladaria’s *La cristología de Hilario de Poitiers*. *Analecta Gregoriana*, vol. 255 (Rome: Università Gregoriana, 1989), chap. 7.



christology as an aspect of the mystery of Christ that invigorates and complements the Logos-oriented dimensions of the same.

The distinction between identity and non-identity applies both to the economic Trinity and the immanent Trinity. The Logos is not the Holy Spirit, and viceversa. And yet the Logos can be said to exist as one in whom the Spirit of the Father rests, just as the Holy Spirit can be said to exist as one who proceeds from the Father through or and the Son. Following Barth and Rahner, I inquired into the immanent implications of God's twofold self-differentiated givenness or communication in the Son and in the Holy Spirit to the humanity of Christ.<sup>26</sup> This move did not prevent me from giving the person of the Son its proper due in the definition of the person of the Holy Spirit (either through a *per filium* or a qualified *filioque* model of processions). Neither did the same move prevent me from giving the person of the Holy Spirit its proper due in the definition of the person of the Son. I did so through an *in spiritu* model that did not overturn either a *per filium* or a qualified *filioque*.<sup>27</sup> In regards to the person of the Logos, I provided a christological-trinitarian synthesis<sup>28</sup> which I can now present again as an affirmation in agreement not only with the correspondence between the economic Trinity and the immanent Trinity, but also with the distinction between identity and non-identity introduced in this essay.

The deepest truth regarding the Logos's distinct self-subsistence (individual aspect) from the very beginning (static aspect), whether in the intradivine life as God the Son or in the economy of salvation as incarnate Son (God-man), is that he exists in openness (dynamic aspect) and in relation (ecstatic aspect) to God the

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<sup>26</sup> See 3.1.

<sup>27</sup> See 3.3.

<sup>28</sup> See 3.2.2.

Father and to us freely and out of love in the Spirit without ceasing to be himself.<sup>29</sup>

#### **4.2.2. Orders of Knowledge and Being (On Method): Jesus the Christ Is the Logos and the Logos Is Jesus the Christ**

Another way to approach the issue of complementarity is by means of the distinction and relationship between christologies “from above” and “from below.”<sup>30</sup> The classical starting point for the mystery of Christ (“from above”) begins with the preexistent divine Logos whose assumption of humanity unto himself constitutes him as God-man from the first moment of the incarnation. A Spirit-christology (“from below”) follows the man Jesus of Nazareth in the economic *kairoi* of his earthly life and ministry as the incarnate Son relates to his Father and to us in the Spirit, and then moves to confess him as Servant, Savior, Lord, and ultimately God. One may formulate a christology from either starting point as long as neither approach ends by denying the church’s basic confession of Jesus’ humanity and divinity (more generally, the Chalcedonian formula) and, in more material terms, as long as Jesus of Nazareth (in his life, words, and deeds)—and not preconceived philosophico-theological systems—is the *norma normans* for christology.<sup>31</sup>

The classical approach “from above” looks at Jesus Christ in *ontological-immanent* terms according to the categories of preexistence and incarnation (= hypostatic union);

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<sup>29</sup> See 2.3.3.4 above, p. 167.

<sup>30</sup> For Joseph A. Fitzmyer’s description of the two approaches, see *Scripture and Christology: A Statement of the Biblical Commission with a Commentary* (N.Y.: Paulist, 1986), 90; cf. Pannenberg, *Jesus—God and Man*, 33; José Luis Illanes Maestre offers five aspects marking the distinction between both methodologies. See “Cristología «desde arriba» y cristología «desde abajo». Reflexiones sobre la metodología cristológica,” in *Cristo, Hijo de Dios y Redentor del Hombre*, 144–46.

<sup>31</sup> Jürgen Moltmann objects to the distinction between christologies “from above” and “from below” when it assumes either a general metaphysical or anthropological framework into which Jesus is later situated. The danger is to “. . . end up with a theological christology without Jesus, or with an anthropological Jesuology without God.” *The Way of Jesus Christ: Christology in Messianic Dimensions*, trans. Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 69.

conversely, one “from below” looks at Jesus’ identity in *soteriological-economic* terms as a dynamic series of successive events spanning from his birth to his baptism, and from his baptism to his death and resurrection.<sup>32</sup> A christology purely “from below” ends by denying Jesus’ full divinity; a christology purely “from above,” Jesus’ full humanity. A Spirit-christology exclusively “from below” leads to Ebionite, adoptionist, and Nestorian views. A Logos-christology exclusively “from above” leads to docetic, Apollinarian, monophysite, and monothelite views. If we cannot speak of an *either/or*, but rather of a *both/and*<sup>33</sup> approach to the Christ-event, we must also try to provide some synthesis.<sup>34</sup>

Let us begin with a question: “Does Jesus help me because he is the Son of God, or is he the Son of God because he helps me?”<sup>35</sup> Moltmann asks this question in the context of a discussion on the classical philosophical distinction between the order of knowing (*ratio cognoscendi*) and the order of being (*ratio essendi*): “Whereas Jesus is not recognizable as the Son of God until his death and his resurrection, in the order of being he is the Son of God before this history takes place.”<sup>36</sup> Whereas our knowledge of Jesus’ divinity is always *a posteriori*, the divinity of Jesus is always an *a priori* reality in the

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<sup>32</sup> The terms “ontological-immanent” and “soteriological-economic” describe orientations and not absolute conditions, as if a fundamental choice had to be made between either an ontological (metaphysical) or a soteriological (functional) christology. Both approaches should have both types of concerns.

<sup>33</sup> Rahner, for example, delineates characteristics of “saving history” and “metaphysical” types, but not without the proviso that these two categories are strictly abstract, since both approaches have often appeared together in mixed varieties. Karl Rahner, “The Two Basic Types of Christology,” in *Theological Investigations*, vol. 13, trans. David Bourke (N.Y.: Crossroad, 1975), 213-24

<sup>34</sup> There is a sense in which even a christology “from below” must proceed “from above” in that the former must assume that God as such freely saves us in Jesus Christ. At the same time, we must also illuminate this truth with the fact that God cannot save what God has not assumed (although freely so). In the latter case, the soteriological-economic concern of a christology “from below” that looks at the actualization and relationality of the Son’s humanity in a wider trinitarian framework complements the move “from above.”

<sup>35</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *The Crucified God: The Cross of Christ as the Foundation and Criticism of Christian Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 91.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.* Moltmann finds in Aristotle the basis for the underlying thought behind the distinction, namely, that “what is last in perception is always first in being” (*The Way of Jesus Christ*, 49); cf. Pannenberg’s discussion in his *Systematic Theology*, trans. Geoffrey Bromiley, vol. 1, 264-66, and esp. vol. 2, 363-72 (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1992, 1994).

order of being. As Pannenberg has pointed out, this principle does not assume that humans arrive at this knowledge on their own, for even “in the order of knowledge the movement “from above” proceeds only by means of divine revelation.”<sup>37</sup> Moltmann exemplifies the approach “from below” to the question of Jesus’ divinity that places the paschal mystery at the center of reflection.<sup>38</sup> According to his eschatological ontology, the end in history reveals the origin in eternity. The same applies to our knowledge of Jesus’ divine origin. Christ’s exaltation to God reveals his sending and origin from God, and his glorious resurrection reveals his descent to become incarnate.

The early Christian community evidently deduced Christ’s original sending *by* and *from* the Father from his eschatological exaltation *to* the Father. . . . [T]he future reveals the origin. . . . Jesus’ resurrection from the dead was not understood as merely happening in time to the dead Jesus. It was simultaneously seen as the beginning of the eschatological era, when the dead will be raised. It therefore also meant the immediate presence of God’s eternity. In time, Jesus is raised ‘on the third day’ after his death, but as the immediate presence of eternity his raising is simultaneous to all moments of his life. To adopt this standpoint is already to assume the perspective which looks from Jesus’ divine to his human nature, and it is then possible to talk about his incarnation.”<sup>39</sup>

We can affirm the centrality of the resurrection appearances of Jesus to his disciples and the Spirit’s descent upon the church from Pentecost onwards for witnessing to this reality (e.g., Lk. 24:26, 46-49; Acts 1:3-4, 8, 2:32-33, 36-39) as the epistemological basis for our *a posteriori* identification of Jesus as Lord and God (e.g., 1 Cor. 12:3; Jn. 20:28).

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<sup>37</sup> Pannenberg, *Jesus—God and Man*, 405.

<sup>38</sup> So does Pannenberg, in *ibid.*, esp. chap. 3.

<sup>39</sup> *The Way of Jesus Christ*, 49.

Let us make this point in terms of a Spirit-christology.<sup>40</sup> In the order of knowledge, Jesus is a man who is fully recognized and confessed as Lord, Son of God in power, and finally God only upon the completion of his life and mission in the Spirit at the moment of his exaltation. In the light of the resurrection, the presence of the Spirit in Jesus—his identity as receiver, bearer, and giver of the same—can point us to his divinity, to the fact that Jesus is none other than the Logos. In this case, we can speak of a Logos-christology *within* a Spirit-oriented christology.

In our *a posteriori* reality as post-Easter/post-Pentecost Christians, in our being and living in the Spirit of the risen Lord and Messiah, we can read the biblical story of Jesus as receiver, bearer, and giver of the Spirit of the Father *for us* and then confess that this concrete man is God. To read the Christ-event from a pneumatological horizon means that the story of this man becomes for us the narrative of the Father's love for us through his Son in the Spirit and of the Son's love to the Father for us in the same Spirit.<sup>41</sup> Only from the perspective of the order of knowledge can we interpret Kasper's proposal that the *gratia habitualis* is the basis for the *gratia unionis*, that Jesus' sanctification in the

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<sup>40</sup> Following Kasper and Pannenberg, Rosato preserves both the uniqueness and universal significance of Jesus Christ as bearer and giver of the Spirit in intrinsically related functional and ontological terms. He argues, for example, that a paschally-rooted Spirit christology is advantageous because "it corrects the ontological and Trinitarian deficiencies of Ebionite Christology by not merely dwelling on the functional significance of Jesus, but insisting that Jesus' universal function is unavoidably rooted in his unique being which pre-exists with the being of the triune God. . . . It has as its starting point in the historical event of the paschal mystery and, in retroactive fashion, guarantees Jesus' uniqueness even before the beginning of his existence; in eschatological fashion, however, it opens up the universal significance of his being for all mankind and for the whole cosmos" (Philip J. Rosato, "Spirit Christology: Ambiguity and Promise," 447).

<sup>41</sup> In a sermon for Trinity Sunday, Luther writes: "The Scriptures gradually and beautifully lead us to Christ; first revealing him to us as a man, then as the Lord of all creatures, and finally as God. Thus we are successfully led to the true knowledge of God. But the philosophers and the wise men of this world would begin at the top and so they have become fools. We must begin at the bottom and gradually advance in knowledge. . . ." Martin Luther, *Sermons on Gospel Texts for Pentecost*, vol. 2, pt. 1, *The Complete Sermons of Martin Luther*, ed. John Nicholas Lenker, trans. Lenker and others (Minneapolis: Lutherans in All Lands, 1907; reprint, Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 2000), 409-10. Here I have simply pointed out the pneumatological horizon from which such reading of the Scriptures is possible and the trinitarian framework of the identity of Christ to whom the Scriptures ultimately point.

Spirit and endowment with its gifts is the ground for affirming the hypostatic union or the identity of Jesus and the Logos.<sup>42</sup> In the *ordo cognoscendi*, therefore, Jesus the Christ is indeed the Son of God because he helps us, he is for us. Jesus the Christ is the Logos.

In the order of being, however, Jesus is not only a man who is or becomes divine in the perfect fulfillment of his life and mission in the Spirit. Herein lies the danger of post-Chalcedonian attempts to make the presence of the Spirit (in contrast to the Logos's) in Jesus' human reality the ontological (in contrast to epistemological) ground for affirming his divinity. Although the Holy Spirit has a constitutive (and not accidental) ontological role in defining the identity of the *incarnate* Logos (his humanity)—as I have argued, a point that must never be taken lightly—the principle of non-identity still prevents us from concluding that this communication of the Spirit in him is identical with the Logos's communication to his assumed humanity. We cannot speak of a hypostasization or incarnation of the Holy Spirit in the humanity that only the Logos has assumed unto himself. The Spirit is not the Logos, and viceversa.

To speak of the Holy Spirit's disposition of a human nature for its assumption by or union with the Logos, of a logical priority of the sanctification over the union (in reaction to monophysite tendencies), cannot ultimately point to Jesus' divinity or his identity with the Logos in an ontological sense. Why? Because the proper mission of the Holy Spirit is to sanctify, not a human nature in general, but precisely the humanity *of the Logos*. Otherwise, in a legitimate attempt to avoid monophysitism and give the Spirit's dynamic presence in the various events of Jesus' life and mission its proper weight, we may

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<sup>42</sup> A point that Ladaria and I share concerning Kasper's pneumatological application of Rahner's axiom. Interview Ladaria; see also my discussion of Kasper in 2.2.2. and esp. 5.2.; for Ladaria's own critique of Kasper, see "Cristología del Logos y cristología del Espíritu," 357.

simply overdo it and fall into adoptionism or Nestorianism—not the best remedy against monophysitism.<sup>43</sup>

From the perspective of the order of being, Spirit-christology must be seen *within* a Logos-oriented christology. From the same angle, the *gratia unionis* is the basis for the *gratia habitualis*, the incarnation (hypostatic union) the ground for the incarnating, God's self-giving to the humanity of Christ in the union the logical priority for God's self-giving in the Spirit to the same in indwelling and sanctification. In the *ordo essendi*, then, Jesus the Christ helps me because he is the Son of God, the divine Logos who in time became flesh. The Logos is Jesus the Christ.

To sum up, in the classical move “from above” which follows the order of being, the Logos is Jesus the Christ. The strength of this approach lies in preserving the personal identity of Jesus and the Logos while avoiding the idea that the Holy Spirit disposes or prepares a human nature for its assumption by the Logos (an adoptionist tendency). From a trinitarian perspective, the move “from above” preserves the order of trinitarian processions *Father-Son-Spirit*, which gives logical priority to the Father's generation of the Son over the spiration of the Spirit from the Father through/and the Son. In order of being, then, we can conclude that this processional priority is the ontological-immanent ground for the same priority in the historical missions of the Son and the Holy Spirit.

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<sup>43</sup> “In the case of Jesus, it is important to avoid Adoptionism. He is ontologically the Son of God because of the hypostatic union from the moment of his conception. Because of that too, he is the Temple of the Holy Spirit and is made holy by that Spirit in his humanity. We have, however, as believers, to respect the successive moments or stages in the history of salvation and to accord the New Testament texts their full realism. Because of this, I would suggest that there were two moments when the *virtus* or effectiveness of the Spirit in Jesus was actuated in a new way. The first was at his baptism, when he was constituted (and not simply proclaimed as) Messiah and Servant by God. The second moment was at the time of his resurrection and exaltation, when he was made Lord.” Congar, *Holy Spirit*, vol. 3, 171; cf. *The Word and the Spirit*, trans. David Smith (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1986), 92.

On the other hand, in the move “from below” which follows the order of knowledge, Jesus the Christ is the Logos. The strength of this approach lies in preserving the non-identity of Jesus and the person of the Holy Spirit while allowing the latter a constitutive role in the economic actualization of the humanity of the Logos in his mission of love (in his free and open relations) to the Father and for us from conception to baptism and from baptism to death and resurrection (contra monophysite tendencies). From a trinitarian angle and in the order of knowledge, the move “from below” also allows us to speak of Jesus’ dynamic and ecstatic existence in the Spirit of the Father throughout the economy of salvation as the soteriological-economic basis for assigning the Spirit a form of participation in the Son’s procession from the Father. I have already proposed an *in spiritu* trinitarian model that does not invert the classical order of processions, but at the same time gives the Spirit its constitutive role in the perfection or completion of the Father’s love for the Son and in the Son’s reciprocal love for the Father.<sup>44</sup>

A synthesis of the orders of knowledge and being in our present *a posteriori* reality as post-Easter/post-Pentecost Christians may proceed as follows. We can approach the mystery of Christ “from below,” beginning with the man Jesus of Nazareth in his life and mission of faithfulness to the Father and for us in the power of the Spirit. Here a Spirit-christology looks at the man Jesus in the context of his “being-in-act” and “being-in-relation,” of his dynamic and ecstatic existence lived precisely in the Spirit of God. We can speak of Jesus’ identity as receiver, bearer, and giver of the Spirit of the Father and look at the mysteries of Jesus’ life from this angle. In the light of the paschal mystery, then, we can also confess *a posteriori* in the Spirit of the risen Lord that this particular

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<sup>44</sup> See 3.3.



Spirit-constituted man whom we call Jesus of Nazareth is not a mere man but also our Lord, Son of God in power, and God. Jesus the Christ is the Logos.

In the move from the order of knowledge to the order of being, it is then possible to begin “from above” —the classical approach—and assume *a priori* that the Logos is Jesus the Christ. We can then speak of Jesus’ identity in terms of his “being-from-the-beginning” and “being-in-himself,” both from eternity as the individual self-subsistent person of the Logos and then in time according to his individual inner-constitution as incarnate Logos at the hypostatic union. We can also look at events in Jesus’ life as revelatory, epiphanic, confirming, or declarative of his divinity. Yet these static and individual dimensions of the Christ-event have to be invigorated with the dynamic and relational aspects of a Spirit-christology arrived at in our initial approach “from below.”

Admittedly, my so-called initial approach “from below” already assumes that God as such saves us in Christ and, indeed, that the Logos is Jesus the Christ. In other words, a Spirit-oriented christology looks at the order of knowledge in the light of the order of being. This is our present reality as people who already confess Jesus as Lord and who, in addition, have learned from St. John and the creeds of the church to identify this Jesus as the Word. A Spirit-christology, therefore, formally presupposes a Logos-christology, just as the order of knowledge presupposes the order of being.

From a methodological point of view (i.e., materially), however, I felt it necessary to relativize the Logos-oriented approach in order to complement it. Otherwise, as my investigation has shown extensively, one loses sight of the significance of events like the baptism and the resurrection for the incarnate Son himself, as well as of the broader trinitarian dimensions of his life and mission as the one who comes from and goes to the

Father *in the Spirit*. Once such dimensions have been restored, and the place of the Holy Spirit has been given its due in God's self-giving to the humanity of the Son, both at the economic and immanent levels, then we can once again see a Spirit-christology *within* a Logos-christology. Only after we affirm the Son's (and, for that matter, the Father's) existence "in the Spirit," can we reconcile this historically neglected truth with the fact that the same Spirit, in the order of being, proceeds from the Father through/and the Son and sanctifies the humanity that the Son has already assumed unto himself. A strong Spirit-christology in trinitarian key does not finally oppose the logical (not temporal) priority of the Son over the Spirit, either in the immanent processions or in the economic missions.

#### **4.2.3. Human and Divine Wills and Operations: Constantinople III and the Complementarity of Approaches**

Congar has suggested that the crisis of monotheletism and the church's response to it at Constantinople III (A.D. 680-81) opened the door for a full study of "the fact that Christ had been called in the truth of his human nature to fulfil himself and his mission as Messiah and Saviour through conscious and free activity in which the movement of the Spirit was present."<sup>45</sup> Historically, the struggle against Arianism already demanded the acknowledgement that Jesus' obedience to the Father did not make him ontologically subordinate to him. Basil solved the apparent contradiction between Christ's human obedience to the Father's will and his divine equality with the Father by affirming the essential unity of will between the Father and the Son manifested historically in their common works.<sup>46</sup> The unity of will in their works *ad extra* pointed to their unity of will

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<sup>45</sup> *The Word and the Spirit*, 86.

<sup>46</sup> *On the Spirit* 8.20-21, 14-15.

*ad intra*. Such an articulation of the issue at hand did not take away from the proper differentiation of the persons in their common works *ad extra* or in their relations *ad intra*.<sup>47</sup> We may say that, just as the divine persons expressed their common unity of essence in their own distinct way (i.e., as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit), so too did the divine persons express their unity of will in their own distinct way.

What this implied for the incarnate Son, however, was not quite clear until the rise of Apollinarianism, monophysitism, and ultimately monothelitism engaged the church in a struggle to safeguard the Son's true humanity against attempts to strip it of a rational soul or human mind, identify it as the one and only divine nature, or strip it of a will.<sup>48</sup> In these cases, strong affirmations of the divinity of the Logos turned heterodox and his full humanity suffered in the process. Monothelites held to the unity of will and operation among the persons of the Trinity, but did not admit that the incarnation of the Logos demanded the notion of two natural wills and operations in the one person. Yet the council's Definition of Faith also avoided a lapse into Nestorianism by affirming that, in the person of Christ, divine and human wills are not in opposition to one another.

We likewise declare that in him are two natural wills and two natural operations indivisibly, inconvertibly, inseparably, inconfusedly. . . . And these two natural wills are not contrary the one to the other (God forbid!) . . . but his human will follows and that not as resisting and reluctant, but rather as subject to his divine and omnipotent will. . . . [F]or although joined together each nature wills and does

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<sup>47</sup> See my discussion of Basil in 3.2.2.

<sup>48</sup> Significantly, the Definition of Faith drawn at Constantinople III understands Apollinaris and Severus (a monophysite) as "endeavouring craftily to destroy the perfection of the incarnation of the same our Lord Jesus Christ, our God, by blasphemously representing his flesh endowed with a rational soul as devoid of will and operation." *Definition of Faith*, in *NPNF*<sup>2</sup>, vol. 14, 344; on Severus's theology, see Davis, *Councils*, 212-25.

the things proper to it and that indivisibly and inconfusedly. Wherefore we confess two wills and two operations, concurring most fitly in him for the salvation of the human race.<sup>49</sup>

In our discussion of atonement theories,<sup>50</sup> we came upon Anselm's thesis that, on the one hand, the Father wills the death of his Son to restore humanity to paradise, and, on the other hand, the Son wills his own death without coercion from the Father. Abelard has serious difficulties with the notion that the Father wills the death of an innocent man. Yet Anselm affirms that the Father does not actually rejoice in his Son's suffering, but in his Son's own choice to suffer for us. Anselm's broader trinitarian assumption is that Jesus' uncoerced human will is one with his divine will, and therefore, one with the will of the Father. Since there is no opposition between Christ's human and divine wills and operations, there is none between the Son's will and the Father's will either. From this trinitarian framework, Aulen's criticism of Anselm's view as a "discontinuous divine work"—i.e., one involving both God's will and man's will—actually fails to give proper account of Christ's active human will and work in the accomplishment of atonement. In short, Aulen does not see that in Christ human and divine wills are in complete harmony.

A Logos-oriented christology places the union of human and divine wills in the person of Christ at the moment of the hypostatic union. An influential voice (through letters) in the deliberations at Constantinople III, Pope Agathos (A.D. 678-81) at one point appeals to Gregory Nazianzus on this point: "[H]e shews that the human will of the Saviour was

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<sup>49</sup> *Definition of Faith*, in *NPNF<sup>2</sup>*, vol. 14, 345; cf. Pope Agathos's letter (hereafter *Agathos's Letter*) read at the fourth session of the council, where he writes, "[W]e say that as the same our Lord Jesus Christ has two natures so also he has two natural wills and operations, to wit, the divine and the human: the divine will and operation he has in common with the coessential Father from all eternity: the human, he has received from us, taken with our nature in time." *Ibid.*, 331.

<sup>50</sup> See 2.3.2.

deified through its union with the Word, and therefore it is not contrary to God. So likewise he proves that he had a human, although deified will, and this same he had . . . as well as his divine will, which was one and the same with that of the Father.”<sup>51</sup> The unity of divine and human wills in the person of the incarnate Word is predicated upon the unity of divine and human natures in him at the moment of the hypostatic union. Now, a Spirit-oriented christology complements the Logos-oriented one by taking full account of the concrete and distinct moments (*kairoi*) of the incarnate Word’s life and work in which the Spirit indwells and empowers him to accomplish the will of the Father (incarnating). A synthesis will have to point to the fact that, just as there is no opposition in the person of the Son between his human will and operations (in which the Spirit fully participates) and his divine will and operations, so also there is none between the divine Son’s will and those of the Father and the Spirit as they work together for us and for our salvation.

In the Christ-event, the unity of wills *ad extra* points to the unity of wills *ad intra* but without neglecting the differentiation among the persons. The identity of Jesus and the Logos and the non-identity of Jesus and the Holy Spirit remains. The Logos becomes flesh, the Spirit indwells the incarnate Logos, and the Father sends them into the world as their personal cause (*aitia*). In their differentiated unity of will and operation, we may say that the Father loves the Son in the Spirit and the Son reciprocates this love in the Spirit. There is, as it were, a harmony of wills and works founded in their common love for us that finds its immanent ground in their love for one another.

In begetting his Son, the Father gives everything he is and has to the Son in complete openness and freedom. In his being begotten from the Father, the Son is and receives the Father’s self-giveness in total openness and freedom as well. As Ladaria puts it, the Son

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<sup>51</sup> Agathos’s *Letter*, 335.

is “the total response to the Father’s self-communication, the total openness without possible closure, pure relation to the Father of whom he is the original Thou, complete reflection of his glory.”<sup>52</sup> And the Holy Spirit is this personal openness and freedom, hypostasized love, in whom God the Father and the Son mutually love one another and in whom their common love finds its perfection and reaches its fulfillment. If the Son always exists in relation to the Father in the Spirit, then the incarnate Son “neither puts nor is able to put any obstacle to the action of the Holy Spirit in him. . . . [T]herefore, in the man Jesus the Holy Spirit finds no opposition in its sanctifying action.”<sup>53</sup> To sum up the matter in terms I have already used, the dynamic and ecstatic presence of the Spirit of the Father in the incarnate Son’s human actions for us has its eternal ground in the divine Son’s loving response in the Spirit to the Father’s inexhaustible love for him in the Spirit.

### 4.3. Conclusion

A synthesis of Logos- and Spirit-oriented christologies must look at the distinctions and relations expressed in the Father’s twofold self-communication in the Son and in the Holy Spirit to the humanity of Christ. I have attempted to accomplish this goal in some measure by summarizing the basic differences between Logos- and Spirit-christologies, and second, by appealing to the complementarity of aspects under three higher-order categories. These are the distinctions and relations between 1) the identity of Jesus and the Logos and the non-identity of Jesus and the Holy Spirit, 2) the orders of knowledge and being, and 3) the human and divine wills in Jesus Christ. My proposal gives full weight to the defining role of the Holy Spirit in the identity of the Son (in his being and acts), both in the economy of salvation and at the immanent level, but without identifying

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<sup>52</sup> “Cristología del Logos y cristología del Espíritu,” 358 (translation mine).

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.* (translation mine).

the Logos's presence in the assumed humanity with the Holy Spirit's or, inverting the missional and processional logical (not temporal) priority of the Son over the Holy Spirit, or overlooking the harmony of natural wills in Jesus Christ with the unity of will among the divine persons.

## CHAPTER 5

### **Pneumatological Christology As a Ground for Convicting and Liberating Proclamation (God against Us and for Us: Preaching Jesus in the Spirit)**

As a theological concern, the nature and function of the church's preaching of God's word typically touches on issues related to Scripture and ecclesiology. From a trinitarian angle, these interrelated areas constitute aspects of christological pneumatology because the church in the world proclaims in the power of the Spirit the word of God that points to the crucified and risen Christ. In previous chapters, I limited my project to the area of pneumatological christology, arguing for the invigoration of the role of the Spirit of God in the life and work of Jesus as a complement to classic Logos-oriented approaches to christology and Trinity. To conclude my work and begin to set foot on the path to the field of christological pneumatology, I am looking ahead into the implications for proclamation of a Spirit-oriented reading of the narrative of Jesus. I argue that the story of Jesus in the Spirit grounds and advances preaching in the Spirit today that leads sinners to conviction and liberation in Christ. I shall preface the rest of the argument with a story.

Growing up ignorant in the things of God never stopped me from wearing as many eighteen-carat gold crucifixes as dear mom every so often brought home to her son. Then, after a soccer afternoon in Panama, came that life-changing encounter with a street preacher: *¡Arrepíentete!* (Repent!) *¡Cristo murió por tus pecados!* (Christ died for/because of your sins!)<sup>1</sup> *¡Pero Dios lo ha resucitado!* (But God has raised him from the dead!). A few straightforward messages to get across. Such words carried a higher

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<sup>1</sup> The Spanish preposition "por" does not only point to Christ's death *in place of* sinners, but also *because of* sinners.



authority than the man speaking them. I was hooked, ready to hear more. Now I know that, for the evangelist, his mission was a matter of death and life—mine! From that moment on, the image on the crucifix became the crucified Christ against me and for me; an object around my neck had become a convicting and liberating cross in my life.

Christian formation took me on a journey from Pentecostalism to Roman Catholicism to Lutheranism. Yet in spite of their distinctive theological expressions and ecclesial forms of life, I realized that no tradition could claim immunity from missing the force of the cross for sinners in the here-and-now. Some preached the cross as the highest model of Christian discipleship. Go and do likewise! Others portrayed the event as the greatest instance of God's identification with all who suffer. God knows your pain! In a homiletics class, a fellow seminarian eloquently explained the cross to us in the spirit of Anselm: As God, Jesus can pay the infinite price owed to the Father for our debts; as man, Jesus must take our place as debtors. Still some were hesitant to ponder on the crucified for too long and moved right on to Christ's lordship. The cross turned into an uneasy step on the path to real victory. Apart from their arguable merits as reflections on aspects of the story of the crucified and risen Christ, none of these theological moves made me face the cross as *my* own death and way to new life in Christ—like that first time in Panama.

Gerhard Forde called for a much needed rethinking of the function of systematic theology in relation to the task of church proclamation. He argued that theology must move beyond its usual contentment with explaining God's past deeds and advance the type of thinking that aims at the direct speaking of God's promises to people today. Using the analogy of lovers to speak of God's dealings with human beings through word

and sacrament, Forde reminds us that talking about love falls short of its goal unless it leads the lover (God) and the beloved (us) to tell each other, “I love you!”<sup>2</sup> But how do theologians—professional or not—make the transition from explanation to proclamation? That’s a lifelong task in itself! It entails an ongoing Spirit-led move, from being read (or spoken to) through Jesus’ story, to being killed and made alive with the crucified and risen Christ of the story, to being self-critical of one’s detached readings (or hearings) of the same. The final self-critical stage should in turn lead to proposals for reading Jesus’ story that aim at its proclamation (especially in the form of preaching) as a transforming death-and-life event.

This chapter represents in part the fruit of my personal journey to come to grips with the relevance of my studies in Spirit-christology for the ministry of proclamation in the world. I argue that reading the life and work of Jesus as receiver, bearer, and giver of God’s Spirit—i.e., a pneumatological or Spirit-christology—invigorates the preaching of his story as a present event in which hearers are convicted of (God against us) and liberated from their sins against him (God for us).<sup>3</sup> To use the essay’s subtitle, I propose that reading the story of “Jesus in the Spirit” (a pneumatological christology) facilitates “preaching in the Spirit” that aims at our being crucified and raised with Christ (a crucial aspect of christological pneumatology). First, I place my thesis in the context of a broader pastoral concern for advocating the function and use of the biblical narrative as a living spoken word from God against us and for us in the here-and-now. Second, I review some basic assumptions of classical Logos-christology and two contemporary Spirit-christologies to unmask ways in which both approaches to the Christ-event can

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<sup>2</sup> Gerhard O. Forde, *Theology Is for Proclamation* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990), 3.

<sup>3</sup> The term “liberation” points to God’s promises of forgiveness of sins and resurrection unto eternal life.

hinder proclamation. Finally, I show that a Spirit-christology oriented towards and centered in the paschal mystery (i.e., Lent, Easter, and Pentecost), and thus our Spirit-initiated participation by grace in the mysteries of Jesus' life and work done in the power of the same Spirit (especially his baptism, death, and resurrection), fosters our preaching and hearing of Jesus' story as our own present death and way to new life in him.

### **5.1. Being Read by the Story of Jesus:**

#### **God Addresses and Shapes Us through the Biblical Narrative**

With the arrival of modernity, Scripture increasingly became a tool to uncover past historical events and unveil universal truths rather than a living word through which God addresses human beings in their current situations to change their lives. Hans Frei's turn to the world-creating function of the biblical stories in their own right for their readers or hearers stands as a classic critique and corrective to the modern fascination with looking behind the text mainly for its historical and religious references.<sup>4</sup> Reading Scripture as the record or word *about* God's past deeds and eternal truths and letting Scripture read us (or speak to us) as the authoritative word *from* God today are two different ways of understanding the function and use of Scripture.

The written word informs about the past, the spoken word transforms in the present. Yet this insight seems difficult enough to get through the mind of an educated middle-class Westerner. I myself did not get it until that Sunday I invited a group of elderly Cuban immigrants to open their Bibles and join me in a study—often a synonym for an explanation—of the Gospel for the day. Not one of them did. For various reasons, not many of them could read. But they seemed so eager to listen to God's word in Jesus'

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<sup>4</sup> Hans W. Frei, *The Eclipse of Biblical Narrative: A Study in Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century Hermeneutics* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University, 1974).

story. They taught me a valuable lesson. Above all, God had brought them to church to hear the word proclaimed to them in their present situation. For Luther, both the written and spoken forms of the word are ultimately authoritative because through them the Spirit points to Jesus Christ, the enfleshed Word; but the reformer also teaches that the written word exists for the sake of the spoken one.<sup>5</sup> How difficult it is for the children of modernity to recall the words of Paul: “So faith comes from what is heard” (Rom. 10:17).

Behind the turn to the narrative lies the assumption that the Spirit addresses human beings in every age through the biblical texts by appropriating what their authors said in the past with the goal of creating in the present a new community of people whose identity is shaped after Jesus’ story.<sup>6</sup> How then are preachers in the church formed or shaped by their hearing of the spoken word that points to Jesus? This is a question of *being* a particular kind of theologian or hearer of the story.

How we see ourselves influences how we read or hear God’s story of Jesus spoken to us in the Spirit. Following Luther, Forde distinguished theologians by the two stories that define their lives: the glory story and the cross story.<sup>7</sup> At any point in time, we are likely to see ourselves in the light of either story. While theologians of glory see themselves as sinners who have fallen to some degree from God’s scale of perfection, theologians of the cross see themselves as sinners who in rebellion against their Creator want to reach upwards and take God’s place.<sup>8</sup> Since the former tend to focus on their partially lost goodness and innate freedom to receive God’s favor, they will not hear Jesus’ story if that

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<sup>5</sup> David W. Lotz, “Sola Scriptura: *Luther on Biblical Authority*,” *Interpretation* 35, no. 3 (1981): esp. 262-64; on the Holy Spirit’s work as preacher of Christ, see *LC*, Creed 37-38, in *BC*, 435-36.

<sup>6</sup> Stanley J. Grenz, “The Spirit and the Word: The World-Creating Function of the Text,” *Theology Today* 57, no. 3 (2000): esp. 362-69.

<sup>7</sup> Gerhard O. Forde, *On Being a Theologian of the Cross: Reflections on Luther’s Heidelberg Disputation, 1518* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1997) 4-19.

<sup>8</sup> Forde speaks of an “upward fall”; see *Theology Is for Proclamation*, 48-49.

implies their complicity in his death and their irreversible rejection of God's mercy through him. To avoid the death of the old Adam and Eve in them, theologians of glory design strategies (theologies, readings of Jesus' story) that will make them immune to their need for repentance and forgiveness. Forde calls this self-preserving move "a defense mechanism against the cross."<sup>9</sup> At a passion play, they are most likely to lament and protest the fact that Jews and Romans killed their Lord. From a safe distance, they judge others without becoming a part of the story themselves. How many of us have fallen into this trap?

Theologians of the cross first hear the Gospels as God's judgment upon them for rejecting his Son as the way of salvation, but finally as God's word of forgiveness and resurrection hope in Christ for all who repent of their sins against him. The language of "killing" and "making alive" expresses this convicting and liberating Spirit-orchestrated plunging of the theologian into Jesus' story.<sup>10</sup> Prior to looking for ways to foster proclamation, theologians of the cross recognize that they—along with their best works and attempts at self-preservation<sup>11</sup>—must first die with the crucified in the story to be made alive with the risen one of the story. At a passion play, they see that sinners like them killed their Lord, and they ask God to forgive them for oppressing his Son.

Shaped by the cross, how then do theologian-preachers use Scripture to advance the telling of Jesus' story as a death-and-life event *for others*? This is a question of *doing* theology. Gunton argues that a Spirit-mediated "logical space" exists between the

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<sup>9</sup> Forde, *On Being a Theologian*, 12.

<sup>10</sup> See *Ap* 12.53, in *BC*, 195; cf. *FC*, *SD* 5.11, in *BC*, 583, and *LC*, Creed 58, in *BC*, 438; in *Ap* 13.4-5 (*BC*, 219), we see that the Holy Spirit's continuous plunging of the sinner into Jesus' story occurs through the spoken word and the sacraments (the visible word).

<sup>11</sup> A theology of the cross attacks the best—not the worst—we have to offer; see Forde, *On Being a Theologian*, esp. 1-4, 23 ff.

biblical text and our present times, one in which “are to be found both [the theologian’s] obedience of true Christian theology to the authoritative word and freedom which is the form of that obedience.”<sup>12</sup> Theologians of the church are read or used by Scripture in such a way that their Spirit-given freedom to articulate God’s truth in a particular context is guided by criteria, norms, or boundaries placed on them by the scriptural content.<sup>13</sup> The Spirit is the mediating agent that allows for the ongoing and dynamic movement from God to us through the word that points to Jesus and from us to God in response for such a gift through its faithful, articulate, and timely appropriation for our congregations.

Although the church’s confession of the scriptural witness to Jesus as true God and true man remains an authoritative norm for Christian theology, the expression of this truth in the language of *homoousios* (of one substance) is a free conceptual response for a particular time and place.<sup>14</sup> The Spirit guides the faithful reception of this norm, but also its fresh appropriation for each generation in which the church seeks to crucify and raise sinners with Christ. In every new age, theologians have to face Jesus’ question, “But who do you say that I am?” (Mt. 16:15). The classical answer has been the incarnate Word. I propose a complementary one that points to the incarnate Son as receiver, bearer, and giver of God’s Spirit. Will any of these affirmations lead to proclamation?

## **5.2. Being Self-Critical:**

### **Logos- and Spirit-Christologies as Hindrances to Proclamation**

If the written and spoken forms of the word ultimately point to the enfleshed Word, then we must at once identify this Word (Logos) with Jesus of Nazareth. But how?

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<sup>12</sup> Colin Gunton, “Using and Being Used: Scripture and Systematic Theology,” *Theology Today* 47, no. 3 (1990): 253.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 255, 258-59.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 253-54.

Assuming that the theologian confesses Jesus Christ as true God and true man, he/she may proceed to answer Jesus' question "from above" or "from below." As an approach "from above," classical christology proceeds from the Logos's eternal preexistence to his assumption of a human nature at a point in time (hypostatic or personal union). What matters most in this methodology is explaining the *how* of Jesus Christ's individual inner-constitution as the God-man. In Cantalamesa's words, "the problem of the foundation of salvation (that is, how the Savior is *made*) becomes more important than the problem of the unfolding of salvation (that is, what the Savior *does*)."<sup>15</sup>

In classical christology, events in Jesus' life and work are interpreted through the lens of the hypostatic union and within the framework of the exchange of divine and human attributes in the one person of Christ. The cross and the resurrection do not play the central role in defining his identity. For instance, the crucifixion may be explained as a logical necessity to satisfy God's justice—Anselm's highest-ranked divine attribute—and on the basis of the personal union: "[Since] none but God can make and none but man ought to make [satisfaction], it is necessary for the God-man to make it."<sup>16</sup> Logos-christology can speak of Jesus' glorification as a reality established at the incarnation; consequently, his glorification at and after the resurrection only seems to confirm for others something that he already fully possesses in his humanity through the hypostatic union.<sup>17</sup> Questions on Christ's death and resurrection are referred back to the moment of his ontological make-up as the God-man. The language of divine preexistence and incarnation frames the issues.

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<sup>15</sup> Raniero Cantalamesa, *The Holy Spirit in the Life of Jesus*, 8.

<sup>16</sup> *Cur Deus Homo?* 2.6, 259; on the priority of God's justice over his sole compassion, see 1.12-13.

<sup>17</sup> *FC, SD* 8.12-13, 23, in *BC*, 618, 620 (but see *FC, SD* 8.51, in *BC*, 625, for a possible qualification of this analysis).

In the history of dogma, Logos-christology stands mainly as an apologetic approach to Jesus' question driven by a legitimate concern to protect his divine equality with God and the unity of his person against heresies. Yet it remains an ideal theology for explanation, not proclamation. By placing the weight of discourse on prior conditions that define the Word's individual identity prior to a discussion of his successive works for us leading to his death and resurrection, Logos-christology can give theologians of glory an excuse to avoid the cross.<sup>18</sup> Even such an honorable theology can become a hindrance to having the old sinner in us killed and made alive with Christ.

A Spirit-christology that begins "from below" with the man Jesus and attempts to arrive at his divinity through a consideration of the Spirit's indwelling in him cannot claim immunity from falling into comfortable explanation. As in early Ebionite christologies, Jesus could be reduced to our greatest example of piety "in order to enhance the sanctification of man himself."<sup>19</sup>

Earlier on, I discussed Lampe's contributions towards a Spirit-christology.<sup>20</sup> Against notions of the Holy Spirit as a personal agent equal to and distinct from God or as a divine hypostasis, Lampe represents the liberal move to define Spirit more generally as God's other-worldly (transcendent) and worldly (immanent) presence in all creatures. Without a trinitarian commitment, he can also argue for Jesus' divinity solely in terms of his unique possession of Spirit—leaving aside the question of Jesus' personal identity as

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<sup>18</sup> In this section, I have applied Forde's critique of christologies in which "continuity is established by going back to a Jesus either prior to or at least relatively untouched by the cross." See *Theology Is for Proclamation*, 69; Luther believed that our knowing of Christ's eternal deity apart from our knowing of the Son as the Father's revelation for us would not bother the devil. Paul Althaus, *The Theology of Martin Luther*, 190.

<sup>19</sup> Philip J. Rosato, "Spirit Christology: Ambiguity and Promise," 435; Luther also believed that our imitation of Jesus' human piety detached from faith in him as the Father's revelation for us would not bother the devil. Althaus, *The Theology of Martin Luther*, 190.

<sup>20</sup> See 4.2.1.



the Logos. In this latter sense, his approach may also be seen as “post-Chalcedonian.”<sup>21</sup> Since Jesus is the fullest expression of the cooperative interaction between God’s Spirit and the spirit in humans, he has “such a unity of will and operation with God” that he can be called God himself in an adverbial sense, namely, in “that in all his actions the human Jesus acted divinely.”<sup>22</sup> In short, Jesus’ being and acts as one possessed by Spirit makes him significantly distinct from other saints, but only in degree. Thus far Lampe.

A conservative Spirit-christology defines the Spirit as one person of the triune God distinct from creation but open to reaching out to creatures in freedom and love. The conservative (neo-Chalcedonian) approach distinguishes between the Logos’s and the Spirit’s presence in Jesus but seeks to bring them together in some trinitarian fashion.<sup>23</sup> Kasper suggests a synthesis, which we have previously presented and discussed: “By wholly filling Jesus’ humanity, the Spirit endows it with the openness by which it can freely and wholly constitute a mould for God’s self-communication.”<sup>24</sup> Here the Holy Spirit’s sanctification of Jesus in his life of obedience to God and service for us stands as the historical presupposition or condition for affirming this openness and the fact that he is not simply a mere man but God the Logos.<sup>25</sup>

Kasper rightly sees the incarnation as the whole history of Christ (not just a past event), but he assumes Rahner’s view of the hypostatic union. Assuming the openness of the human spirit to God on the basis of God’s own immanent presence with his creatures,

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<sup>21</sup> See my brief discussion on the basic types of Spirit-christology in my introduction to the whole work.

<sup>22</sup> G. W. H. Lampe, “The Holy Spirit and the Person of Christ,” 124.

<sup>23</sup> I propose three ways of looking at the issue of complementarity in 4.2. I define a “neo-Chalcedonian” approach as one that looks at Jesus’ identity as divine and human in terms of the complementarity of both Logos- and Spirit-oriented approaches in trinitarian perspective.

<sup>24</sup> *Jesus the Christ*, 251. This thesis in itself is susceptible to the charge that it conceives of a logical existence of a humanity endowed with the Spirit prior to and for union with the Logos. For my previous discussions of Kasper, see 2.2.2 and 3.2.2.3.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.* I see no problem if this argument refers to our knowledge of Christ’s lordship and deity (*ordo cognoscendi*); see my discussion in 4.2.2.

Rahner sees the Word's incarnation as the highest and definitive expression of human (created) potentiality for reaching out to God and for receiving God's own (uncreated) grace or self-communication.<sup>26</sup> Despite their differences, Lampe and Kasper share a common anthropology. Jesus' openness in the Spirit to God's presence in him (as seen in his life and mission) serves as the paradigm for our openness to God in that we (like Jesus) have an innate, grace-given role (self-transcendence)—even if a little one—to play in making God's gracious presence in us possible.

If a Spirit-christology will lead to proclamation, a few correctives are necessary. Although Jesus is like one of us, we cannot forget that he is also “without sin” (Heb. 4:15). The Holy Spirit makes the child in Mary's womb “holy” and the incarnate “Son of God” from conception (Lk. 1:35). This unrepeatable indwelling of the Spirit in Jesus surpasses God's presence in humans not merely in degree but in nature. The Son's incarnation by the Spirit of God stands as the historical side of the eternal Son's unique hypostatic or personal openness to the Father in the same Spirit. It is not merely the culmination in history of the Spirit's general work in creation whereby all human creatures are given a partial disposition towards God.<sup>27</sup> Theologians of the cross know that since Eden they have lost all inclination to live in the Spirit and thus according to God's will. Jesus' reception of the Spirit from conception allows for the fulfillment of God's original plan for his creatures frustrated by their rebellion, for it serves as the unparalleled condition for the Holy Spirit's gracious indwelling of the saints as gift from the Father through his anointed, crucified, and risen Son. By placing the weight of

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<sup>26</sup> See Karl Rahner, “Current Problems in Christology,” in *Theological Investigations*, vol. 1, 163-65; cf. Kasper, *Jesus the Christ*, 266-67.

<sup>27</sup> “The cry, ‘Abba! Father!’ is not a universal cry, but that created in us by the Spirit of Jesus Christ.” Olaf Hansen, “Spirit Christology: A Way Out of Our Dilemma?” 200.

discourse on our potential for receiving God's Spirit, liberal and conservative Spirit-christologies can give theologians of glory an excuse to dodge the cross.

### **5.3. Being Crucified and Raised with Christ: Pneumatological**

#### **Christology As a Ground for Convicting and Liberating Proclamation**

Due to its strong interest in the problem of Christ's once-for-all inner-constitution as the God-man, Logos-christology sees the incarnation as a static event in the past and defines the person of Christ in terms of his individual subsistence (especially against modalism). A Spirit-christology seeks to complement this approach with a dynamic view of the incarnation inclusive of the successive mysteries of Jesus' life (e.g., baptism, death, and resurrection) and an ecstatic understanding of his person that looks at him in his relations to the Father and for us in the Spirit. If the Son is most deeply himself in his relating to others freely and out of love, then the shift from Christ's being-in-himself to his being-for-us in the power of God's Spirit can already foster the preaching and hearing of the Gospels as the unfolding soteriological drama of God's deeds to us in Jesus.

Admittedly, Jesus' exorcisms, healings, and preaching are all events in which the Spirit plays a defining role. As theologians of glory, we could focus only on one of these awesome facets of Jesus' ministry and forget the tragic result of these very deeds and sayings in the Spirit, namely, his innocent death at the hands of sinners like us. For this reason, a Spirit-christology that aims at the crucifying and raising of sinners with Christ must first lead hearers of the story to Jesus' suffering and death on the cross, but then also to his being raised from the dead and his giving of the Spirit to us. Is calling for the centrality of the paschal mystery an imposition on the Gospels? Or does the story of Jesus in the Spirit at once point the hearer to Lent, Easter, and Pentecost? The latter is

the case. The Gospels (especially Luke and John) have an inner-dynamic that flows from Jesus' receiving and bearing of the Spirit of God to his dispensing of the same to others.<sup>28</sup>

However, the key to placing hearers into the paschal mystery begins with their incorporation into Jesus' anointing or baptism at the Jordan—not into his incarnation as such. Unlike Jesus' non-transferable possession of the Spirit from the moment of his conception (incarnation), the Spirit's new descent on and presence in him at the Jordan can be communicated to us: "He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit" (Jn. 1:33; cf. Lk. 3:16 and parallels). Jesus' reception of the Spirit of the Father at the Jordan is the presupposition of the church's reception of the same Spirit through the crucified and risen Christ from Pentecost onwards (Lk. 24:46-49; Acts 1:3-5). Logos-christology can point hearers to Christ's divinity as the ground for the possibility of their forgiveness and to his exalted humanity (already from the time of the personal union) as the ground for their divinization or glorification. Such a move tends to be more explanatory than kerygmatic. I propose that the language of anointing and baptism—in contrast to preexistence and incarnation—is more conducive to grasping and advancing the Spirit-initiated plunging of sinners into a present-day reenactment of Jesus' anointing with the Father's Spirit. When the pastor says to us, "I baptize you . . .," such a Spirit-led reenactment occurs for us, and we are thereby initiated into the mysteries of Jesus' life.

Jesus' baptism in water takes him on a mission that leads to his baptism in blood at Golgotha. Upon his anointing, Jesus enters this mission "to fulfill all righteousness" for us as obedient Son and Servant (Mt. 3:13-15; 8:16-17, quoting Isa. 53:4; Lk. 3:22 and

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<sup>28</sup> For the link between Spirit and sonship in Luke-Acts, see James D. G. Dunn, "Spirit and Holy Spirit in the New Testament," in *Pneumatology*, 8-9; for John, see Felix Porsch, *El Espíritu Santo*, esp. 27-34.

parallels, quoting Isa. 42:1; Lk. 4:18-19 and Acts 10:38). He is led or driven by the same Spirit into the desert, where Satan puts his faithfulness as Son to the test: “If you are the Son of God. . . .” (Lk. 4:1-13 and parallels). Jesus’ deeds in obedience to God leads to his death on the cross (cf. Philippians 2:8). The term baptism no longer applies only to Jesus’ anointing for mission at the Jordan, but serves also as a metaphor for the end of his mission at Golgotha—his highest act of service as a ransom for many (Lk. 12:50; Mk. 10:38, 45).

Significantly, in John’s Gospel, Jesus’ giving of the Spirit—“rivers of living water”—to those who believe in him must await his glorification (7:38-39), which does not come until the end of the Gospel narrative. It is as the risen Lord that Jesus breathes the Holy Spirit on his disciples, bestowing on them the power to forgive the sins of the penitent and bind those of the impenitent (20:22-23). Since the Son’s obedience unto death already points to his glorification (cf. 13:31-32; 17:1-5), Jesus’ handing over of his *pneuma* (literally, his life) on the cross (19:30) can point at a symbolic level to his imminent giving of the Spirit as risen Lord.<sup>29</sup> The blood and the water flowing from Jesus’ pierced side (19:34) may also point to this indissoluble link between Jesus’ death and his dispensing of the Spirit to the church.<sup>30</sup> In 1 John 5:6-8, the Spirit of truth does not only testify to the baptism and death of Jesus “who came by water and blood,” but also makes possible the church’s participation in such mysteries through the sacraments of baptism and the Lord’s Supper.<sup>31</sup> When the pastor says to us, “Take and eat the body

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<sup>29</sup> See Porsch, *El Espíritu Santo*, 103-04; for John, the Son’s giving of the Spirit to those who believe in him presupposes his receiving and bearing of the Spirit from God “without measure” (3:34).

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 104-06; on a *pneumatologia crucis*, in which the Spirit’s coming depends on Christ’s passion, see Jürgen Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*, 60-71.

<sup>31</sup> Miguel Ángel Tábet, “El Testimonio «del Espíritu, y del agua y la sangre» (1 Jn 5,8),” 71-90.

of Christ . . . take and drink the blood of Christ . . . ,” the Spirit incorporates us into Jesus’ own death (cf. 1 Cor. 10:16; 11:26).

Being raised from the dead “according to the Spirit of holiness” (Rom. 1:4; cf. 1 Tim. 3:16, and 1 Pet. 3:18), Jesus enters his final stage of sonship in the history of salvation as Lord (Acts 13.33). Seated at God’s right hand, he is the end-time giver of the promised Spirit whom he receives from the Father to pour out for the forgiveness of sins on all who call on the Lord’s name with a contrite and trusting heart (Acts 2:17-21, quoting Joel 2:28-32; Acts 2:33, 38-39). As last Adam and life-giving Spirit, he becomes the first fruits of our final adoption as God’s children in the coming resurrection through his Spirit (1 Cor. 15:20-23, 45; Rom. 8:11, 22-23).

Of course, in our case, sharing in Jesus’ death and resurrection happens already and at once when we share in his anointing through Christian baptism for the forgiveness of our sins and the hope of our resurrection unto eternal life with him (Rom. 6:3-11). A Spirit-christology shows that Jesus’ giving of the Spirit to the church since Pentecost through word and sacrament depends on his prior reception and bearing of the Spirit in his mission as faithful Son and suffering Servant. I have linked our participation in Jesus’ mysteries to the sacraments (visible Word), but the same must be done for preaching. From Romans 6:4, Luther gathers that baptism is not only a past event but a way of life characterized by the daily drowning of the old sinner in us “through daily contrition and repentance” and his/her daily rising anew “to live before God in righteousness and purity forever.”<sup>32</sup> Preaching actualizes this life in us.

If Jesus’ story has an orientation that guides hearers into his paschal mystery, then preachers must face and act on what precedes and follows from that center. What does

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<sup>32</sup> SC, Baptism 11-14, in *BC*, 360.

this mean? First, preachers must draw hearers into the story by pointing out that everything Jesus claims to do and does *in the Spirit*, and, therefore, in obedience to his Father and for the sake of the neighbor, gets him in trouble and leads to his suffering and death at the hands of sinners like us.<sup>33</sup> If preachers are to convict their hearers of their complicity in Jesus' death, they will want to address them in a way similar to the following: "Jesus is God's anointed Son, the one who delivers you from the oppression of sin, death, and the devil. But you will not have God's mercy. You are like the ones who want to throw him off a cliff" (Lk. 4:14-30). Another example: "The kingdom of God comes upon you every time Jesus drives out Satan from your lives. But you reject God's Son. You are like the ones who make him out to be Satan" (Lk. 11:14-23; cf. Mt. 12:22-30). Preachers of the cross convict hearers by showing them that they are oppressors of the Son. If hearers see themselves as such oppressors, then they have been crucified with Christ. Yet conviction is not yet proclamation in the ultimate sense unless it also leads to liberation.

If our complicity in Jesus' eventual death precedes the paschal mystery, what follows from this center? Simply stated, the church's preaching of Jesus' story. Peter seeks to bring sinners to face their guilt in Jesus' death (Acts 2:23, 36) and I have applied this insight to the stories that precede the paschal mystery. Yet the goal of this killing word is to announce forgiveness and resurrection hope to all who repent of their rejection of God's mercy in Jesus (Acts 2:37-39). God is against us to be for us. Going back to Luke 4 and 11 once again, preachers may finally address hearers as follows: "You are the poor

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<sup>33</sup> A recognition of our oppression and killing of God's Son complements the dimension of the atonement that sees Jesus himself as freely going to the cross to reconcile us with the Father (e.g., Jn. 10:18; Heb. 9:14) and that sees in the cross the fulfillment of God's foreknown purposes (e.g., 1 Pet. 1:20; Rev. 13:8). But if proclamation is to occur, these aspects cannot minimize our own guilt in Jesus' death (esp. Acts 2:23). See Forde on actual atonement in *Theology Is for Proclamation*, 121-27.

to whom God's anointed Son brings good news, the captives whom he sets free, the blind whom he heals, the oppressed whom he liberates." In Jesus' name and in his stead, preachers are given the Spirit to proclaim release from the evil one: "I release you from the bondage of sin, death, and Satan. I forgive your sins and give you life."

#### **5.4. Conclusion**

Ever since Pentecost, each time we are convicted of and liberated from our sins against God's anointed Son and Servant through word and sacrament, we undergo a Spirit-led reenactment or actualization of Jesus' baptism, death, and resurrection in our lives. We are read or spoken to by the living word of God that points to Jesus and in turn are shaped into theologians of the cross who are crucified and raised with him each day until our resurrection from the dead unto everlasting life. The church's participation in Jesus' mysteries also involves her sharing in his mission of obedience to God and service to the neighbor who is Christ in her midst. I have yet to explore the missiological and ethical aspects of what it means for the church to live in the Spirit of Jesus Christ today. For now, I shall be content if my proposal for reading the Christ-event from a pneumatic angle paves the way for theologian-preachers to make the transition from their reflections on Jesus' story to its proclamation as a death-and-life event for others.



## CONCLUSION

“No Christology without pneumatology and no pneumatology without Christology.”<sup>1</sup>

So clearly and succinctly did Yves Congar state for his work on the Holy Spirit what one can see as the trinitarian basis and framework for all Christian theology. Conceivably, a systematic theology could be prepared under the theme of the *joint mission* of the Word and the Spirit of God in the economy that spans from creation to incarnation and from the paschal mystery (i.e., Lent, Easter, and Pentecost) to the eschaton. In this project, I have only focused on the place of the Spirit of the Father in the economy of the Christ-event. I set out on a journey to dis-cover (or unmask) the relativized pneumatological dimensions of Christian reflection on the mystery of Christ in order to re-discover and then revitalize or invigorate what had been forgotten and at times neglected. Faithfulness to the biblical story of Jesus, the incarnate Son who receives, bears, and gives God’s Spirit, as well as the witness of theologians like Irenaeus, Basil, and Hilary of Poitiers to the constitutive place of the Spirit in defining Jesus’ identity required nothing less.

The problem of the secondary role of pneumatology in the West has virtually become an axiom in contemporary theology.<sup>2</sup> Admittedly, the legitimate centrality that Scripture (especially the Gospels) and the Christian tradition ascribes to Christ in the church’s discourse and piety points to a broader trinitarian reality that has often been implicitly assumed more than explicitly articulated. When this occurs, as far as pneumatology goes,

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<sup>1</sup> Introduction to *The Word and the Spirit*, 1.

<sup>2</sup> “In the West, we think essentially in Christological categories, with the Holy Spirit as an extra, an addendum, a ‘false’ window to give symmetry and balance to theological design. We build up our large theological constructs in constitutive Christological categories, and then, in a second, non-constitutive moment, we decorate the already constructed system with pneumatological baubles, a little Spirit tinsel.” Kilian McDonnell, “The Determinative Doctrine of the Holy Spirit,” *Theology Today* 39 (1982): 142; cf. his “Reconceiving the Trinity as the Mystery of Salvation,” *Scottish Journal of Theology* 38 (1985): 9; see also Vischer, ed., Introduction to *Spirit of God, Spirit of Christ*, 18; and Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, 123-32.

one gets the impression that the mission of the Holy Spirit becomes somewhat accidental in relation to that of the Son. Much reflection has taken as its implicit or explicit starting point Jesus' sending, as risen Lord, of the Spirit of the Father to the church. From this moment forward, one can speak of a *christologically-informed* pneumatology. Thus, no pneumatology without christology. Within the framework of a Logos-christology, a christological pneumatology typically shows that the Son gives the Spirit because he is personally God and the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and him (*filioque*) or through him (*per filium*).

It has been my contention that more attention must be given to a *pneumatologically-informed* christology that grounds Jesus' identity as dispenser of the Spirit to others in the Father's giving of the same Spirit to him: "He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit" (Jn. 1:33). No christology without pneumatology. A Spirit-oriented christology grounded in the economy of salvation helps us immensely to arrive at the ontological-immanent conclusions of a Logos-christology, while at the same time placing the person of the Son in the context of his acts towards and relations with the Father and for us in the Spirit. From this broader trinitarian perspective, we can once again look at a christological pneumatology in the light of a pneumatological christology. The risen Messiah and Lord gives the Spirit from the Father to the church in his Spirit-glorified humanity because he first receives and bears the same throughout his life and work. But the incarnate Son's economic existence in faithfulness to his Father and for us in the power of the Spirit also points to and thus has its immanent ground in the eternal Son's reciprocal love for the Father in the same Spirit.

The Son gives the Spirit, not only as one through whom the Spirit proceeds (*per filium*), but also as one who is begotten from the Father in the Spirit (*in spiritu*).

A number of conclusions follow from my investigation. First of all, *the relativization of the anointing for Jesus himself in Christian theology represents one clear instance of a much broader historic problem which I have referred to as the partial eclipse of the pneumatic aspects of christology. What this means is that the Spirit's constitutive role in Jesus' being and acting receives little or no attention.* Early on in the history of dogma, the church legitimately felt the need to safeguard her unique ontological-immanent claim for Jesus, namely his eternal preexistence and divinity. As a reaction to heterodox (especially adoptionist) views of Jesus' baptism, we see this apologetic move in Justin Martyr's exchange with Trypho, Irenaeus's response to Cerinthus, and Athanasius's arguments against the Arians. Indeed, if Jesus is God, or more specifically, if he is the divine Word made flesh from the first moment of birth or conception, what else could he possibly need for himself (even in his humanity) that he does not already have? When this question is asked of each event in Jesus' life and work, the presence of the Spirit of the Father in him becomes rather superfluous.

Justin transfers the historical character of messiahship and anointing to the realm of preexistence. Our theologian can speak of a preincarnational anointing of Christ as God into the offices of priest, king, and prophet. The import of the anointing for mission at the Jordan becomes somewhat relativized by the emphasis on the cosmic function of the eternal anointing in view of the creation of the world. Above all, the baptism reveals to others the saving knowledge of Jesus' identity as Messiah/God. By contrast, Irenaeus gives full weight to the Father's sending of the Spirit (= unction) upon the incarnate

Word for mission. Dwelling in the flesh of Christ (= anointed one), the Spirit becomes accustomed to dwell in the human race. Irenaeus's move is predicated upon a logical priority of the union of Word and flesh (incarnation) over anointing. Unlike Irenaeus, however, others will focus almost exclusively on the incarnation (the nature of the union itself) to the detriment of the mysteries of Jesus' life (especially his anointing, death, and resurrection).

Athanasius sees the anointing as an epiphanic instance of the divine Word's prior sanctification of himself with his own Spirit from the time of incarnation. Cyril of Alexandria follows him on this point. Athanasius can even speak of the incarnation metaphorically as an anointing or chrism. In the East, Gregory of Nazianzus and John of Damascus do the same. In the West, Augustine goes as far as saying that Christ was certainly not anointed at the Jordan, but rather at the time of the incarnation. For Athanasius, moreover, since the baptism of Jesus does not bring anything unique to his humanity that he did not already have from the incarnation, the event only points to the ecclesiological significance of the event for Christian baptism. In the West, Thomas Aquinas takes a similar position.

*Second, the church's overriding interest to preserve Jesus' divinity yields a particular reading of his story (a hermeneutic) that defines his identity in terms of his preexistence as a self-subsisting subject of actions done in and through his assumed humanity and in terms of his individual inner-constitution as God-man from the time of the incarnation. I have referred to this hermeneutic as Logos-oriented readings of the narrative of Jesus.* What is true of this type of reading of the anointing also applies to other moments of the Christ-event in different ways. In some cases, the miracles and resurrection of Jesus

point to the fact that he is God, just as the anointing did for Justin Martyr. No room is made to speak of the Spirit's role in Jesus' healings and exorcisms or of the Father's raising of Jesus from the dead according to the Spirit of holiness. In other cases, the role of the power of the Most High in effecting the conception, sanctification, and identity of the child in Mary's womb as messianic Son is also read as the preexistent Logos's forming, sanctifying, and assuming of the flesh unto himself. Just as the anointing of Jesus is a revelatory instance of the Logos's prior anointing of his humanity with his own Spirit at the incarnation, so is his exaltation at the right hand of God interpreted as a confirmation of the Logos's prior exaltation of his humanity at the incarnation. Here the anointing and the exaltation are transposed to the moment of the hypostatic union, to the divine Logos's assumption of a human nature unto himself. Moreover, the three major types of atonement theories also work under the framework of Christ's constitution as divine and human. Consequently, pneumatology has no place in these systems.

*Third, Logos-oriented readings relativize the pneumatic dimensions of Jesus' identity as receiver, bearer, and giver of the Spirit of the Father in two basic ways, namely, by reading the Christ-event as a revelatory or exemplary reality for others, and by paying little or no attention to the place of the Spirit and the Father as agents of actions in and to Christ's humanity.* First, events in Jesus' life and mission in which the Spirit has a constitutive role are read as an epiphany, confirmation, revelation, declaration, and/or proclamation for others of his prior identity as Logos or incarnate Logos (God-man). At least in the case of the anointing, the significance of the event is that it serves as an example to others of Christian baptism. We can speak of a revelatory or exemplary importance of the Christ-event *for others*, but not of a constitutive one for the Word

*himself* (in his humanity). Second, the Holy Spirit is not seen as personal agent of actions in the man Jesus, who is the incarnate Word, throughout his human existence. At the same time, and closely related to this, the place of the Father as the personal agent of actions towards his Son through his [i.e., the Father's] Spirit receives no attention.

Fourth, *a Spirit-christology is a soteriologically-oriented trinitarian christology. As such, it invigorates Logos-oriented static and individual aspects of Jesus' identity with dynamic (actualizing) and relational (ecstatic) dimensions. It does so by placing the person of the Son in the context of his acts and relations to the Father and to us in the Spirit, looking at his identity as Son in a wider soteriological and trinitarian framework.* This leads to complementary views of incarnation and person. Regarding the incarnation, Logos-christology shows that the preexistent Word unites to himself a human nature at a set point in time (hypostatic union). It stresses the individual inner-constitution of Christ as God-man from the first moment of the incarnation. Here we have static and individual views of the incarnation that respectively stress the Son's "being-from-the-beginning" and "being-in-himself" as incarnate Logos. On the other hand, a Spirit-christology points out that God acts in Jesus and for us by his Spirit at special times (*kairoi*) in the economy of salvation, so that we can speak of the Son's assumption of a concrete human history in his life and ministry of obedience to the Father and for us (incarnating). Here we have dynamic and ecstatic views of the incarnation that emphasize the Son's "being-in-act" and "being-in-relation."

Fifth, *in terms of its usefulness for reflection on the Trinity, a Spirit-christology invigorates Logos-oriented views of economic missions and immanent processions, the person, and trinitarian reciprocity.* It does so by looking at God's self-communication in

the Holy Spirit to the humanity of the Son at the hypostatic union (incarnation) and throughout the whole Christ-event (incarnating). In addition to Logos-oriented *per filium* and *filioque* models of the Trinity, a Spirit-christology especially adds an *in spiritu* complementary model of trinitarian missions and processions. In other words, not only does the Spirit proceed (or is spirated) from the Father and the Son, but also the Son proceeds (or is begotten) by the Father in the Spirit.

Through an *in spiritu* trinitarian model, a Spirit-christology also complements Logos-oriented views of what it means for the Son to be person, especially as this relates to the Logos in the economic and in the immanent Trinity. As we saw earlier concerning the incarnation, we can now say that a Spirit-christology adds dynamic and ecstatic elements to Logos-oriented static and individual views of the person. Above all, we learn that the deepest truth regarding the Son's distinct self-subsistence from the beginning, whether in eternity or in time, is that he exists in relation to the Father and to us both in freedom and openness (i.e., love). This is to say that the Son, without ceasing to be himself, exists in the Spirit, the personal love in whom the Father and the Son love one another and in whom their common love finds its fulfillment and completion.

A Spirit-christology also supports the notion of trinitarian reciprocity through the *in spiritu* model. It points out that the Father and the Son coexist in the Spirit without denying the classical order of processions *Father-Son-Holy Spirit*. The Holy Spirit is the surplus of the Father's self-giving love to and for the Son and thus is manifested totally in the Son. In begetting his Son in the Spirit, the Father gives himself to the Son without remainder. In his being begotten by the Father, the Son does not hold back, totally reciprocating in openness and freedom (i.e., in love) the Father's inexhaustible love for

him in the Spirit. Only in the Spirit, hypostasized love, do the Father's total self-giving to the Son and the Son's complete response to the Father find each other. An *in spiritu* trinitarian model brings dynamism and relationality within the classical order or taxis of processions.

Sixth, *Logos- and Spirit-christologies genuinely complement one another as long as three pairs of distinctions and relations are respected. These are the personal identity of Jesus and the Logos and the non-identity of Jesus and the Spirit, the orders of knowledge and being, and the human and divine wills in the person of Jesus Christ.* Although the Spirit's indwelling in Jesus is constitutive for his identity as receiver, bearer, and giver of the same, it cannot point to his personal identity as the divine Logos in an ontological sense (i.e., in the order of being), but only in the order of knowledge in the light of the paschal mystery. Giving the Spirit's presence in Jesus, who is personally the Logos, its full weight does not require in logical terms the Spirit's disposition of a humanity prior to its assumption by the Logos or the logical priority of his procession from the Father over the Son's generation from the Father. Moreover, just as there is no opposition in the person of the Son between his human will and acts (in which the Spirit fully participates) and his divine will, so also there is none between the Son's will and those of the Father and the Holy Spirit in their common work in the economy or in their intradivine relations.

Finally, *the proclamation of Jesus' story in word and sacrament from a Spirit-oriented perspective fosters the present-day Spirit-led plunging of sinners into Jesus' anointing, death, and resurrection through conviction of and liberation from sins against him.* A Logos-oriented christology can point hearers to Christ's divinity as the ground for the possibility of their forgiveness and to his exalted humanity (already from the moment of



the hypostatic union) as the ground for their glorification. This move tends to be more static than dynamic and more explanatory than kerygmatic. A Spirit-christology oriented towards the paschal mystery is more conducive to the proclamation of Jesus' story as the unfolding drama of God's saving deeds to us in Jesus, our tragic rejection of his love expressed in our complicity in his Son's death, and God's renewed offer of forgiveness and resurrection hope to all who repent of their sins against Jesus. This implies a move in the story from Jesus' reception and bearing of the Spirit as Messiah and Servant to his reception and giving of the Spirit as exalted Lord. It also implies a reenactment of the story of Jesus' life and mission in the Spirit in our lives, namely, a Spirit-led participation in his anointing (baptism), death, and resurrection. It is through conviction, forgiveness, and resurrection hope that the Spirit addresses us today in order to shape and incorporate our life-stories into Jesus' own life-story as receiver, bearer, and giver of God's Spirit.

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