5.4 The New Testament Ethic and Hermeneutical Strategy

5.4.1 Introduction

Having traced the contours of Bogdashevskii's approach to the New Testament and formulated some conclusions about the way in which he reads the New Testament the focus of this section is in seeking to reconstruct how Bogdashevskii interprets the New Testament in addressing ethical issues as an example of his hermeneutical strategy.

Before plunging into the substance of the investigation, it would be well to note two major reasons for the choice of New Testament ethics as a test of Bogdashevskii's hermeneutical strategy. *First*, in his works Bogdashevskii shows the predominance of moral problems by taking them as essential for the Russian society of the 19th -beginning 20th century. Second, from the reading of Bogdashevskii's works it is clear that he maintains continuity with the Russian orthodox practice of bible interpretation in which the exegetes are forming the moral teachings which directly outcome from the Scripture.[199] These two reasons allow us to discuss Bogdashevskii's New Testament ethics in order to identify his hermeneutical strategy as visible condition that corresponds to the Orthodox hermeneutics.

Bogdashevskii has not produced a major systematic treatment of Christian ethics; most of his writings have taken the form of occasional essays. The exegetical studies, on which we shall concentrate our attention, stand as his most significant constructive contribution on the issue. Also, of importance for understanding Bogdashevskii's ethics are his sermons. Taken together, these works provide the basis for an assessment of his use of the New Testament for constructing Orthodox ethics.

In order to show how Bogdashevskii's hermeneutics is applied to New Testament Christian ethics, it is necessary first of all to understand his general construction of the ethical system. His ethics are based on a coherent set of convictions. First, in the understanding of his ethical material it is important to remember that precisely from the Orthodox theological point of view Bogdashevskii is trying to find support for his ethical prescriptions. This requires us to build his theological framework. Second, Bogdashevskii's moral vision is intelligible only when his anthropological perspective is kept in mind. This leads us to consider how his anthropology is worked out in handling the ethical issues. Since the methodology of Bogdashevskii's ethics takes the nature of man (in relation to God) as a

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[199] Cf. Platon (Levshin), *The Complete Works* (SPb.: 1913), Vol. 1, 691.

starting point for understanding the ethical obligations, an anthropological framework will be outlined as a part of his hermeneutical strategy for constructing Orthodox ethics. Third, in our task to analyse how the New Testament functions in Bogdashevskii's ethics the focus will be placed on two issues most noticeably demonstrated by Bogdashevskii: ethnonationalism and violence. The analysis of these two issues in Bogdashevskii's ethics will supply the matters of direct observation on his hermeneutical strategy. Fourth, without doubt Bogdashevskii's approach in constructing an ethical core requires a certain process of valid reasoning and argumentation. In order to see how Bogdashevskii's ethics is constructed in its logical weight, the relationships between the premises and the conclusion (such that if the premises are true then the conclusion is true) will be outlined.

5.4.2 The Theological Framework

The power of Bogdashevskii's ethical system is not in its rules or dictum; rather it is on the basis of this system. There are two decisive bases that determine the ethics of human beings: (1) the world of a man; and (2) the world of God. Every person is in interdependent relationships with the other beings of the human society; yet, for Bogdashevskii, the ethical system of "this world" is not absolute, since "this world does not act decisively upon our will."[200] Therefore, Bogdashevskii sees both God and Christianity as a substantial basis of ethics.[201]

His theological framework is fourfold: (1) God and Christ; (2) the Church; (3) eschatological judgement; and (4) an identity with God (a mystical unity with God in the concept of sonship).

First, since a sound argumentation for ethics must not degenerate into impersonalism the idea of a symphony of personalities, in which ethics is reflected, is based on the character and deeds of God and especially of the Incarnated Word (historical figure of Jesus Christ). It is the most essential archetype for the human ethics.[202] Ethics has a *theo*centric orientation. This saves ethics from impersonalism without committing ethics to any humanistic personification. The prayer to God is a device where by an initial submission to the will of

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[200] D. I. Bogdashevskii, "The Last Visit of Christ the Savior in Galilee: Mt. 17: 1-18:35 and parell.," *TKDA* III, 11 (1913): 358.

[201] Cf. D. I. Bogdashevskii, "The Letter of James," *TKDA* III, 11 (1907): 462.

[202] Cf. D. I. Bogdashevskii, "Lecture. About the Gospels and Their History: In Apposition to Contemporary Rationalism," *TKDA* 2 (1902): 288-89.

New Testament, is absolutely faithful to the Orthodox seminarian text-books are not valid (contra Prof. M. Tareev [194]).

For example, he is opposing the traditional understanding of ὁ μικρότερος in Mt. 11:11 (cf. Luk. 7:28) as a greater rating of Jesus to that of John the Baptist. Bogdashevskii argues that this interpretation, despite its attestation in the Church tradition cited in the Orthodox text-books, is not convincing. He suggests that the contrast is not between two individuals, but between two eras, where the new reality of the Kingdom of God dawning through the ministry of Jesus places least in the new order of the kingdom everyone who is not the member of its kingdom. In the clause ὁ δὲ μικρότερος ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ τῶν οὐρανῶν μείζων αὐτοῦ ἐστιν ["but the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he"] has not a Christological, but eschatological echo. "It is impossible to suggests that Christ the Saviour is speaking of Himself as of 'the greater in the kingdom of heaven', for He is not the member of this kingdom, but its Founder."[195] The era of the present state of Old Testament fulfilment in the person of the John the Baptist, for Bogdashevskii, does not overshadow the era of promise, when all believers will share a greater state in existing together with the Founder of the kingdom. He disagrees with one view attested by the Church Fathers, and argues for the other interpretation, also supported in the Patristics.[196] Next, in his writings Bogdashevskii argues against an allegorical interpretation of Luke 5:36 suggested by St. John Chrysostom († 407) who takes ἐπίβλημα ἀπὸ ἱμάτιον καινοῦ as high Christian commandments and ἱμάτιον παλαιόν as "not yet the renewed nature of Christ's disciples, and implies, until disciples renew their hearts Jesus will not demand from that they follow His principal commandments. Bogdashevskii's argument against Chrysostom is as follows: "This interpretation does not correspond with the context, for Christ does not explain here, why He does not inform His disciples about high and difficult teaching, but rather shows why His disciples must follow this particular teaching, fleeing from the Judeo-Pharisaic understanding of righteousness."[197]

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[194] M. Tareev, M. "K voprosu o perevode In. 8:44," ["On the Translation of John 8:44,"] *Bogoslovskii Vestnik* II (1904): 146.

[195] D. I. Bogdashevskii, "Exegetical remarks: (1) Mt. 11:19…, " *TKDA* II, 7/8 (1909): 481.

[196] D. I. Bogdashevskii, "Exegetical remarks…," *TKDA* (1910) I, 3, 480ff.

[197] D. I. Bogdashevskii, "Christ as the Miracles Performer: Mt. 8:1-9 and the corresponding texts," *TKDA* III, 11 (1911): 392.

Bogdashevskii shows a critical evaluation of both the Patristic[198] and modern (for his time) exegetical studies. For example, Bogdashevskii also argues against Chrysostom, Origen, Augustin, Feokfilat Bolgarskii who identified *only the heretics* (those who are not within the Church) in the weeds of the Parable of the Wheat and the Weeds (Mt 13:24-30) on the basis that the weeds are not the result of natural processes, but of a deliberate attempt to ruin the plantation of good seed (within the Church) from outside. Bogdashevskii says, that the weeds are all the sinners of the present age (in both human society and the Church) preserved as fuel for burning for the time of the harvest (*i.e.*, eschatological judgment). Among actual members of the Church there are many sinners that are warned by this parable to turn away from sin.

The hermeneutical issues in Bogdashevskii's exegesis are especially vital in the relationships between an accurate historical critical task (where faith in relative degree is passive) to engage in the understanding of the text and the limits of historical-logical positivism (where reason is philosophically and sceptically biased). In his view, the Orthodox theological claims cannot be dismissed on account of historical objectivity, because of Scripture's sacred status and the value of encountering the Church witness.

In most cases, Bogdashevskii works with very acceptable principles of interpretation. One the one hand it seems, therefore, that the Orthodox Church (for example, in case of Bogdashevskii) had a knowledge of the exegetical methodology. Then, the question is: why did exegesis not flourished in the Russian Orthodox Church? One of the possible answers is that there has been an obvious domination of the Church interpretation over the individual exegesis. Thus, the individual exegetes felt being uncalled for a task of exegetical inquiry.

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[198] See D. I. Bogdashevskii, "Pritchi Khrista o tsarstvii nebesnom: Mf. 13:1-52, i parall.," ["Christ's Parables on the Kingdom of Heaven: Mt. 13:1-52 and parall.,"] *TKDA* III, 10 (1912): 194-95. Against the allegorical interpretation of the Parable of the Unforgiving Servant (Mt. 18:23-35), offered by Feokfilat Bolgarskii, see his "Poslednee prebyvanie Khrista Spasitelia v Galilee..." ["The Last Visit of Christ the Savior in Galilee: Mt. 17:1-18:35 and parall.,"] *TKDA* III, 11 (1913): 375.

God is taking place, because both liturgical and private prayer serve as the paradigm for receiving God's supplying grace and help for any human mediums and activities [203]

Furthermore, since the revelation of the Word of God is communicated through Scripture, the Bible represents an ultimate authority over the conduct of people.[204] No reader of Bogdashevskii will have any difficulty identifying the focal image that serves to unify his reading of Scripture. The person of Jesus Christ who is the ground and the content and form of the divine claim, is the unifying centre; all Scripture bears witness to him and his truth and places Jesus' life as the exemplification of righteous living. Human life must be infused with Christ's spirit and everything must be done for the sake of Christ.[205] His New Testament ethics testifies to *Christocentric interpretation*, for Christ is the main subject of Scripture, and, therefore, he is the end of biblical interpretation and application.

Bogdashevskii's strategy demands that one read Scripture thoroughly with the intent of obeying exactly what is commanded there. Throughout all his writings and sermons, Bogdashevskii reminds us about moral duties stated in Scripture as being *mandatory*. Scriptural portrayal of Jesus and the Apostles provides, therefore, the norms for the life of the Orthodox Church. The New Testament, as such, however, is not reduced to an abstract ethical codex. It expresses both the core of the ethical commandments and their actual application in a real environment of human life.[206] Yet the New Testament text(s) do not form a sole authority for ethics. The ethical system of Bogdashevskii is built on the theological framework of ecclesiology. The Church receives more emphasis than the New Testament in the sense that the Church is the keeper of Divine truth, and consequently knows and lives according to the Divine moral imperative.

Second, the Church is a realized ethical system of God because only within Church life are the applications of ethical norms visible in their greatest pragmatic perfection.[207] The

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[203] Cf. D. I. Bogdashevskii, "Slovo. O Molitve...," ["On Prayer. Luk. 22:40; cf. Mt. 26:41; Mk. 14:38),"] *TKDA* I, 4 (1907): iii.

[204] Cf. Archpriest Bogdashevskii, "Slovo. O dukhovnoi khritianskoi bor'be," ["Sermon. About Spiritual Christian Warfare,"] *TKDA* I, 3 (1911): vii.

[205] Cf. Archpriest Bogdashevskii, "Slovo. O khristianskom dolge," ["Sermon. On Christian Responsibility,"] *TKDA* I (1913): xiv-xv.

[206] Cf. D. I. Bogdashevskii, "Lecture. About the Gospels and Their History: In Apposition to Contemporary Rationalism," *TKDA* 2 (1902): 288-89.

[207] Cf. Archpriest Bogdashevskii, "Slovo. Evangelie v ego otnoshenii k zemnomu blagoustroeniiu," ["The Gospel and its Relationship to an Earthly Equipping,"] *TKDA* III (1912): vi-vii.

Church is "a living ethic" that fully brings to life the silent testimony of the New Testament texts. Thus, the ethical norms are rooted in the essence of the Church; for as such, they reflect the Body of Christ in a real world. "Sustenance of Christian unity [or the Church itself] confirms on every one of us specific moral obligations."[208] The unity of the Church is based on faith, but it is love that builds up this unity.[209]

Moreover, since Bogdashevskii stresses that an absolute freedom of man is impossible, because "an absolute freedom of a man leads him to absolute self-rule and arbitrariness,"[210] a thinkable freedom of man is not in his independence from society, but in belonging to an appropriate community of the people. Such community is the Church. Bogdashevskii argues that the Orthodox Church is the guarantee and guide for the freedom of man, because the truth of God is in her. Since freedom is not possible without truth, the freedom of a man to act ethically is not realistic outside of the Church.[211] According to Bogdashevskii, Paul's expression δικαίῳ νόμος οὐ κεῖται ["the law is not made for a righteous man"] (1 Tim. 1:9) denotes the highest moral state of human being, for it expresses the condition of man having the law as an essential component of being.[212] If the moral law becomes part of our being, we do not need any external supremacy for direction. The paradox of moral life, however, is the autonomy from both inner or external powers and standards. This autonomy is dissolved in the corporate Christian togetherness of the Church in which the people are not regarded merely as elements or cells of the whole, but part of the organism in direct and immediate union with Christ and His Father. The Church outgrows and transcends the limits of the people to be organically united with the others on the basis of God's ethical code.

In Bogdashevskii's thinking, the New Testament functions in relation to ethics from the stand point of the Church, rather than from its own pragmatic essence. Accordingly,

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[208] "Сохранение христианского единения возлагает на каждого из нас и особенные нравственные обязанности." D. I. Bogdashevskii "About Christian Unity (John 17:21)," ["O Khristianskom Edinenii (In. 17:21),"] *TKDA* I, 4 (1902): 585.

[209] Esp. his sermons "About Christian Unity (John 17:21),"] *TKDA* I, 4 (1902): 576-586; "About Christian Unity (John 17:21)," *TKDA* I (1905): 566-575.

[210] D. I. Bogdashevskii, "Lecture. About the Church: On Contemporary Religious Demands," ["Chtenie. O Tserkvi,"] *TKDA* 2 (1904): 192.

[211] Cf. D. I. Bogdashevskii, "Slovo. Istina i Svoboda," ["Truth and Freedom,"] *TKDA* I (1900): 533-545; Ibid., "Lecture. About the Church: On Contemporary Religious Demands," *TKDA* 2 (1904): 195.

[212] D. I. Bogdashevskii, "Slovo. Radovat'sia ili Plakat'? (Luk. 23:28)," ["To Rejoice or to Cry? (Luk. 23:28),"] *TKDA* I, 3 (1906): xvii.

Church tradition, prayer and mystical perceiving at the holy places are the ceaseless sources of morality.[213] In his sermon "The Significance of the Holy Places for an Orthodox Christian" (pronounced at one of the most sacred buildings of the Russian Orthodox church, the large Kiev-Percherskii monastery (or Cave, founded early 11th century, known for its catacombs), he emphasizes the necessity of visiting some holy places, particularly the tombs connected with the life or death of the early Orthodox saints, with religious intent such as an act of thanksgiving or penance, to solicit supernatural aid, or merely as an act of devotion. Bogdashevskii notes, that a holy place, such as Kiev-Percherskii monastery, is of a special significance for the Russian Orthodox people. He says bout the holy places, "These are the centres of national religious life; these are the living witnesses to the truthfulness of our faith, here many times the Lord has shown his saving wonders."[214] In some way, the holy places, particularly the tombs of the saints, contain an ethical requirement. They are "the ceaseless sources of moral comfort and encouragement."[215] The meditation at the tombs makes ethical demand upon the human spirit. At the holy places believers experience, learn and envision not only an individual religious ethic, a complete obedience to God, but also the integrity and beauty of the human spirit that has both a vertical dimension between the loving will of God and the will of man to follow God's commandments and a horizontal are between the loving people of the Church in society.[216] It is of course not to assert that Bogdashevskii concludes that Orthodox people can understand and practice the moral codex of God after they contemplate on it or 'see' it in the lives of the saints. He considers it necessary to have some understanding of the practical, moral life of other exemplary Christians (from the past and present), before a personal action is possible. Thus, in Bogdashevskii's view, the ethics of an individual are shaped beyond Scripture, by Church living tradition, by attending to the examples of those who have been morally capable and thus worthy of teaching from their life style.

Third, Bogdashevskii empowers his moral system with the concept of obedience, personal responsibility and accountability before God. He says, "the nearness of the Second

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[213] Cf. D.I. Bogdashevskii, "O Znachenii sviatykh mest…," ["The Significance of the Holy Places for on Orthodox Christian,"] *TKDA* III (1911): vi.

[214] Cf. "Это- центры его [т.е. русского православного народа] религиозной жизни; это живые свидетели истинности его веры; тут Господь не один раз являл дивные знамения для его спасения." Ibid., viii.

[215] Cf. "здесь [т.е. на святых местах, в обителях святых угодников Божиих] обретаем неизсякаемый источник нравственного утешения и ободрения." Ibid., vi.

[216] Cf. Ibid., vi-viii.

Coming does not have a chronological, but one ethical meaning."[217] The responsibility derives from a theological context of the Judgement. Bogdashevskii notes that if the idea of accountability is abandoned, the moral norms under such a dictum receive a worldly or unrestricted character.[218] In contrast, the acceptance of this dogmatic element consequently leads every human being not only to a careful examination of God's ethical codex, but also to its practice.

Last, the concept of obedience and personal responsibility of the people in relation to God is interrelated with a theological theme of identity with God. In constructing an ethical system Bogdashevskii uses *Father - Son- child* language as an integrated part of the larger metaphorical network of New Testament ethics. In his lecture, "About the Gospel and Its History: Against Contemporary Rationalism"[219] he attempts to emphasize the elements of the familial imagery of Father-Son in the Fourth Gospel that on the basis of family ethics requires obedience of the children to their father. He begins with a brief survey of pertinent texts in the Fourth Gospel, attempting to establish the essence of familial imagery of Father-Son. *First*, the Son is identical with the Father (referring to John 3:13; 8:58; 10:30; 17:5). The family relationship between the Father and Jesus Christ includes a moral identity, but their identity of course is not limited to a moral sameness. The Son as well as the Father has the same power (John 5:21); is the object of worship and reverence (John 5:23); gives eternal life (3:15-16; 5:24: 6: 35, 48), judges the world (3:17; 5:22, 27) ... he has everything that the Father has (17:10). The Jews, actually, recognized that Jesus stands for the Father, but they did not believe Him (10:33; cf. 5:18; 19:7).

Second, in the Fourth Gospel Bogdashevskii visualizes the calling into the family of *God-Son-children of God* (*i.e.* believers) that requires family ethics based on obedience exemplified in *Father-Son* relationships. The adoption of the believers into the family of Father-Son has to be reflected in a moral conduct, i.e. to act according to the will of the Father. Bogdashevskii then summarizes the results of his survey in the following way: the realized ethics according to Father-Son image (i.e. moral sonship) is fundamental for stating our identity with God (sonship in nature). The general tenor of his use of familial imagery

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[217] "Близость второго пришествия имеет не хронологический, а этический... смысл." D. I. Bogdashevskii, "The Letter of James," *TKDA* III, 11 (1907): 460.

[218] See D. I. Bogdashevskii, "Slovo. O Pokaianii," ["Sermon. On Repentance,"] *TKDA* I, 4 (1910): 504.

[219] Esp. D. I. Bogdashevskii, "Lecture. About the Gospels and Their History: In Apposition to Contemporary Rationalism," *TKDA* 2 (1902): 290-91.

Father-Son-children of God, in the Fourth Gospel, is to base the call for ethical conduct as the reflection of people's identity with the Father and His Son. [220]

5.4.3 The Anthropological Framework

New Testament ethics, in Bogdashevskii, rest upon the anthropological concept of the *inner and divine* of man and the understanding that a divine force acts as the ordering principle in human nature. This does not necessarily have a dualistic sense in which the flesh or the body is evil in contrast to the spirit, for both are stained (Jesus came in the flesh, and the flesh has a share in the resurrection). In Bogdashevskii, nevertheless, there is a tendency to associate human natural desires more strongly with the flesh. Although there is a certain ascetic thrust, yet there is no flight from the flesh, which is to be kept like a temple, which becomes immortal through union with the Holy Spirit, and which will finally be raised again. Consequently, dualism is present only in the sense of ethical conduct. "The dualism of the spirit and flesh can be extinguished not by the synthesis of both, but by submission of the flesh to spirit, or by transformation of the flesh."[221] Thus, the *inner man* cannot be substituted by the *outer being* and the outer being of man has to be transformed according to divine power,[222] because the outer being is guided by its chaotic and contradictory instincts.[223] Thus, salvation from sin, i.e., proper ethical behaviour is the overcoming of the flesh by the spirit in submission to the will of God. This submission is possible only through the Holy Spirit which dwells in the human *being.* Because of the Spirit, a man can escape the slavery of evil carried out from a fleshly heart to which the fact of *progenitor* - Adam's sin

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[220] The metaphor of the family in the interpretation of the ethical dynamics in the Forth Gospel is analysed in a recent study by J. G. van der Watt, *Family of the King: The Dynamics of Metaphor in the Gospel According to John* (Leiden: Brill, 2000).

[221] "Дуализм духа и плоти устраняется не их синтезом, а подчинением плоти духу, или преображением плоти." D. I. Bogdashevskii, "Chtenie. O Prichinakh Sovremennogo Neveriia," ["Lecture. About the Basis for Modern Unbelief,"] *TKDA* I, 2 (1910): 168-169.

[222] Cf. D. I. Bogdashevskii, "A Sermon. Truth and Freedom," ["Slovo. Istina I Svoboda,"] *TKDA* I (1900): 542.

[223] Cf. D. I. Bogdashevskii, "Lecture. About the Church: On Contemporary Religious Demands," *TKDA* 2 (1904): 192.

brought about a state of the sinful or immoral man in whom "there is continuous discord between spirit and flesh."[224]

Bogdashevskii contrasts the sphere of the flesh with that of heaven or spirit. He argues that the spirit of man denotes a heavenly relationship, "Our spirit is of a Divine origin; it is the flame from God's fire, it is from heaven; therefore ... it is seeking justice, searching truth, longing for an eternal ... satisfied only by God's law."[225] On the other hand, flesh denotes an earthly relationship. This relationship is not evil, because in every man there is some deposit of good; but it is also not absolutely positive, because it is sealed with wrongdoing as norm.[226] Thus, moral principles according to the flesh mean morals according to the categories of this world. God's promise is the opposite of flesh and in Christ the divine sphere has invaded the human. The Holy Spirit is regenerating humans for a new life, characterized by obedience to God.[227] It means that 'fleshly' humanity as a whole cannot inherit the kingdom of God without transformation through Christ that starts as birth from the Spirit:

> All behaviour of a man must be oriented toward the highest purpose [be transformed by Christ]. Our life must be transformed in the highest form of life; the purpose of an ethical act results in creating a new spiritual person..., born of the Holy Spirit (ref. John 3:6).[228]

Moreover, the transformation of a mankind, in Bogdashevskii, has eschatological perspective. He is concerned not only with the present life of a man, but also with his future. Thus, Bogdashevskii stresses, the present presence of a divine component in a human being

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[224] "... замечается всегдашний разлад между духом и плотью...." D. I. Bogdashevskii, "O dukhovnoi khristianskoi bor'be (Mf. 26:41; Mk. 14:38)," ["About the Christian Spiritual Struggle (Mt. 26:41; Mk. 14:38),"] *TKDA* I, 3 (1904): 364.

[225] "Дух наш есть начало божественное; он пламень от божественного пламени; он –от неба, а потому, естественно, обращается к небу, как своему истинному отечеству.... Он жаждет правды, стремится к истине, тяготит к вечной и неизменной красоте; он ищет горнего, услаждается только законом божественным." D. I. Bogdashevskii, "About the Christian Spiritual Struggle (Mt. 26:41; Mk. 14:38)," *TKDA* I, 3 (1904): 361; cf. Ibid.,. "The Gospel and its Relationship to an Earthly Equipping," *TKDA* III (1912): iii.

[226] D. I. Bogdashevskii, "About the Christian Spiritual Struggle (Mt. 26:41; Mk. 14:38)," *TKDA* I, 3 (1904): 365.

[227] Cf. Bogdashevskii, D. I. "The Letter of St. Apostle of Jude," *TKDA* III, 11 (1908): 388.

[228] "Все поведение человека должно быть направлено к достижению этой цели [т.е. преображенное существование во Христе]. Наша жизнь должна быть преобразована в высшую духовную форму жизни; цель морального действия заключается в том, чтобы создать новое духовное человечество..., рожденное от Духа." D. I. Bogdashevskii, "Lecture. About the Basis for Modern Unbelief," *TKDA* I, 2 (1910): 169.

makes it illogical and risky to live a human existence according to the motto found in 1 Cor. 15:32 - Φάγωμεν καὶ πίωμεν, αὔριον γὰρ ἀποθνήσκομεν ("let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die").[229] Bogdashevskii follows traditional Orthodox lines and signifies the transition from living by human passions to living by God's will as the reality of a realized eschatology. Christian faith and the works of the Holy Spirit are essential for the process of liberation from an earthly manner of life.[230]

In light of the foregoing sketch of Bogdashevskii's anthropology, let us now summarize his outline. The relation to God who is the creator and life giver of human beings qualifies humanity. Salvation does not lie in a retreat from the physical to the spiritual. Flesh is not a separate and intrinsically bad sphere, but becomes bad only with orientation to it in moral conduct. The flesh as a wrong disposition away from God seems to become a controlling power. Salvation through Christ means liberation from earthly goals in a life that is lived in obedience to God by God's gift of a new spiritual nature to man.

The ethical imperatives of Scripture are for all Christians. To implement these imperatives is a continual task. In this sense every Christian has to be ascetic. Bogdashevskii says,

> ...in essence, the life of a Christian is the life of asceticism; it is ceaseless activity that is longing to give the victory of spirit over the flesh, to make our body a worthy instrument of spirit and through the development of spirit to transform our body into a spiritual body as much as possible.[231]

5.4.4 Moral Logic

Christianity, in Bogdashevskii's opinion, does not reject the positive sides of a human being, but it stresses ethical purification. This ethical purification is a triumph of Christian living.[232] He says, "Man is not only an intelligent being, he is also a moral being; therefore

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[229] See D. I. Bogdashevskii, "A Sermon. Truth and Freedom," *TKDA* I (1900): 542-43.

[230] D. I. Bogdashevskii, "About the Christian Spiritual Struggle (Mt. 26:41; Mk. 14:38)," *TKDA* I, 3 (1904): 366-67.

[231] "...по существу жизнь христианина есть аскетика – всегдашнее деятельное стремление дать торжество духовному началу над плотяным, сделать тело достойным орудием духа, преобразовать через развитие духа уже здесь, насколько это возможно, тело душевное в тело духовное."D. I. Bogdashevskii, "About the Christian Spiritual Struggle (Mt. 26:41; Mk. 14:38)," *TKDA* I, 3 (1904): 363-64.

[232] Ibid., 363, 365.

the moral issues, as such, trouble us greatly."[233] The theological and anthropological framework constructs the basis of Bogdashevskii's logical chain of arguments that supports the requirement of Christian ethics and answers to the question of what is the aim of Christian ethics.

As noted above, Bogdashevskii rejects the concept of absolute freedom or the ideas of *self-control* and *self-guidance* as sufficient governing factors in human behavior. Although it is good to live according to a personal state of mind, "to live without the external authority is impossible, for the longing to deny each and every authority will be captured by much exceeding authority [perhaps, of self-contradictions]."[234] Thus, self-control is necessary only in respect of controlling oneself to adapt the moral standards fixed by the controlling authority (*i.e.*, God and the Church). "The norm of life derives not from what man *is*, but from what he *ought to be*, and this [*i.e.* what man ought to be] is perfectly pointed out by Christianity."[235] Thus the Church is not only the source of the norms of conduct, it is also the source of empowerment for the moral life.

Therefore, Bogdashevskii also dismisses the concept of a *moralistic human society* that develops common ethical principles and serves as the guide of an individual to practice a morally righteous life.[236] If separated from the Church whether can the State of the constitutional or monarchal government of the state be considered as an authoritative guide in ethical instruction and code? Only the Church is a sole and trustworthy institution on the Earth, upon which God bestowed a perfect awareness of moral norms.[237] Therefore, the Church brings out the best principles or standards of human conduct rather than science or

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[233] "Человек есть не только разумное, но и нравственное существо, а потому, нас постигают, далее, смущения нравственные в собственном смысле этого слова."D. I. Bogdashevskii, D. I "A Sermon. In Remembrance of Christ's Suffering: Where to find Peace for Our Doubts (John 14:1)," (In. 14:1)," *TKDA* II, 5 (1891): 5.

[234] "…[в жизни] без авторитета обойтись невозможно, и кто желает отрешиться от всякого авторитета, тот попадает еще более тяжкому руководителю." D. I. Bogdashevskii, "To Rejoice or to Cry? " *TKDA* I, 3 (1906): xvii.

[235] "Норма жизни заимствуется не из того, что человек *есть*, а из того, чем он *должен быть*, а это должное совершеннейшим образом указывается христианством." D. I. Bogdashevskii, "Slovo. O Khristianskoi Pravde (Mf. 3:15)," ["Sermon. About Christian Truth (Mt 3:15)," *TKDA* I (1912): xiv (his italics).

[236] Cf. D. I. Bogdashevskii, "A Sermon. To Rejoice or to Cry? (Luk. 23:28)" *TKDA* I, 3 (1906): xvi.

[237] Archpriest Bogdashevskii, D. I. "Sermon. About Christian Truth (Mt 3:15)," *TKDA* I (1912): xv.

different kinds of the literary art. The Church in its full dimension (teaching, art, music, rites, etc.) establishes the way of life. She cultivates the ethical principles in Christians. [238]

Bogdashevskii sees the danger that the moral principles could be viewed as license for obtaining public recognition. Therefore, he reasons that the ethical norms do not serve mainly for the purpose of delighting other people. To please the people is not only impossible, but also needless, because the expectations of the people are quick to be modified accordingly to society's majority. Moreover, the people expectations are of a self-centred nature. He says,

> The Christian never should long for and search for praise from all the people in order that all the people will say about him: 'good and moral.' This false motivation for any activity essentially perverts our ethical life and makes our conduct clearly unchristian.[239]

Two corollaries of Bogdashevskii's approach to the problem should be noted. *First*, not all the worldly moral principles are acceptable for a Christian; thus to act in agreement with people's standard or expectation is a potential contradiction to the Christian ethical system. *Second*, to observe moral principles for the sake of getting respect from the people is to submit oneself to merely human values; rather, the motivation for a living moral codex is to obey God, to submit oneself to God. Since, human values are morally legitimate only if in accord with God's moral system, Christians have to live exclusively for the purpose of pleasing God, aiming to receive God's acclamation. Sincere people might wish to serve God but even in so doing they fall into the sin of establishing their own righteousness. Right desires become carnal action; so that only in retrospect can one differentiate the will which opposes the fleshly nature of man.

Since, in Bogdashevskii, the New Testament is used in regard to Christian ethics as a historically reliable document, the reality of facts in the life of Christ, the Apostles and the Apostolic Church determine the meaning of an ethical system in a sense of its actual realization. Thus, the New Testament is the crucial source of ethics, because it functions authoritatively by exemplifying the real people that utilized the ethical system given by God. Moreover, the moral system of Bogdashevskii is to extend the chain of Church lifestyle

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[238] Cf. D. I. Bogdashevskii, "Truth and Freedom," *TKDA* I (1900): 540-41.

[239] "Христианин никогда не может желать и стремится к тому, чтобы у всех людей стяжать похвалу, чтобы все говорили о нем: "добр", "добр". Это совершенно ложное побуждение в деятельности, в корне извращающее нашу нравственную жизнь, делающее наше поведение явно не - христианским." D. I. Bogdashevskii, "Slovo. O Lozhnoi Pokhvale," ["A Sermon. About False Acclamation,"] *TKDA* I, 4 (1903): 540.

tradition by attending closely to the example of the Church saints, who have given an example of a moral life. These saints, in their life-journey, together formed a community of the Orthodox Christian character and conduct.[240] Being concerned with the morality of the Orthodox community, as the locus of God's saving and transforming power, Bogdashevskii links the moral teaching with the Russian Orthodox identity. He urges Christians to live as the Orthodox, to live according to Orthodox faith in order that unbelievers "will not doubt in the holiness of our beliefs, in the power of our Saviour, in the renewing and sanctifying action of His grace."[241]

Bogdashevskii's logic for ethics derives also from his personal encounters. His appeal to the ethical issues is formed from two environmental factors. *First*, there is the personal factor. Bogdashevskii indicates that he himself shares the tragedy of all human beings who by their own power want to change the morals and life, but are not capable of staying on the legitimate moral principles and immediately return to a former ethically lawless path of acting. Such a condition of the people or even of the whole society, Bogdashevskii argues, comes from the confidence in the rightness of the judgment of a personal or corporal human mind. The human mind, Bogdashevskii emphasizes, is not sufficient but contradictory, and, therefore, it is not reliable for constructing ethical values. The human mind, without being brought to light through faith in God, gives only the possibility to identify good and evil, but is does not guide a human being in choosing moral good over against evil.[242]

Second, Bogdashevskii is concerned with the morality of Russians in general and especially with the ethics of the Orthodox people. His sermons have a number of ethical themes that stress: (1) the collision of Russian believers with worldly tendencies; (2) obedience as a paradigm for action; and (3) the Orthodox community as the locus of God's saving and transforming power. Obedience assumes the humbling of one's mind before the teaching of the Church.[243] In Bogdashevskii, belonging to the Church overlaps with one of his most distinctive moral concerns - to live according to the Orthodox faith in order to

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[240] D. I. Bogdashevskii, "A Sermon. About False Acclamation," *TKDA* I, 4 (1903): 546-47.

[241] D. I. Bogdashevskii, "In Remembrance of Christ's Suffering (Luk 23:21)," *TKDA* II, 5 (1988): 56; also cf. D. I. Bogdashevskii, "About Christian Unity (John 17:21)," *TKDA* I (1905): 574-75.

[242] Cf. D. I. Bogdashevskii, "A Sermon. In Remembrance of Christ's Suffering: Where to find Peace for Our Doubts (John 14:1)," *TKDA* II, 5 (1891): 6-7

[243] Cf. D. I. Bogdashevskii, "A Sermon. In Remembrance of Christ's Suffering (Luk. 23:21)," *TKDA* II, 5 (1988): 58.

transform the whole of Russian society.[244] In his vision, as soon as the saving message of Scripture and the normative aspects of the Church become a living experience, in the *praxis* of the Russian Church, it becomes an existential access to a new life of the whole country. Christian ethics, which demonstrates the unity with God and Church, is a spiritual movement that will drive an ongoing health and renewal of Russia. Bogdashevskii argues that Christian ethics cannot be linked with *the spirit of time*, breathed in Pre-Revolutionary Russia.[245] "We cannot", he says, "justify our unchristian deeds due to the spirit of the times."[246] *Moralistic society* in Russia is the outcome of the Christian paradigm. The example of Christian ethics should affect the life of every individual, national culture (art, music, literature, etc.), etc., - the whole human life-environment.[247] Bogdashevskii's stress of the implementation of the ethical code, however, is not aimed to form a human society with a certain ethical quality that advocates democratic and economic well-being[248]; rather, its necessity and result is mainly concerned with the spiritual or religious state of individuals and to bring a person close to God's holiness.[249] Ethics, foremost, is not a concern with the well-being of the people, in terms of their wealth or health. "The soul is greater than the body, greater than food and clothes."[250]

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[244] Cf. D. I. Bogdashevskii, "A Sermon. In Remembrance of Christ's Suffering (Luk. 23:21)," *TKDA* II, 5 (1988): 56.

[245] Bogdashevskii speaks in great detail about the moral corruption of the nation. See especially his sermons "To Rejoice or to Cry? (Luk. 23:28)" *TKDA* I, 3 (1906): xiv-xv; On Christian Responsibility," *TKDA* I (1913): xi-xviii.

[246] D. I. Bogdashevskii, "Truth and Freedom," *TKDA* I (1900): 543.

[247] Archpriest D. I. Bogdashevskii, "The Gospel and its Relationship to an Earthly Equipping," *TKDA* III (1912): vi-vii.

[248] Cf. Ibid., i-vii.

[249] See D. I. Bogdashevskii, "Sermon. About Christian Truth (Mt 3:15)," *TKDA* I (1912): xii-xiii.

[250] "Душа больше тела, больше пищи и одежды." D. I. Bogdashevskii, "The Gospel and its Relationship to an Earthly Equipping," *TKDA* III (1912): iii.

5.4.5 The Function of the New Testament

The main purpose of this section, is to ask how the New Testament functions in Bogdashevskii's ethics on two most apparent issues: ethnonationalism and violence and to see how Bogdashevskii places the Russian Church within the world articulated by the text. The analysis of these two issues in Bogdashevskii's ethics will supply the matters of direct observation on his hermeneutical strategy.

5.4.5.1 Ethnonationalism

A racial or ethnic question is at the heart of Bogdashevskii's ethics. Bogdashevskii's concern with the ethical issues is linked to an ethnically diverse Russian Empire. On the one hand, the events in Russia of the attacks against ethnic minorities (after 1881) perhaps stipulated Bogdashevskii to address the issue.[251] On the other hand, voicing the issue in the language of *ethnicity - morals* was his prophetic warning.

He does not have a racial or anti-national element in his ethics. Knowing that all human beings can be classified according to common descent and superficial physical characteristics Bogdashevskii builds his concept of race not particularly from a sociological or biological point of view, but from the point of a specific human environment created by Orthodox Christianity. In determining behaviour and lifestyle, he is considering the Church a far more important factor than race.

Bogdashevskii argues, that the Orthodox Church does not ask any human being *where you come from* or *what is your national identity* in order to limit his or her personal freedom on the basis of the race.[252] In this sense, the Church is a community of people that

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[251] Being a national minority in tsarist Russia, Jews, for example, have experienced the organized attack and massacre (so-called *pogrom* "devastation") which occurred in 1881, following the assassination of Tsar Alexander II by revolutionary terrorists. This massacre took place in 1903 in the Bessarabian city of Chisinàu. Later, after the failure of the Revolution of 1905 in Russia, pogroms occurred in about 600 villages and cities; thousands of Jews were slaughtered, and the property of many of the victims was looted and destroyed. Ostensibly, these pogroms were spontaneous uprisings of Christians outraged by alleged Jewish religious practices, especially the hypothetical and supposed ritual murder of Christian children in connection with the festival of Pesach, also known as Passover. As established by documentary evidence, however, the pogroms were deliberately organised by the tsarist government to divert into channels of religious bigotry and ethnic hatred the Russian workers' and peasants' discontent with political and economic conditions. See the standard sources on the History of Russia.

[252] Cf. D. I. Bogdashevskii, "Truth and Freedom," ["Slovo. Istina i Svoboda,"] *TKDA* I (1900): 537.

overcomes ethnic division not only within the Church, but also serves as a paradigm for ethics of love and acceptance in ethnic issues toward the 'outsiders.' Thus, Bogdashevskii's ethics has no assumption that inherited biological differences cause some human sub-populations to be fundamentally different from, or superior to, others and therefore a generalized body of rights, such as the right of individuals to act as they choose (*individual liberty)* or the sovereignty of nation (*national liberty)*, etc. have to be granted to all and be accepted by all the people across ethnic and racial lines.

Further, Bogdashevskii addresses the issue that every society has its culture, and therefore its own cultural biases. He sees no grounds for the tendency to make judgments by reference to the values shared in the subject's own ethnic group, as if it were the centre of everything (*i.e. ethnocentrism*). Being aware that the high profile of the issue of race is a result of the political uses of notions of superiority, Bogdashevskii solves the issue from the Christian anthropological assessment of the dualism among human beings (*i.e.* the people without faith and the renewed men in Christ). This leads him to argue that there is no reason for Anti-Semitism as a political, social, and economic agitation and activities directed against Jewish people, historically regarded as the killers of Jesus Christ, because there were and many still are people without faith. As such, Bogdashevskii argues, the Jews and the Russians have the same moral standards which are formed from a general disobedience to God. Moral wrongdoing is the tragedy of all nations.[253]

In the light of the above, it is remarkable to see that Bogdashevskii is troubled with the New Testament accounts that contrast Jews with the other nations. In his public lecture "About the Gospels and Its History: Against Contemporary Rationalism" of 1902, Bogdashevskii comments that the author of the Gospel of John notably develops a theme - the Jews of Jerusalem contra the Samaritans and the people of Galilee.[254] Unfortunately, he gives no supportive arguments for this (doubtful in our opinion) conclusion, nor does he explain the significance of the point. Further, his interpretation of The Parable of the Two Sons (Mt. 21:28–32), offered by Jesus to the Jewish leaders who had just questioned Jesus about his authority, argues that the purpose of this parable is not to depict the unfaithfulness of the Jewish leaders exclusively, but to criticize the whole Jewish nation. Thus, the polarity of this parable, Bogdashevskii places not between the sinners, the tax collectors and harlots,

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[253] See esp. his sermon "In Remembrance of Christ's Suffering (Luke 23:21)," *TKDA* II, 5 (1988): 43-58.

[254] D. I. Bogdashevskii, "Lecture. About the Gospels and Their History: In Apposition to Contemporary Rationalism," *TKDA* 2 (1902): 287.

who believed both John and Jesus and the Jewish leaders, as opposed to Jesus' authority, but between the Gentiles and the Jews in general.[255]

In addition, Bogdashevskii argues that in the Letter of James, the writer accuses Jews (*i.e.* rich men) whose grievous sin lies not in what they do to themselves but in how their misconduct affects the others (esp. in 4:13–17; 5:1–6). The essence of what he finds at fault, are the Jews with a possessive and selfish outlook regarding material goods and gains. Bogdashevskii notes that a person may be outwardly religious, yet if the desire for material gain becomes the dominant force in which the rich place their confidence in one's earthly goods, these expose the hidden danger of a discontented, lustful spirit that is always seeking for more.[256] In his view James interprets social crimes as offences that contravene the divine law and so entail divine retribution. He notably identifies the rich men charged in James as the rich Jews; not genuine Christians. He stresses that, according to the Letter of James, the Jews are guilty in the folly of accumulation of goods, the crimes of dishonesty and selfish greed with no concern for the poor. He says,

> If we identify the rich, rebuked in the Letter, not as Christians, but actually as Jews, then a demoralized state of the Christian Churches, to which the Letter was intended, is significantly reduced.[257]

From the above quotation it is obvious that Bogdashevskii is leaning rather to accuse the Jews (by the authority of the New Testament document) than to admit that James addresses social problems in general and charges a specific class of the people (i.e. Christian believers) rather than a specific national group for charitable actions. Bogdashevskii's attempt is to exclude the possibility that among the rich there were both the Jews and Gentiles is not convincing.

Nevertheless, although his interpretation of the New Testament has an anti-Semitic element, in general, he avoids making any implication or conclusion that the New Testament text(s) indicate the validity of ethnonationalism. But it is in the Church that he sees the roots for the establishment of reconciliation of different ethnic groups. Within the Body of Christ,

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[255] See Bishop Vasilii, "Deiatel'nost' Khrista Spasitelia ot vkhoda v Ierusalim do Paskhi stradanii...," ["The Activity of Christ the Savior During the Entry into Jerusalem and the Passover of His Suffering: Mt. 21:1-26:2 and parall., "] *TKDA* II, 5 (1914): 21.

[256] Cf. D. I. Bogdashevskii, "The Letter of James," *TKDA* III, 10 (1907): 194.

[257] "Если... под богатыми, обличаемыми в послании, разумеются богачи не христиане, и именно иудеи, то мрачная картина состояния церквей, которым назначено послание, значительно смягчается." D. I. Bogdashevskii, "The Letter of James," *TKDA* III, 10 (1907): 195.

that expands the task of Scripture, the identity of the human community is not marked by merely ethnical distinct characteristics, but by the Christian moral feature that surpasses ethnic division and antipathy.

5.4.5.2 Violence

Similarly to the concern of the ethnic problem, the issue of violence in Bogdashevskii thought is crucial. As noted above, in ethnical matters of Bogdashevskii's ethics there is no stipulation for any sort of violence based on ethonationalism (such as the impulse to impose the will of one nation on the other through violence or the approval of the practice of 'ethnic cleansing').

Nevertheless, attached to a socio-political environment of the Russian Empire, violence is legitimate. Bogdashevskii's ethnical theoretical system is not neutral to the use of violence in armed conflicts between Russia and other states. Bogdashevskii seems to favour violence by encouraging Russians to show patriotic devotion in supporting or defending their country in wars. For example, in the sermon "About the Christian Spiritual Fight (Mt. 26:41; Mk. 14:38)" he connects the themes of spiritual warfare and ethical issues with patriotic motifs involved in wars.[258] In this sermon, delivered on February 20, 1904 soon after the military conflict between the Russian and Japanese Empire (a Japanese attack was on February 8, 1904) Bogdashevskii stresses,

> [W]e need spiritual watchfulness and sobriety, because the fight with an external enemy can be triumphant only if we are victorious in the internal battle in the inner purification of self [*i.e.* resistance to sin, immorality in general]. Thanks be to God, our spirit is watchful! As one, we battled against our enemy - pagan [*i.e.* non-Christian nation]... In the name of the Gospel, let us courageously fight, hoping for God's help; let us fight with the enemy that disturbed our blessed peace.[259]

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[258] D. I. Bogdashevskii, "About the Christian Spiritual Struggle (Mt. 26:41; Mk. 14:38)," *TKDA* I, 3 (1904): 359-368. Of course, Bogdashevskii was well aware about military affairs in the history of Russia and knew about the later developments of the Russian Empire, esp. the series of conflicts between the Russian and Ottoman Turkish empires (known as Russo-Turkish Wars), during the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries during the reign of Tsar Peter the Great (assumed power in 1689), Catherine the Great (empress of Russia, 1762-1796); Tsar Nicholas I (led to the Crimean War in 1853-1856); Tsar Alexander II (declared war on Turkey in January 1877). For details see standard historical studies.

[259] "...нужна нам духовная бодрственность и трезвенность. Потому что борьба с внешним врагом только тогда может быть успешною, когда победоносно ведется нами борьба внутренняя, - внутреннее очищение себя. Богу благодарение, дух наш бодр! Мы возстали, как один человек, на врага язычника, попирающего всякие христианские отношения.... Во имя Евангелия мира будем смело, в надежде на помощь Божию, вести борьбу с врагом, нарушившим наш благословенный мир." D. I. Bogdashevskii, "About the Christian Spiritual Struggle (Mt. 26:41; Mk. 14:38)," *TKDA* I, 3 (1904): 368.

It seems that Bogdashevskii literally does not forbid self-defence and does not preclude fighting in defence of countrymen, and the Russian Motherland. The perfectionistic ethic view of non-violence has no case in Bogdashevskii's thought if the people of Russia are the innocent party. Moreover if Christianity in Russia is in danger, Bogdashevskii felt that the battle of the State is the battle of the Church or vice versa, because the Russian Church, State and all the Russian people in general form a single *being* - "one ecclesiastic body and one governmental body."[260]

Later, the theme of violence in Bogdashevskii becomes on the one hand more definite, but on the other hand more complex. His view, on this issue, was revived after so-called Bloody Sunday (22 January, 1905) when a demonstration of student and labourers led by Socialistic groups and by Georgy Appolonovich Gapon, a revolutionary Orthodox priest, marched to the Winter Palace to present their social and political demands. They were fired on by imperial troops, hundreds were killed and wounded. Such violent preservation of political stability in the country became the subject of public debate.[261] Moreover, at the same time within the Orthodox Church, the defects of ecclesiastic discipline and organization reflected in commotion and conflicts which urged the initiation of Church reforms.[262] These circumstances stimulated Bogdashevskii to address the legitimacy of violence.

In his sermons "About Christian Unity" (11 March 1905, at the Church of Kiev-Bratsk Monastery) and "To Rejoice or to Cry? (Luk. 23:28)" (24 February 1906, at the same Church) Bogdashevskii depicts the difficult situation in the country. These pastoral messages seek to find the answer for a dispute in society and in the Church - What to do? Where to go? A call for unity is his dominant response. Nevertheless, Bogdashevskii especially emphasizes the issue of violence. *First*, he stresses, "The Church does not know any kind of violence; she persuades the consciousness of the people as a single sphere in her influence....

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[260] D. I. Bogdashevskii, "A Sermon. About Christian Unity (John 17:21)," *TKDA* I (1905): 573. See "Мы одно тело церковное, как одно тело и государственное, а потому твёрдо должны стоять на защите крепости, целостности, правильного развития этого тела.... " Idem.

[261] This massacre was the signal for a revolution. Strikes and riots began throughout the industrialized sections of Russia. The rush of events, combined with continued disaster in the war, influenced the government to make concessions. For the account of the immediately pre-Revolutionary period see J. S. Curtiss, *Church and State in Russia: The Last Years of the Empire 1900-1917* (New York, 1940); A. V. Kartashov, "Revolution and Council: 1917-1918," *Bogoslovskaia mysl'* 4 (1944): 75-101; G. Simon, Church, State and Society," in G. Katkov *et al.* (eds.), *Russia Enters the Twentieth Century* (London 1971, 1973), 199-235.

[262] On Church reform, see A. A. Bogolepov, "Church Reform in Russia 1905-1918," *SVSQ* 10 (1966): 12-66; G. Freeze, *The Parish Clergy in Nineteenths Century Russian Crisis, Reform, Counter-Reform* (Princeton: 1983).

[The Church] cannot approve horrible factors of our society... [but] in no circumstances can the Church approve violence. She says: love your neighbor and be merciful."[263]

Second, by endorsing the Letter of James, Bogdashevskii argues that Christians have to be patient even until the coming of the Lord; do not complain against one another, that you not be judged (cf. James 5:7-9; but the printed sermon incorrectly refers to James 4:7-9).[264] Violence, according to Bogdashevskii derives from a constant faultfinding and criticism. A criticizing mind extinguishes everything positive in a human being and this leads to the extremes of violence.[265]

Third, in Bogdashevskii's argument, specifically related to the political environment in Russia, he re-contextualizes 1 Peter 2:13 (ὑποτάγητε πάσῃ ἀνθρωπίνῃ κτίσει διὰ τὸν κύριον / "submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human [state] institution) and calls for obedience to the Russian state authorities rather than for a fight against it. Thus, by submitting themselves to the monarchal throne, the Russian people will refrain from violent activity toward the government.[266] It is noticeable that Bogdashevskii does not speak, however, on 1 Peter 2:14 that implies the use of violence in the punishment of evildoers, the needless offenders of civil authority. Also it is not clear what Bogdashevskii's view is of the responsibility of civil government to "punish" offenders (cf. Paul's use of ἔκδικος εἰς ἐργήν (Rom 13:4)). He does not comment on whether or not civil authority is a "servant of God" (θεοῦ γὰρ διάκονός ἐστιν) and whether the punishment of the crime exacts a divine punishment.

Fourth, the Church has not only the voice of consolation, but also of correction, repudiation and even punishment.[267] Punishment, as such, does not mean violence. Bogdashevskii indicates that for Church disciplinary purposes expulsion from the Church is optional. The act of removal from the Orthodox Church, in his opinion, however, cannot be

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[263] "Церковь Христова на знает никакого насилия; она воздействует только на совесть людей, - вот единственная область ея влияния. ... Никогда и ни при каких обстоятельствах Церковь не может одобрять насилия. Она говорит только одно: люби ближняго, будь милостив...."D. I. Bogdashevskii, "About Christian Unity (John 17:21)," *TKDA* I (1905): 571; cf. Ibid., "A Sermon. To Rejoice or to Cry? (Luk. 23:28)" *TKDA* I, 3 (1906): xix.

[264] Cf. D. I. Bogdashevskii, "A Sermon. About Christian Unity (John 17:21)," *TKDA* I (1905): 572.

[265] Cf. D. I. Bogdashevskii, "To Rejoice or to Cry? *TKDA* I, 3 (1906): xv.

[266] Cf. D. I. Bogdashevskii, "A Sermon. About Christian Unity (John 17:21)," *TKDA* I (1905): 571-572.

[267] Cf. Idem., 572.

considered as violence. The Church expels from its Body only those people who themselves already have left the Church (directly or indirectly). For example, because an individual is professing a heresy he or she completely, with premeditation departed from the Church. Thus, the expulsion is only an authoritative identification of a self-made choice to withdraw from the Church rather than a violent act toward a human being.[268] In his interpretation of the Parable of the Wheat and the Weeds (Mt 13:24-30) which states that sinners will be burned at the time of the harvest (*i.e.*, points out to the eschatological judgment), Bogdashevskii argues that this parable does not suggests an immediate separating of the good seed from the weeds (*i.e.*, complete cleansing of the Church from sinners), but allows them to grow together until full maturity of the wheat and the time of harvest. Thus, Church discipline is a spiritual assistance rather than violence, war, bloodshed or killing. Since the renewal of wrongdoers is not only desirable but is possible, violence may lead to the slaying of the devout members of the Church (in God's conception and grace).[269]

With regard to the issues of violence, as example, it is obvious that Bogdashevskii overrides the witness of the New Testament against any kind of war (just war, holy war, world war, civil war, etc.). The New Testament does not even suggest the nonbelligerent use of military force to assist warring parties in reaching a settlement. The New Testament calls the Church to take up the cross and follow Jesus in suffering and death, it calls to absolute obedience and thus self-denial, putting one's life on the line. In Mf. 10:30 Jesus categorically stated: καὶ ὃς οὐ λαμβάνει τὸν σταυρὸν αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀκολουθεῖ ὀπίσω μου, οὐκ ἔστιν μου ἄξιος (if you refuse to take up your cross and follow me, you are not worthy of being mine). In any case the New Testament makes the point that the enemy can and should be treated as God treats people, treating enemy and friend alike (Cf. Matt 5:43–8). Yet, in surveying the use of the New Testament by Bogdashevskii it seems that he appeals to the biblical texts in certain mode of "de-emphasising" Scripture. He gives hermeneutical primacy to the Church and tradition that carry insights about the ethical code of the people.

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[268] Cf. D. I. Bogdashevskii, "Lecture. About the Church: On Contemporary Religious Demands," *TKDA* 2 (1904): 192.

[269] D. I. Bogdashevskii, "Pritchi Khrista o tsarstvii nebesnom: Mf. 13:1-52, i parall.," ["Christ's Parables on the Kingdom of Heaven: Mt. 13:1-52 and parall.,"] *TKDA* III, 10 (1912): 195.

5.4.6 Conclusion

In Bogdashevskii's ethics there is the distinction in the emphasis between the authority of a proposed set of hermeneutical guidelines for ethical evaluation based on the normative texts of the New Testament and the authority of life experience of the Orthodox Church. Being less concerned with interpreting the authoritative text of the New Testament as a sole source of Christian ethics, Bogdashevskii operates on the inside of the life or experience of the Church lifestyle tradition, to which Orthodox theology testifies. His concept of Church life is a more valuable basis and criterion for ethics, than the New Testament itself. Consequently, Bogdashevskii does not first determine the meaning of the New Testament text(s) and on its basis draw out the concepts of the text for the construction of an ethical system; rather the New Testament, for him, is known in the experience of the Orthodox Church, and, thus, the meaning of the text is not crucial as such. The New Testament functions authoritatively only within the Orthodox Church and therefore the mind of the Church (its Tradition) determines both the meaning of the New Testament texts and forms Christian ethics.

The Church, for Bogdashevskii, is the final discernment for ethics; rather than a merely. He says, "it is apparent, how mistakes are made by those who take the Scriptures as a single source of the Christian faith and life and reject all the significance of the Sacred Tradition."[270] Bogdashevskii does not limit ethics to conceptual evidences - to *texts* of the New Testament. Not excluding the *texts*, he is searching for *existential* evidence of the living experience of the Church, as a precise meaning and significance for Christian ethics. The Church constitutes the transcendent grounds for ethics. His maxim is "*Believe as the Church prescribes, live as the Church commends.*"[271] The Church is the locus of the ethical authority that augments the textual evidence. In this regard, Bogdashevskii's hermeneutical strategy can be formulated as agreeing with Georges Florovsky's statement: "Only the inner memory of the Church fully brings to life the silent testimony of the texts."[272]

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[270] " Понятно..., как заблуждаются те, которые единственным источником христианской веры и жизни считают Писание и отвергают всякое значение Священного Предания." D. I. Bogdashevskii, "Lecture. About the Gospels and Their History: In Apposition to Contemporary Rationalism," *TKDA* 2 (1902): 281; cp. p. 301.

[271] "*Веруйте так, как учит Церковь, живите так, как повелевает Церковь.*"D. I. Bogdashevskii, "Lecture. On Significance of the Church," *TKDA* 3 (1913): 457 [my italics].

[272] Florovsky, *Ways: Two*, 304.