The Trinity, the Incarnation *and* Practical Theology

An Inquiry into Ministry

A Lack of Assurance, Anxiety, and Shame

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE REV. JOHN MCLEOD CAMPBELL, D.D.

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A Dissertation submitted for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Practical Theology
The University of Pretoria, Pretoria, South Africa

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DECLARATION

I, the Rev. John D. White, hereby state that the dissertation which I submit for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Practical Theology at the University of Pretoria, Pretoria, South Africa is my own work and has not been previously submitted by me for a degree at this or any other University, Seminary or Institution. Every source used has been indicated and acknowledged by means of a complete reference.

Signature _____ Date October 2, 2017

Name of Supervisor: The Very Reverend Professor Maake J. Masango, Ph.D.

Signature _____ Date _____

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my family with deep thankfulness. My parents, David M. and E. Jean White adopted me at three months of age in Montreal, Quebec, Canada in December of 1964, and have shaped, molded, and loved me unselfishly ever since. In the mystery of God's providence, we found one another.

As Canadian singer, Celine Dion put it in a song,

For all those times you stood by me For all the truth that you made me see
For all the joy you brought to my life For all the wrong that you made right
For every dream you made come true For all the love I found in you
I'll be forever thankful You're the one who held me up
Never let me fall You're the one who saw me through…through it all

You were my strength when I was weak You were my voice when I couldn't speak
You were my eyes when I couldn't see You saw the best there was in me
Lifted me up when I couldn't reach You gave me faith 'coz you believed
I'm everything I am Because you loved me

You gave me wings and made me fly You touched my hand I could touch the sky
I lost my faith, you gave it back to me You said no star was out of reach
You stood by me and I stood tall I had your love I had it all
I'm grateful for each day you gave me Maybe I don't know that much But I know
this much is true I was blessed because I was loved by you

They are remarkable people and **I am** because they loved me. They have been and continue to be a living witness to the gift of God's grace.

My wife, Jenifer, and three children, Cameron (who helped edit the dissertation—all of the dissertation!), Katelyn, and Kelsy are all similarly remarkable. I would be lost, as the children's movie *Balto* noted, without **Jenifer!**, there is no one quite like her anywhere—to say she is *sine qua non* or a *hapax legomenon* is an understatement– I continue to experience God's love and grace through her daily, and my children have continued to teach me important lessons about life, love, and happiness. If, as Orthodox theologian John Zizioulas suggests, we have our being in communion—I am today who I am because of who they are. Each of them is a

unique gift and blessing. They are miracles of God's goodness. They are my greatest treasure! My parents-in-law Charles and Donna Spiers make this world a better place and I am fortunate that they count me as family. It is also a joy to count them as family…

October 2017

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I must first thank my *Doktorvater* the Very Rev. Professor Maake J.S. Masango for his faith, assistance, and support during the time I have engaged in the research that has resulted in this dissertation. When another professor suggested, years ago, that he did not believe I could complete a PhD dissertation satisfactorily, Maake gave me the chance. He is that kind of person. He believed in me—for that, I will ever be grateful! Ten years has been a long time to encourage, prod, challenge, and cheerlead. Even though the work stopped and started in fits with breaks, was sporadic, because of family, work and commitments he continued to e-mail me with support. I have known Maake since the fall of 1988 when he led a class in Christianity and current events at Columbia Theological Seminary. I have never failed to be impressed with Maake's faith in Jesus Christ and how that faith works itself out in his behavior. He is, indeed, someone to emulate. He was perhaps the most pastoral person at that institution and his presence was a gift to many of us.

Two friends, the Rev. Blaine Hill and the Rev. Dr. Franklin Fant, both ministerial colleagues, have counseled, encouraged, and assisted in the writing of this dissertation in ways that would probably surprise them. I thank them both.

Mrs. Patty Kestner, Church Secretary, and Choir Director at Congaree Presbyterian Church contributed immeasurably through her efficiency, administrative assistance, and personality. She kept the office running smoothly, giving me the space to do the work needed.

The congregations of North Avenue Presbyterian Church, Atlanta, Georgia (1989), Fain Presbyterian Church, Wichita Falls, Texas (1990-1991), Cuba Presbyterian Church, Cuba, Georgia (1992-1993), Rocky Springs Presbyterian Church, Laurens, South Carolina (1993-1998), and finally, Congaree Presbyterian Church, Cayce, South Carolina (1998-) have all been patient, kind, and caring as together we have learned both to allow Christ to live in us by faith and to learn to have the mind of Christ within us.

ABSTRACT

Among the variety of challenges facing human beings, three emotions of self-assessment cause human beings adversity,

> (a.) a **lack of assurance** in God's unconditional love,
> (b.) **anxiety** over the present and future, and
> (c.) **shame**, which is the certainty that one cannot be loved, because one is not worthy of being loved.

These three integrally related dilemmas pose a problem for the pastor or caregiver. Knowing how to proceed requires thoughtful reflection on Christianity's past history and theology, current norms of Pastoral Care, Philosophy, Interpreting Scripture, and the judging of Experience. The pastor *as* pastor offers a unique perspective in ministering to people. Though Social Workers, Doctors, Nurses, Physical Therapists, Counselors, in addition to others not named, all minister, the pastor as pastor fulfills a unique vocation and role in the life of people and congregations. Nineteenth century Scottish pastor theologian the Rev. John McLeod Campbell, D.D., provides a resource towards a Trinitarian-Incarnational Pastoral Theology. In contra-distinction to much Practical Theology and Pastoral Theology, John McLeod Campbell offers a *theology* rooted in experience while also rooted in the Reformed Tradition. He does so by providing an alternative construct or frame of reference in his preaching, teaching, and pastoral care, which stands in contrast to the one by which we live. His work flies in the face of destructive dualisms, which fatally assume a deistic disjunction between God, the world, and the universe. McLeod Campbell does this by clarifying the nature and character of God. In response to much theology, he does not posit a God based on Aristotle and philosophy, rather than in divine revelation or on Jesus Christ. Instead, he sees the unity

of the New Testament revelation providing us with the knowledge of the Father-Son relationship. He does this by re-visioning the person and work of Jesus Christ in significant ways from his contemporaries. McLeod Campbell accomplishes this by including us within the person and work of Christ by participation. This participation is a gift of the Spirit of God. McLeod Campbell also recognizes that in our connection and fellowship of Christ, we share in his blessings. In addition, the Holy Spirit ministers, guides and leads indicating the epistemological relevance of the Holy Spirit's ministry. This changes our framework for approaching people in our life as pastors and it certainly offers a different vision by which to live for those desirous of such. A Pastoral Theology, which has particular reference to McLeod Campbell's work, includes his

- Sermons and Lectures,
- Notes of Sermons,
- Fragments of Truth,
- Christ the Bread of Life,
- Thoughts on Revelation, and finally
- On the Nature of the Atonement …

A Practical Theology, which converses with the Trinity, the Incarnation, Social Sciences and person experience is in a privileged position to offer solicitous care by creatively responding to these three related emotions of self-assessment with a gospel of grace. As Karl Barth once noted regarding former great theologians, they are not dead and gone. They live and remain as conversation partners through their work. McLeod Campbell offers us an opportunity to retrieve from him much wisdom. Finally, McLeod Campbell's atonement theory provides one possibility for using this doctrine constructively, creatively, and therapeutically in ministry to others. Ultimately, McLeod

Campbell would have been horrified if his work and its constructive use were just posited as another theology. He shows us the direction in important ways, if we but journey through his writings. His theology *is* pastoral *and* practical in nature in the best sense.

KEY TERMS

- John McLeod Campbell—Little known nineteenth century Scottish pastor-theologian. Author of the classic treatise On the Nature of the Atonement (1856).
- Lack of Assurance—The absence of confidence in God's love. The feeling that God does not love one because…
- Anxiety—A dizzying, fearful, emotion that Kierkegaard suggested was akin to dread.
- Shame—Extreme embarrassment and the belief that one does not count or matter; in its deepest forms it is the view that we are not worthy of being loved by another.
- Frame of Reference—A framework, a mental construct and interpretive lens, out of which we interpret our world to make sense. Galileo saw the world differently from those that preceded him. My Father grew up in Depression Canada and viewed life through that framework. Our neighbor may see things differently also.
- Reframing—Changing our beliefs, knowledge, values or ethics through the changing of perspective.
- Metanoia—Comes from the Greek word for change, alteration, repentance.
- Eusebia—Piety, faith, belief, behavior.
- Trinity—The Three persons of the one Godhead—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- Incarnation—God come as man in the flesh *as* Jesus Christ, who has two natures, but is one person.
- Vicarious Humanity of Christ—Christ's representative, vicarious role on our behalf. It may be said that he takes our place.
- Atonement—Communion, koinonia, fellowship, reconciliation.

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SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS

In **CHAPTER ONE** we suggested some definitions of Practical or Pastoral Theology. We arrived at the provisional statement or thesis that this particular way of doing theology involved the care of persons and theological inquiry into that care. Part of the theology of care with which this study begins is the assertion that our lives are now included in the very life of the Trinity. Ministry to persons as care is a participation in Jesus Christ's ongoing ministry to and care of individuals. In this chapter, we emphasized the theological character of the discipline both at the beginning of care, during care, and as care proceeds. The resultant theology may be different from the initial theology. We also highlighted the implications this has for ministry and theology as a whole. A conversation partner during this study is nineteenth century Scottish Pastor-Theologian John McLeod Campbell, D.D. whose writings emphasize the Trinity and the Incarnation as therapeutic for troubled parishioners. One aspect of our study is the care of persons who struggle with a lack of the assurance of God's love, anxiety, and shame. This care is a care of souls, as viewed historically. The methodology we settled upon was the one used currently in the author's praxis as minister. This way of doing Practical Theology is the method of ministry suggested by James and Evelyn Whitehead which involves attending to the problem presented by the parishioner, assertion of the variety of voices among conversation partners, and finally, a possible, provisional answer to the issue.

In **CHAPTER TWO** we raised a variety of issues from the denial of Pastoral Theology or Practical Theology as merely tools which the pastor can use depending on circumstance. Instead, we raised the issue of the big-picture. We called this a 'meta-view' of Practical or Pastoral Theology. We raised the idea of shepherding as the best metaphor or image for solicitous care. We also raised the issue of the generative problematic for Pastoral Theology or Practical Theology. This is the issue of the presence of God in care. We rehearsed the historical eclipse of the Trinity from theology and instead argued for a view of Practical or Pastoral Theology, which has the Trinity front and center. We discussed the relationship between theology and praxis, discussing both. We reviewed the contribution of Don Browning throughout his career, noting that in spite of our philosophical disagreement with him, he still offered a profound view of doing Practical Theology. Following our discussion of Browning's proposal, we highlighted the relationship between the indicative and the imperative in theology and asserted that the indicatives of grace are always prior to the imperatives of demand in the gospel. We emphasized the importance of the ὁμοούσιον τῷ Πατρί as foundational to any theology. We discussed the difference between theology and mythology. Finally, we looked at the stratification of reality. We concluded with John McLeod Campbell's theological epistemology.

In **CHAPTER THREE** we took a long look at the difficulties, historical, theological and practical to the issue of assurance in classic Reformed thought. Because of the particular way history coursed the practical concern churches were left with regarded the issue of assurance. Assurance, we noted, was that confidence or *parrhesia* as the New Testament

puts it in relationship to God. The issue of one's outlook was raised. Metanoia was called for as a necessity. In addition, piety was viewed as a prerequisite for the minister. Anger was studied as a feeling or emotion, but the question additionally raised was can anger have a gospel. The transformative moment and the agogic moment were looked at as the beginning of a response to a lack of assurance. We also discussed the doctrine of God. Emotions of self-assessment as deviation from the norm were also examined. The doctrine of God, the reflection upon God's nature and character, led to the problem of a lack of assurance in the lives of people. One reason for this was an incorrect view of God. The other was the emphasis on people's emotions, feelings, and experiences in place of Jesus Christ. We covered the historical background beginning in Augustine proceeding through Calvin and most particularly Beza. We then looked at how John McLeod Campbell's theology sought to respond to this issue positively and therapeutically. We also saw that this is not just an historical question, but also very much an issue for today.

In **CHAPTER FOUR** we covered the problem of anxiety. We utilized a dialectical conversation of sorts through our examination of different thinkers regarding the nature and character of anxiety and then their solutions. Our provisional definition was an unease or dread in the face of the unknown. We looked to Friedrich Nietzsche and discovered that knowledge is perspectival. We then moved on to the perspectival aspect of personal experience. We concluded with the pastoral and theological viewpoint of Helmut Thielicke, concluding the conversation with the ideas of John McLeod Campbell. We finally discussed the idea of *parrhesia*.

In **CHAPTER FIVE** we looked at the deep seated identity issue of shame. We looked at a variety of experiences of shame, literary, theatrical, and personal. We looked at shame's effects. Following we covered the Biblical and Theological views of shame seeking to understand its origins in the history of thought. Next, we covered the affects of shame. We continued with experiences of shame in popular culture. Finally, we concluded with Leon Wurmser's comprehensive study of shame from a Freudian perspective and used it to guide us towards a Practical Theology, which seeks to respond to shame. The question in Pastoral Theology about shame, particularly for the author, is the question 'What is the gospel?' Is there a gospel of grace, which may respond to the issue of shame?

In CHAPTER SIX we began by asking what language is appropriate for a Practical Theology which seeks to be centered in solicitous care. We then discussed the idea of estrangement and its reconciliation. There is estrangement from one another. There is also estrangement from God, particularly an epistemological estrangement, not rooted in reality, but rather in our own consciousness. A lack of assurance, anxiety and shame are all a part of this estrangement. We are our own worst enemies. We covered the idea of the atonement as a theological doctrine. We discussed the origin of the English word atonement stemming as it did from a particular translation of the Greek New Testament. Then we looked at the atonement as an answer to particular pastoral problems. As we did so, we examined Daniel Day Williams's views, Paul Pruyser's views among others, and importantly, Don Browning views. We then looked at John McLeod Campbell's

particular view, which is unique in the history of atonement theory. Next, we looked at the Biblical background to McLeod Campbell's interpretation. We considered the atonement from two different aspects—the retrospective and the prospective. It is McLeod Campbell's prospective view, which we stated was of most interest and use to us. We then discussed the idea of participation, which the New Testament understands in its use of koinonia.

In **CHAPTER SEVEN** we offered our conclusions. We focused on love as the ultimate therapy, particularly as it is more robust than the psychological term 'acceptance.' We looked at the orientation of the Pastor in seeking to minister to those struggling with a lack of assurance, anxiety and shame. We spoke of solicitous care, but from an Incarnational and Trinitarian perspective. We spoke of 'participation' in ministry—our participation in the ministry of Christ—his ongoing ministry. We suggested a fresh perspective on how this truth alters ministry. Finally, we highlighted the praxis of prayer.

CHAPTER ONE

Proposal for a Practical/ Pastoral Theological Study

The Problems of a Lack of Assurance, Anxiety, and Shame from a Pastoral Perspective

1.0 Introduction

The focus of this dissertation is 'Practical' theology, or as it is sometimes referred to 'Pastoral theology.' One beginning definition of Practical Theology is "any serious attempt to bring reflection upon and understanding of the Christian faith into dialogue with action motivated by that faith." (Patton 1968: 1) Patton indicates that theology or 'understanding of the Christian faith' is placed in dialogue with 'action.' This is not a haphazard action, however, but rather a specific action that is motivated by this 'Christian faith.' What Patton indicates is the making of connections back and forth, dialogically, between the two aspects of the Christian faith and the action arising from that faith. James Lapsley defines Pastoral Theology as, "the study of all aspects of the care of persons in the church in a context of theological inquiry, including implications for other branches of theology." (1969: 43) Lapsley emphasizes the care of person in his definition. Therefore, initially, we have a Christian faith that issues in specific action or actions as it seeks to care for persons. The purpose of this proposal is to move the conversation forward regarding Practical/ Pastoral Theology and to offer in broad-brush strokes, what might be described as a new frame of reference, which seeks to move towards a unique theology of the care of persons. What is argued for here, then, is a

unique Practical Theology whose theory, theology and action, praxis is different from others.

My argument is simple. Leonardo Boff in his book Trinity and Society argues that the Trinity seeks to include others in its life as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit is an "open reality" which by grace includes that, which is *different* into its unique communion and fellowship. (1988: 3) Neil Pembroke follows up this line of thinking by saying that at the heart of the Triune God's life together is "relationality." (2006: 7) Hilary of Poitiers in his treatise on the Trinity *De Trinitate* notes that the knowledge and understanding of God's love for him, in including him in the Father – Son relationship, mediated by the Spirit, was **therapeutic.** (1954: 10) With John Libert, we affirm that the centrality of God for us is fundamental, both for existence and for Practical Theology/ Pastoral Theology. He writes, "God is experienced during those momentous occasions of intense profundity and decisive sudden disclosure. Additionally, these moments produce expressions of conversion and human transformation…" (2000: 75) The concerns of these authors may all be discovered in the work of Scottish Pastoral Theologian John McLeod Campbell whose ministry occurred in nineteenth century Scotland. If both Patton and Lapsley's definitions are correct, we will discover in McLeod Campbell someone for whom theological inquiry occurred precisely in the context of his care of parishioners. His findings are important for Practical Theology or Pastoral Theology today. Making connections between McLeod Campbell and other scientific disciplines is fundamental and a part of the methodology for Practical Theology, which then issues in a particular kind of therapeutic action.

The argument continues. The church and the pastor should be the conduit by which Jesus ministers to those struggling and suffering from a lack of assurance, anxiety, and shame. The pastor and the church may assist the struggling individual through a specific relationship motivated by the Christian faith. Gershen Kaufman, in the care of individuals, speaks importantly of something similar to what is intended, when he speaks of "bridge-building" in therapy with clients. (1985) Kaufman's emphasis has important parallels with the relational nature of God. It is the argument of this dissertation that God seeks relationship with human beings. This relationship, and how this relationship is inculcated, may be called "atonement." Harry Stack Sullivan used an early form of milieu therapy in his treatment of schizophrenics with success. Stack Sullivan's goal in therapy was 'atonement' although he would not have used that word. In the Church's care of and for individuals, spearhead by the pastor, a kind of milieu therapy may occur. Through its various ministries, the church should be a haven for those dealing with these difficult emotions of self-estimation. In our care of hurting people, we offer a space for the kind of insight – the 'occasion for intense profundity' and 'decisive sudden disclosure' about which John Libert speaks. Peter the Apostle advises his congregations (1 Peter 4:9) to be "hospitable to people without complaint." The letter to the Hebrews suggests (13:2) that we should "show hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it." The content of our hospitality should be none-other than the love about which the Apostle Paul speaks in 1 Cor. 13, that is "sacrificial and self-giving love" (*agape*).

Towards showing this, **Chapter One** will argue for this kind of Practical Theology, while asking questions about Practical or Pastoral Theology itself. (I use the

terms interchangeably) What is it? How should it be done? What preferences should exist in Practical Theology? One aspect of this proposal is that we will follow James and Evelyn Whitehead's method of reflection and action. Their model includes attending to the presenting problem, assertion of a thesis through the integration of a critical correlation between varying sources, and finally decision making as we deal with the experiences of those struggling with three of the emotions of self-assessment, lack of assurance, anxiety, and shame. (J. Whitehead, E. Whitehead 1980) The Whitehead's method involves listening to the parishioner, then resourcing the issue involved through the lenses of the Christian tradition (Scripture, Church History/ Theology/ Ethics), the social sciences (Psychology, Sociology, etc.) and cultural beliefs and values along with personal experience. Following the critical correlation between these three lenses, a proposal for action is made. Following this proposal, the individual with the presenting problem must make a decision about how to proceed.

Chapter Two will deal primarily with methodological issues. Don Browning, the Dean of American Practical Theology, proposed a *Fundamental Practical Theology* in 1991. It quickly gained the reputation for being innovative and for providing Practical Theology with a sound methodology. The author raises necessary questions about Browning's work, which betrays the liberal theology out of which he came in Chicago. Browning's work has primarily focused on ethics, because he believes metaphysics is bankrupt. I disagree. The author will seek to show that metaphysics is indeed viable both ontologically and epistemologically.

Chapter Three will focus on the issue of a Lack of Assurance. A lack of assurance involves the question over whether God loves one or not. I will show what it is

and why this is the case theologically, then I will propose how both the Pastor and Church may respond. Even though we do not hear much about this debilitating issue, it is of real concern for pastors in congregations. For the Christian, perhaps no more vital question may be considered.

Chapter Four will deal with anxiety. The author will rehearse proposals about anxiety and will seek to show what it is, why it might be caused, and initially what might be done to assist in its alleviation. This is of concern, because many deal with this emotion of self-assessment. **Chapter Five** will deal with the issue of shame. Psychotherapists and Psychologists indicate that sin is no longer the primary issue with which we deal in society, but rather shame. Donald Capps indicates that the shame bound individual is depleted. (1993) Leon Wurmser suggests that the cause of shame is a lack of love experienced in one's life. Once again, we will indicate some options for the Pastor and Church in how to respond. We shall see that this primarily involves an outlook and an orientation.

Chapter Six covers the area of atonement. Can one, in our increasingly secular culture, still speak of atonement? Some have tried to address the issue of atonement from a psychological perspective, instead of a dogmatic perspective. The result is mixed. If we may still speak of atonement, then what language shall we use? Finally, the author will seek to show that John McLeod Campbell provides resources to address this issue.

Chapter Seven concludes the study by arguing that the answer to the three issues raised, is to put it simply, love. I will seek to show how the Church and the pastor can assist in the alleviation of these existential dilemmas through a variety of traditional

means, tailored, however, for these issues at hand. The pastor and the Church in this view act as conduits and as participants in Christ's ongoing ministry to individuals. Practical Theology is about action. This chapter will cover suggestions for ministry through the time-honored practices of preaching, teaching, and pastoral care.

Practical Theology begins on the one hand, with experience and the existential questions, which have arisen through issues in living; perhaps even existential questions brought up in pastoral ministry. At the same time, it we will indicate a valuable resource in the particular Reformed theology of the noteworthy nineteenth century Pastor/ Theologian John McLeod Campbell (1800-1872) of Scotland. However, it will seek to travel beyond just a narrow dogmatic or systematic theological description in its emphases as it moves towards a broader understanding of a Practical or Pastoral Theology which ministers to people struggling with a lack of the assurance of God's love, anxiety and shame. The issue for theology is always connecting its truth claims with living—and living with theology's truth claims. Theology ought always to be 'Theology-in-action,' according to T. F. Torrance. (1965: 26-27) In addition, this proposed Practical Theology will also seek in an integrally and explicative way to be 'Trinitarian' in its doctrine of God and 'Incarnational' in its understanding of ministry—without failing to address living in the light of its truth claims.

One important aspect of this dissertation is a dialogue with Don Browning and what he calls the 'metaphoric level' of practical moral thinking. By this 'metaphoric level' Browning means "a vision of the purposes of life." (1991: 142) Browning's view of reality is essentially anthropomorphic, that is human centered and human derived. It will become clear that the author disagrees fundamentally with Browning's use of

metaphor in Practical Theology. Browning notes, “All thinking rests on a foundation of metaphors.” (1983: 57) He also writes, “Metaphysical systems are extensions and generalizations of historically generated metaphors and narratives.” (1991: 191) By this Browning indicates that we create and perpetuate our own version of realities.

As this dissertation will illustrate through its reliance on critical realism, Browning’s approach is what the great, fourth-century, Church father Athanasius of Alexandria termed **mythological** in nature and character. It is mythological, in that, his approach, though suggested as modern and up-to-date, is not, but was viewed by the early Church fathers as simply agnostic. In modern terms, his approach to the “ultimate context of experience” which “orients us towards that context” will be seen to be nothing more than the social construction of reality. (1983: 58) In simple terms, we create our own reality. An example of this appears in the statement of faith of a minister that recently applied for membership in the Presbytery in which I pastor in South Carolina, USA. The candidate began by affirming her faith in God. She elaborated by saying that God is the mystery, beyond mystery whom we cannot truly know. We call this God, for lack of a better term. This social constructivism will be described as nothing more than ‘the state of play.’ This dissertation’s proposal, by contrast, for a Pastoral Theology, is Trinitarian. It believes, therefore, that God exists. It is Trinitarian in how it prioritizes and treats the doctrine of God ontologically, epistemologically and pastorally. God is Father, Son, and Spirit. (Van Buren, Charry 2012) An additional focus of this study is on the nature and character of God as integral to human healing and growth. This Pastoral Theology will be Incarnational in that it takes Christ’s whole life as salvific, redemptive and healing. Thus, with the early Church fathers, it believes that Christ's

presence is monumental. Specifically, it does so, in that it takes, with great seriousness, the *mifica commutatio* (the great exchange between Christ and humanity about which Calvin speaks (in his Institutes IV.17.2) seriously in our understanding of human beings, their growth, flourishing, living and thriving. Irenaeus of Lyons, in his treatise Against the Heresies speaks of *anakephalaiosis* (ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι—Ephesians 1:10), a concept similar to that of Calvin's and just as inclusive. Irenaeus writes, "He (Christ) has therefore, in His work of recapitulation summed up all things, both waging war against our enemy, and crushing him who had at the beginning led us away captives in Adam…" (Cox 1885: 548)

Christ vicariously and representatively stands in our place before God. This is not mere metaphor. The Apostle Paul in Romans 5 would have been horrified had we suggested so. This changes everything about reality, the reality we experience and thus, our reality. Consequently, the proposed Practical Theology will be Trinitarian and Incarnational in that it also seeks to take seriously the Trinity and the Incarnation as integral to the work of the pastor. This Practical Theology will be Trinitarian and Incarnational in that it follows and retrieves the thought and work of Nineteenth century Scottish pastor-theologian John McLeod Campbell. We shall see that it seeks to be "participatory" *by* the Spirit in Jesus Christ's continuing ministry to us and in us *through* the Spirit (both to the Father and to others)—thus, Trinitarian and Incarnational. An illustration of what I mean might be the combination of the hand covered by a glove. T. F. Torrance writes, "for us to be in the Spirit or to have the Spirit dwelling within us means that we are united to Christ the incarnate Son of the Father, and are made through this union with him in the Spirit to participate, human creatures though we are, in the

Communion which the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit have among themselves and are in themselves." (1996: 148) In addition, this Practical Theology will seek to provide impetus towards 'glorifying God and enjoying him,' in a life of discipleship (to quote the answer to the Westminster Shorter Catechism's first question: "What is the chief end of man?" On this view, discipleship is more inclusive that the category of ethics.

Now, what is "Practical theology" or "Pastoral theology?" There are dozens of definitions that could be used, but for our purposes, James N. Lapsley's definition is perhaps the most productive for our purposes, "Pastoral theology is theological inquiry into the care of persons in an ecclesial context or by ecclesial representatives outside that full context" (1986: 116). The author would like to highlight this definition—**"theological inquiry into the care of persons."** This study views this definition as of great import. This investigation will focus on that concept 'theological inquiry.' Lapsley also noted that four criteria would be important to keep in mind as one developed a "Pastoral theology."

> (1) A basic focus on the caring, helping, healing, and sustaining aspects of ministry as data of the inquiry,
>
> (2) Recognition of the pervasiveness of these aspects or dimensions of ministry, which are nevertheless not exhaustive of it descriptively,
>
> **(3) The theological character of the discipline—which means that both the starting point and the conclusion of inquiry in pastoral theology are theologically oriented with implications for broader theological understanding, and** (my emphasis)
>
> (4) The use of the personality sciences and related disciplines as important tools in the inquiry.

The author has bolded the third description because this is a priority for this study. Practical Theology is theological in nature. This means that it has to do with God. God is the beginning and the end of Practical Theology. The action and praxis of our theology, that is, our living out of this theology in our care of others, at the same time shapes and influences this Practical Theology. There is a necessarily circular movement from beginning to end. A ubiquitous saying among Presbyterians, the denomination of which I am a part, is the Latin phrase, "**ecclesia reformata, semper reformanda, secundum verbum dei: 'the reformed church, always reforming, under the word of God.'"** This too is a circular methodology for doing theology. Its movement is something of what I have in mind, with the exception of the addition of experience to the equation.

At the same time, keeping Lapsley's criteria as guides, this project will be self-consciously Trinitarian and Incarnational, from start to finish, in how it approaches Practical theology or Pastoral theology. It will be pastoral in that it is rooted in the church. It will be theological in that it will excavate and re-appropriate the constructive and therapeutic Reformed theology of a little known, but important, pastoral theologian from nineteenth century Scotland—the Rev. John Mcleod Campbell, D.D. (1800-1872). John McLeod Campbell was, arguably, Britain's most constructive theologian in the nineteenth century.

Practical Theologians Paul Ballard and John Pritchard, in their book Practical Theology in Action: Christian Thinking in the Service of Church and Society (2000), note that Christian theology has never been just a "speculative" enquiry. It has always been practical. Because it is practical it has always derived the "ought" from the "is." In

discipleship, there is no such difference or chasm between the two. Theology as they understand it, taking their cue as they do from Anselm, is "faith seeking understanding." (2000: 1) The foundation of theology for them is its witness in worship, proclamation, service, and daily living. They understand Practical Theology as a particular discipline in the life of the Church and Academy that deals specifically with Christian life and practice within the Church and in relation to wider society. (2000: 1) In their view,

> "Practical theology… is of interest to a wide range of people. It raises the theological issues of meaning and truth in relation to the living out of the life of faith. It brings together theory and practice. It relates to pastoral skills and ministerial training, but is also concerned for every aspect of social policy and cultural experience…it is a field potentially wide ranging." (2000: 5)

The author would add that the important category of the nature and character of God should not and cannot be forgotten or conveniently overlooked. It is fundamental. For the purposes of this study, the author will make little distinction between the two species of the theological disciplines—"Practical Theology" and "Pastoral Theology." The author's blending of the two disciplines will no doubt raise the ire of purists. There are differences, to be sure. However, for this study I consider the two different species of the theology to be related, in much the same way that my two daughters are related. The author thus, will focus on their areas of <u>agreement.</u>

A European contemporary of McLeod Campbell's, German church historian Otto Pfleiderer, judged Campbell's dogmatic work Scotland's most important of the nineteenth century (Pfleiderer 1890: 382). John McLeod Campbell's theology, as it was hammered out on the anvil of his pastoral practice and reflection, as we shall see, is

fertile ground for seeking to explicate an answer to the question of God's nature and character, and thus God's unconditional regard, which is our assurance of God's love, anxiety, and shame. McLeod Campbell's theology is pastoral in the sense that it took place in the church, where he ministered his whole career as he sought to answer his people's deepest existential questions. It is practical in that his theology was about living. Although Mcleod Campbell undoubtedly would have understood our modern usage of the concepts of anxiety and shame, he was more focused because of his time and era on the particularly troublesome Reformed theological category described by the awkward phrase "lack of assurance." At heart, however, for our purposes all three categories are about the restless human desire for love.

God's love is fundamental as Augustine noted in his Confessions. We *are* restless until and when we find our rest in God's solicitous care for us. We are similarly restless until we recognize that we are loved by others as well. **A lack of assurance** may be understood, tentatively, as that fear/ anxiety that God does not love one. **Anxiety** may be understood, cautiously here, as the eternal nervousness, which exists in life arising from the dread that something terrible will befall one. **Shame** may be understood, briefly here, as the deep certainty that one is unloved and unlovable. The study will affirm that these are fundamentally emotions of self-judgment. It seeks, following Mcleod Campbell's lead, to take seriously both the Trinity and the Incarnation of Jesus Christ as integral to the nature and character of God and to the work of the pastor as an impetus towards the therapeutic care of souls.

The church today faces difficulties, no greater than did those of yesteryear (and certainly no less either)—but all the same unique, seemingly intractable and

demoralizing. Biblical illiteracy is at an all-time high. Cultural norms have run rampant in their influence. The heuristic framework with which people operate is more often that of the culture in which they live, rather than that of a faithful disciple of Jesus Christ (Taylor 2007; Wells 1995). Theology, particularly since the work of Karl Barth in the *Church Dogmatics*, has become increasingly interested in the "Trinity." Nevertheless, the theological gains from this renewed academic interest, insofar as the pastorate is concerned, are minimal. Dogma and doctrine have not influenced living as much as could be desired. Hence, the dire need for a Practical Theology whose scope involves the Triune God.

As Sociologist Christian Smith has observed, teens in the U.S. (and probably adults also), generally identifying as 'Christian,' are characterized in their belief by his telling descriptive phrase 'Moralistic Therapeutic Deism." (2010) From this study, the question may arise, is it in fact the case that God is only worried about morality? Many obviously believe so. Is it also the case, that God is only worried about what makes humans happy or feeling fulfilled? Evidently, many believe so. Alternatively, is it also the case that God is ultimately unconcerned with the world and his creation? Deism is the philosophical belief that God has created the world and set it in motion. Now, however, God is removed from its operation. God is, in the words of the inimitable American singer Bette Midler, simply 'watching us from a distance.' (1990) Karl Barth writes in his *Church Dogmatics* (CD II.2), "Deism separated the Creator of the world from the world-process. The Godhead was thought of as quite inactive in relation to this predetermined process. World development took place according to its own divinely established law." (2004: 182) Smith terms this telling phrase a summary of their actual,

tacit, and de facto religious faith. (Smith 2010) If this is actually the case, Moralist Therapeutic Deism, and Smith's work is accurate in its description then the need for clarity regarding the nature of God, his character, and our lived response is crucial, vital, and may not be avoided. Is this not one important aspect of pastoral work? The author would argue that it is.

Too often Pastoral Theology has been psychological rather than theological. Pastoral Theology as practiced by pastors, unfortunately majors in psychological categories, rather than in theological categories (Purves 2004). This orientation completely removes God from the equation of care. Dietrich Bonhoeffer lamented this sad state of affairs in his Letters and Papers from Prison. It might be noted that he had personal experience of this, given that his father was a noted German psychiatrist in Berlin. In a letter dated June 8, 1944 to his dearest friend Eberhard Bethge, from Tegel Prison in Germany, he grieved over the loss of God in our culture and for all practical purposes in human life. He writes,

> The movement that began about the thirteenth century (I'm not going to get involved in any argument about the exact date) towards the autonomy of man (in which I should include the discovery of laws by which the world lives and deals with itself in science, social and political matters, art, ethics and religion) has in our time reached an undoubted completion. Man has learnt to deal with himself in all questions of importance without recourse to the 'working hypothesis,' called 'God.' In questions of science, art, and ethics, this has become an understood thing, at which one now hardly dares to tilt. But for the last hundred years or so it has also become increasingly true of religious questions; it is becoming evident that everything gets along without 'God' – and, in fact, just as well as before. As in the scientific field, so in human affairs generally, 'God' is being pushed more and more out of life, losing more and more ground. (Bonhoeffer 1971: 325-326)

This viewpoint has been called by some 'practical atheism.' One may note here Bonhoeffer's agreement with his friend and mentor Karl Barth that the theology of the nineteenth century was not about God, but rather about *man*. (Barth 2002) That the issue remained into the twentieth century, as a problem, one may note from Bonhoeffer's remarks.

While Oxford theologian Paul Fiddes has suggested a 'pastoral' doctrine of the Trinity titled Participating in God (2000) in which he seeks to honestly wrestle with the subject, and comes close, this attempt ultimately leaves much to be desired. It is—though—an honest effort. Fiddes work importantly shapes the issues for the author, particularly in seeking to correlate a theological doctrine of the Trinity with pastoral care. Ultimately, Fiddes seeks to build his pastoral doctrine of the Trinity from the ground up, much like Schleiermacher. He writes, "I aim to develop an image of God which is appropriate to the demands of experience in pastoral care for others." (2000: 7) Fiddes then rehearses the development of the doctrine of person, both as this relates to God, and to us. He notes that the doctrine of the Trinity had its origin in the experience of the early Christians. His goal is to aid the Christian pastor who seeks to enable someone to live in the interaction between who they truly are (as a person) and in whom they present to the world (as a persona/ personage). (2000: 21)

As Fiddes puts it, the difficulty is in the discrepancy between who we are and what image or person we present to the world in our daily interactions. As this discrepancy is diminished, as greater authenticity is achieved, we attain a greater balance in our integrity of self and our openness to others. (2000: 22) Another tension for Fiddes is the relationship between independence and dependence, whereby we learn to

adjudicate our relationships with others from the social roles we are required to fulfill. Finally, there is the issue of unity and diversity. (2000: 25, 27) The goal of a pastoral doctrine of God should involve the language of participation. As such, it is to ask conceptually, how our engagement with God speaks to pastoral issues. Next, our experience of God should satisfy a pastoral doctrine of God. Subsequently, Fiddes discusses how experience shapes and is in turn, shaped by, a conceptuality of God. (2000: 33)

Fiddes then explicates an epistemology of participation in which we share in God's being through engaging God's movements between persons through prayer, baptism, in discipleship as representatives of Christ, through discovering our roles, and ultimately in the divine communication beyond us. (2000: 38-55) Fiddes' work is well thought out, beautifully conceived and sincere in its presentation. One firm difficulty, however, is his understanding of participation, which in the end is simply not robust enough to satisfy. As Fiddes puts it in his book, prayer to God is like that of a child to a parent. As we pray, we participate (in something like) the Son's prayer to the Father within the Triune life itself. (2000: 37) As we pray, we participate (in something like) the Father's sending of the Son in love. To do so, in the Spirit is to be open to new depths of relationship. No matter how outstanding and laudatory his work, and it is, the author is not completely convinced by the thrust of his argument. We mention Fiddes because his work is influential, both pro and con, for this study.

The author would make a personal observation, which is that much pastoral work today that I have observed may be described 'theologically' as not "Trinitarian," but sadly as only, "Unitarian." Meaning, of course, that it centers on 'me' and what I do, and

then on ‘God,’ (as a unity and essentially, a monad) but only as an *afterthought*. We are awash in this anthropological dilemma in care carrying on as if God were ultimately not crucial or fundamental. In addition, when God is mentioned, it is in a Unitarian way in that this 'care' has little place for Jesus Christ, both his person and his work. These are two issues necessary in working through regarding a Practical or Pastoral Theology. Unitarianism, and also essentially a “practical atheism” in that God and God’s work in Christ is an addendum tacked on to the psychological motifs presently postulated (or instead God is simply ignored altogether). As a minister in a congregation, the author believes that Practical Theology/ Pastoral Theology ought to be "theology" in the best sense of the word.

A Pastoral Theology must be both ‘pastoral’, while being also ‘practical’ and ‘theological.’ It ought to be practical in that it is a *lived* theology. It ought to be theological in that it takes seriously God’s communication of his nature and character in the Incarnation. It should be practical and theological in that it discerns in the Incarnation the reality of Emmanuel—that is, God with us! That God is truly with us in Jesus Christ ought to be an integral axiom for a Practical Theology. It is the Spirit’s practical ministry to reveal this to us. This is one aspect of the tradition, which cannot be overlooked. In John’s Gospel (Chapter 16) Jesus speaks of the Spirit’s arrival following his ascension, and ministry, as leading us into the truth. For Pastoral Theology, the epistemological relevance of the Spirit of God is important, not just important—but **fundamental.** Because of the Spirit’s ongoing work as Advocate and Teacher (to name only two aspects of the Spirit’s work), John McLeod Campbell would have understood this epistemological deficiency and the lack of faith in us about God’s presence and work in

Christ *as* sin. Sin, for McLeod Campbell, is failing to believe God's self-attestation. Sin blinds us to the truth. For him, sin was understood as not believing in God's great purposes for us in Jesus Christ. Sin was putting ourselves in God's place. Sin was also placing ourselves in Christ's place. For Mcleod Campbell what God has done for us in Jesus Christ is so monumental, so universal, so powerful, that it changes the creation in which we live and reconciles and redeems who we are down to the very core of our humanity. Not to believe this, then, is sin. Sin is disbelief. It is to live one way, when reality requires another way. Not to act on this truth is also sin. Sin is a sickness, which affects us completely. Because of his great work in and through Jesus Christ, God is rightly the 'Father of our spirits' and we are his beloved children in consequence. Our way, because of God's ongoing work in us, of understanding the reality around us and ourselves changes.

This speaks volumes to a present generation, whose struggle as psychoanalyst Leon Wurmser suggests is 'shame.' Wurmser describes shame at its core as 'feeling unloved' (Wurmser 1994). One must clarify here, that in Wurmser's view our perceived enmity with others and thus shame is only anthropologically oriented. Because of its basis in psychology, there is little reference in the literature to shame as a response to feeling unloved by God. Therefore, if this is in fact the case, how—as a pastor—is one to respond effectively? One orientation is to disabuse them of the feeling that God does not love them. Another is to address the affected core of their person and their belief of feeling unloved by significant others like a parents, extended relatives (Aunts, Uncles, Cousins), siblings, and friends. This is the necessary pastoral work of praxis.

Long before Jacob Firet (1986), Ray Anderson (2001) and Gerben Heitink (1999) suggested pastoral work as **"mediation"** of God's presence in the care of persons, John Mcleod Campbell understood ministry to people as "participation" in God's great work in Christ to them and also as presenting the mind of Christ to people (Campbell 1869). In rehearsing Christ's mind to them as found in the Scriptures, McLeod Campbell sought to define for them the truth of their situation. Not what they believed; or what they had been told previously, or what they thought—but what Christ actually thought of them through his person and work. In this way, he sought to *reframe* their way of thinking, to change their mental constructs regarding religion, God, themselves, others, so that they saw the world in a different manner based on God's objective work on their behalf in Jesus Christ. His preaching, teaching, and pastoral care all had this as their *fundamental* theme—the careful reorientation of their believing and thinking.

An expedition of a thousand miles, so it is said, whether through forests or deserts—begins with the first step. This is undoubtedly true. The Psalmist, like so many others before him, about to embark on a journey of his own, looks up into the dangerous hills through which he will travel near Jerusalem, and asks: *"I lift my eyes to the hills, from where will my help come?"* (Psalm 121) The first step, like the Psalmist's initial footstep, of this particular exploration is the place from which to begin, and to do so as we journey forward with prayer.

ONE SMALL VIGNETTE

The elderly farmer sat in his big lounge chair in his farmhouse with tears streaming down his face as he wept quietly and profusely. He was saying good-bye to me, and I to him and in the process of doing so—trying to sum up what my time at Rocky Springs had meant both to him and to me. I had taken another call to a neighboring church in the Presbytery. This seeking of closure between parishioner and pastor had become common in the last weeks as I slowly made the rounds to speak with everyone face to face. In between low sobs, he uttered in appreciation of our time together, *"John, I never thought I was good enough for God to love. I always thought, though that if I did right, lived a good life, and went to church regularly, God might love me."* There was a long silence as we both pondered his words, because I had done nothing but talk about God's unconditional love for people for the last five years, which in a primarily Baptist territory in the Deep South of the United States seemed odd at best and heretical at least. Conditional grace and love are common among evangelicals in this region. Salvation is the key to unlock God's love. On this view of preaching, teaching, and pastoral care, the word "if" stands hovering silently and morosely. Everything is geared, then, to an experience of salvation. "Bill," (which was not his name), then said, *"I will always be grateful to you because I now know that God does love me and it's made all the difference in my life."* The author had made quite a few mistakes at that church as a green young pastor and so I was glad, even grateful, that I had done at least one thing right and beneficial! Bill's remarks raised the issue for the author with which I have been struggling ever since.

The people have changed, their names are different, but the theological and pastoral issue has not changed at all. If anything, I am more convinced that the issue of God's nature and character as revealed in Jesus Christ by the power of the Spirit is deeply intertwined with how a person regards himself or herself as a person and as a Christian. To know God is to know ourselves. The reverse, as Calvin notes, is also true. On a youth trip to Colorado, I realized this as the young woman looked at me sheepishly because she worried that I would judge her as lacking in some important sense. She was also anxious, because she was not sure if God could love "a nerd" like her. The issue of God for her was a real one. It is one thing to view God metaphorically, by assuming we cannot know God and positing a name or personality for God (and in so doing hope it matches), it is another thing for God to have revealed himself in Jesus Christ unreservedly. How do we view God? Do we simply throw metaphors skyward and hope that something sticks? Do we play language games hoping that something may help? What does God's nature and character tell us as it is revealed in Jesus Christ, in Scripture and in preaching? T. F. Torrance made the constant plea that in Jesus Christ, God stands fully revealed. There is no part of God hiding behind Jesus.

Bill struggled with what is classically known in theological terms as a **"lack of assurance."** This is the fear that God does not love us. Later generations more likely would have understood this feeling as **'anxiety.'** Anxiety, in modernity, is a diffuse and generalized *apprehension* about something or someone unknown. It can be subtle or it can manifest itself as sheer terror. As modernity increasingly removed God from the universe, the Christian's 'lack of assurance' could have readily morphed into a better-explained non-theological **anxiety.** Our generation, today, might also characterize Bill's

issue as **'shame.'** Shame is the feeling of not mattering at all. It is the feeling of being unloved. Unfortunately, as I have discovered over the past twenty-nine year's Bill is not alone, nor is he unique.

One reason for the beginning of this specific journey, and the study before you, is the church's health at the inauguration of the twenty-first century. It is in desperate shape. Not only is the church's corporate health a concern, but the spiritual condition of the parishioners who make up the church is crucial as well. Are they really disciples? I have to confess that my interest as a pastor is not only with the academy, towards which this study aims to contribute,—but also the strength and vitality of the individual church and the church members who make up a congregation. Knowledge, for the sake of knowledge, is all well good and fine but as a practicing minister preaching, teaching, and engaging in pastoral care in the trenches, I am also interested in what will work—what is practical. The way ahead will be arduous and fraught with difficulty, of that I have no doubt. If we are to make progress on this trek, we will have to say with hope and a prayer, just as the Psalmist does: *"My help will come in the name of the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth."* Therefore, this research's journey begins with prayer and faith that God will provide.

As a pastor, perhaps more than any other subject, I deal with the skill, faithfulness, integrity, and viability of ministry. Is this particular word beneficial? Is what I do caring? Has there been failure? How am I to understand this event? What shall I say to someone in order to assist them in growth? With what issue am I really dealing—is it theologically or psychologically oriented? How may I care better, more

solicitously? What does it mean to care for people, doing so in the light of Jesus Christ daily? How do I assist them in their journey of faith?

Effective ministry has more in sight than the physical well-being of church members. It also has more in sight than their psychological well-being, although that is important. However, both concerns are not the main thing…and keeping the main thing, *the main thing*, is what is most important (so the saying goes). It is also, more than just worrying over their *mental* health. Ultimately, it is, or should be, our concern with the entire person is it not, or to put it as a previous generation had it: **"to care for their souls."** Strasbourg Reformer Martin Bucer (1491-1551) speaks for the Reformed tradition of pastoral care, or as he puts it: **'care of souls'** when he writes the following in his pastoral treatise, Concerning the True Care of Souls.

There are five main tasks required in the pastoral office and true care of souls.

1. First, to lead to Christ our Lord and into his communion those who are still estranged from him, whether through carnal excess or false worship.

2. Secondly, to restore those who had once been brought to Christ and into his church but have been drawn away again through the affairs of the flesh or false doctrine.

3. Thirdly, to assist in the true reformation of those who while remaining in the church of Christ have grievously fallen and sinned.

4. Fourthly, to re-establish in true Christian strength and health those who, while persevering in the fellowship of Christ and no doing anything particularly or grossly wrong, have become somewhat feeble and sick in the Christian life.

5. Fifthly, to protect from all offence and falling away and continually encourage in all good things those who stay with the flock and in Christ's sheep pen without grievously sinning or becoming weak and sick in their Christian walk. (Bucer 2009: 70)

Bucer, as one can observe, counsels evangelism, pastoral care, forgiveness of sins, discipling or mentoring. As we will see, Mcleod Campbell comes from this *very* **Reformed** tradition's emphasis on ministry. He would have understood Bucer's counsel. His own interpretation of his ministry was his desire above all else to be of some good for his people. Of concern for him, in this vein, was the correct understanding of the gospel. Misunderstanding or error here is catastrophic. Next in order comes living into that correct understanding of the gospel in one's life. Indicative comes first and then the imperative. Administering its truth to one's self comes next. Self-examination precedes the examinations of others. Finally, one must continuously nurture one's faith and understanding so that one might grow in awareness so that this affects living, as one is slowly being conformed to the image of Christ. We are all on the way. Pastors are disciples too—we may be guides, but we are still journeying just as our parishioners.

What is fundamental and revolutionary in Mcleod Campbell's pastoral understanding is that God gives us the very tools we need in order to work out our salvation with fear and trembling, by grace, while developing into the child which God so desires us to be. God grants in Christ all that he requires. In this vein, a favorite Scripture verse of McLeod Campbell's, which he quoted on numerous occasions, and which guided his thought, is Galatians 2:20. Paul writes of his own experience, *"It is not I who live,* ***but it is Christ who lives in me****, and the life I now live I live by the faith (or faith in—depending on whether one reads here a subjective genitive or an objective genitive) of the Son of God."* McLeod Campbell was conscious of this same truth.

How is one to do just this today, in the twenty-first century? Is one simply to mimic the pastoral care of a previous generation? To do so presupposes our existence in the same culture, with the same worldview. Princeton Pastoral Theologian Seward Hiltner uses as an example in his book, Preface to Pastoral Theology (1958) the ministry of the Rev. Ichabod Spencer from the nineteenth century. Spencer too was worried about salvation. While Spencer's journal entries are interesting and speak volumes about how a poor doctrine of election can contribute to anxiety, we are in a different place today. Spencer's pastoral care included encouraging one to make a decision for Christ. This decision was the key and the serum. According to Spencer, this changed their existential status. It also affected the way God viewed them. It is obvious that because of the difference in times one cannot simply bring Spencer's methods willy-nilly into the twentieth first century, although some would argue differently.

Another example to consider: Pope Gregory's 5th century Book of Pastoral Rule (c. 590) is a classic book on pastoral care. It has much to commend it. There is much of use in its pages. However, it comes from a far different culture and time. To read it today, post-Freud, is to wonder at some of its counsel. For many its counsel would seem far too belligerent and bullying of the parishioner. In some important ways, it is not terribly different from Eduard Thurneysen's A Theology of Pastoral Care (1962). "Directive" would be the term pastoral counselors would use! Others would wonder at the demands of the imperatives at the expense of the indicatives of grace. So, not all of the past may be appropriated beneficially. Do we then forget the past? Do we mine what may be appropriated—excavating it and then transforming it for our generation?

Our work as pastors is unique in this time and place, but to seek to minister without a knowledge of the past, seems to this author, foolishness. It is to seek to reinvent the wheel of pastoral care, particularly without knowledge of the *Christian* past (Elford 1999). With pastoral theologian Ed Wimberley, the author is convinced that the retrieval of the past is both important and beneficial (Wimberley 2011). As **"Christian"** ministers, we, I am arguing, should not leave the past behind. Some aspects will however, have to be jettisoned or reworked—simply by being inappropriate for today's work. Cultural norms have changed. Ideals have changed. People have changed.

One example that McLeod Campbell's own work highlights is the difficulty of the traditional Reformed/ Presbyterian doctrine of predestination. This doctrine led in Campbell's own day to a common grievous theology with horrible results for worship, preaching, and pastoral care. One could not be sure when one sat in worship whether the God one worshipped regarded the worshipper as a beloved child or the subject of wrath and judgment. How was one to tell? Yet, one was whipped up by the pastor into worshipping God. Questions regarding who God was, and then what God, one addressed in worship and in prayer, cut to the core of their experience. These related question played havoc with the Church's life and witness. As we shall see McLeod Campbell's Pastoral Theology took note of his parishioner's experience and questions. In his use of the doctrine of election, McLeod Campbell bears remarkable similarities to Pierre Maury (1960), a French colleague of Karl Barth's and the inspiration for his own doctrine of election in the Church Dogmatics. McLeod Campbell's focus, both philosophically and experientially, was always Jesus Christ. Thus, pastoral theology must archeologically re-appropriate the best of the past, but in so doing re-interpret it for today's time and place.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

As a working pastor for the past twenty-seven years, I have had a variety of occasions to counsel a wide range of people. Much of the counsel has centered on their feelings of being unloved by parents, neighbors, others –but also has focused on God's disposition towards them. In the Scottish context in which Mcleod Campbell pastored the issue would have been described as **"a lack of assurance of salvation"** (J. B. Torrance 1973: 295-311). Given the thorny problem of predestination, the people in the pew worried whether they were among God's beloved. In other theological contexts, such as Kierkegaard's treatise on anxiety and its relation to the Christian, the (roughly) similar issue would have been described as **"despair"** or **"anxiety."** (Kierkegaard 1980; Hans Urs von Balthasar 1994; Tillich 2000) Today, pastoral psychotherapists would describe the issue not as a lack of assurance or anxiety, but rather as one of **"shame."** (Wurmser 1981; Capps 1993) In an ecclesial context, regardless of the diagnosis, the concern is remarkably similar—the feelings of being unloved and the concern about God's disposition towards people in general and them in particular. Can I be loved? Can I be loved by anyone? Can God love me? Does God love me? Am I worthy of being loved? And so on.

Now, how does a pastor respond? We may listen with profit, to numerous voices from the past as we seek to navigate the treacherous waters of ministry today. Freud and his followers have cast a huge shadow on pastoral care, particularly in the twentieth century up until today. Freud's suggestion that reconciliation was needed between the three dynamic forces of the mind reworked the whole doctrine of reconciliation and did

so anthropologically. Reconciliation was now no longer with God and neighbor, but with one's self. Broadly speaking, this ministry of Pastoral Care, or Pastoral Theology, I am suggesting, may be understood, as one of the pioneer's in the field of pastoral theology, Seward Hiltner, suggested, it as, "Christian shepherding." If reconciliation is the issue, then constructively dealing with it requires some kind of care. For Hiltner this care was "shepherding." In Hiltner's understanding, shepherding involved every aspect of the life of the church and the pastor's ministry. Counseling, teaching, preaching, and administration and so on—all fall under the rubric of "Christian *shepherding*." Because of this controlling image of shepherding, as Hiltner has it, the minister should be vitally concerned with the concept itself, its matter, depth and the practice of care, or "shepherding" (Hiltner 1958: 15). Perhaps there is no more accurate metaphor, than that of the shepherding one, by which to describe the work or ministry of a pastor (Oden 1983: 49ff.). This archetypal image is certainly a common one.

This essay, however, seeks to re-appropriate, excavate, and retrieve the past, and in particular the specific work and ministry of nineteenth century Scottish pastor-theologian John McLeod Campbell. McLeod Campbell was at once brilliant, pious, determined, and faithful in his pastoral ministry. He was also deposed by the National Scottish Church for preaching heresy five years into his ministry. He was defrocked primarily for his understanding of God *as* love, and even more so God *as* the Father of our spirits. He was also deposed because of the weight he placed on the Christian's understanding and assurance of such love, and what it meant to live daily in response—to this love—as a Christian. McLeod Campbell was ultimately interested in the praxis of Christian living. Because of his preaching and his notoriety, he was highly regarded in

some quarters and despised in others. As we reflect on his work, we might heed pastoral theologian Bonnie Miller-McLemore's (1996) counsel that it might be time regarding the shepherding perspective to reflect particularly on our theological language, the role we enact as a minister, in the care of both the congregation as a whole, and individuals, specifically, in a new way. There are undoubtedly other metaphors, than shepherding, to use.

Sharon Thornton, argues as much, in her book Broken, Yet Beloved (2002: 172-173) echoing the reservation regarding shepherding imagery. She is not alone, Carroll Wise suggested years ago in 1966 in the pages of his book The Meaning of Pastoral Care that the shepherding perspective was tired and dated. (1966: 2) Don Browning (1987), internationally recognized teacher of Practical Theology, raises this very issue when he suggests that Psychology has its own unique language and meta-perspective which differs in important ways from Practical Theology's. Can we still use this imagery? Language and outlook is undoubtedly rich in content and there have been positive gains in the field of pastoral care and pastoral theology over the course of the last several decades. The field is not so crowded, however, that there is no more room for an additional perspective. The shepherding metaphor, analogy, imagery continues to be used here in this essay as a kind of 'disclosure model.' (Ramsey 1957; Grenz 2004) Models may assist an individual to gain some new appreciation or learning from the replica, it may also clarify language used. Language can function as a model. An accumulation of perspectives may also function as a model. An image may function as a model. As clarity occurs one may say that a 'disclosure' is apparent. As McClendon and Smith (1973) point out, for Ramsey religious language arises from experience, which may be

described as situations of 'cosmic disclosure.' From this, a particular discernment develops and a commitment is made. Language may consist, on this account, of models whose function is to inculcate in the hearer an image, a figure, a picture and to do so imaginatively such that it discloses some truth. Hence, because this image, picture, language, figure or replica divulges some perspective of truth, the phrase 'disclosure model' is used in science and in theology. The shepherding image remains important for the author.

This additional, new viewpoint about Pastoral Theology must be a perspective rooted in the past, while seeking to be faithful to the needs of the present. One challenge in promoting such a view is the pragmatism and instrumentalism inherent in the field. In gauging the field of pastoral theology from the viewpoint of a woman, Bonnie Miller-McLemore notes that "shepherding" or "ministry" has all too often been too interested in **technique**. Hiltner was guilty of accentuating the operational aspect of the field. That it, in so doing, ministry betrays a certain *theological vacuousness*. Doing, thus becomes more important than purpose. Technique, then, she argues, trumps theology. Miller McLemore writes:

> "Among clergy, the psychological approach has generated an almost unhealthy reliance on psychological jargon and counseling techniques rather than on theological language, pastoral mediation, and congregational care." (Moessner 1996: 12)

In a survey I conducted for a psychology class in college at the University of South Carolina in 1987 among pastors and pastoral counselors, I discovered that psychological terms and jargon predominated from their training and outlook. Humanistic Psychologist

Carl Rogers had by far been more influential than any other resource or person. At the end of the course, in the final research paper I submitted to the professor I questioned the relationship between the two disciplines, Psychology and Theology. It is this specific 'theological vacuousness (her term) which this study seeks to address in concrete ways while using Mcleod Campbell's pastoral and theological corpus of work—sensitively and constructively. Theology remains important.

Our investigation here, then, aims at reflection upon the act *and* theology of "Christian Shepherding." However, following Lapsley (1986), the author intends this study to highlight the theological character of Pastoral Theology or Practical Theology as it interfaces with practice. Thus, we seek to do so in the sense in which pastoral theologian Derek Tidball puts it,

> Pastoral theology…relates to the interface between theology and Christian doctrine on the one hand, and pastoral experience and care on the other. As such, it is found to be a discipline in tension. It is not theology in the abstract, but theology seen from the shepherding perspective. (Tidball 1986: 24)

Questions arise about "shepherding." Why? How? In what way? With what purpose? To what end? And so on. Questions quickly multiply. As such, the issue of shepherding and its relation to Pastoral Theology takes front and center stage. We will find that one guide through the maze of these difficulties is Mcleod Campbell himself. McLeod Campbell's entire corpus was written while ministering in the trenches and not from the lofty academic lecturing stands from which so much other Pastoral Theology comes. Although he is not well known, particularly in the United States, McLeod Campbell is of

interest because his theology of **"the love of God"** as Scottish theologian George Newlands (1980) puts it, flew in the face of almost the entire outlook of the day.

The Bible's simplest definition of God, that "God is love," (1 John 4:8) would have inspired pause in many. Much of Reformed theology centered on a certain understanding of the "order of salvation" (*ordo salutis*) which is/ was neither Biblical, nor pastorally helpful, or sensitive – giving rise to much anxiety, or as Mcleod Campbell would have understood it particularly a **"lack of assurance (of God's love)".** Sadly, much poor theology today still contributes to this malaise. Mcleod Campbell's theological language, in addition, by being both Trinitarian and Incarnational offers suggestive grist for the mill of our pastoral work from the Shepherding perspective.

1.2 The Aim of This Study

Dr. Leanne Van Dyk, President, and Professor of Reformed Theology at Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, Georgia, in her book on John Mcleod Campbell's doctrine of the atonement concludes with this observation,

> "Campbell's atonement theology is pastorally oriented to troubled and restless persons, [and] is also a uniquely modern, or thoroughly contemporary, theology. The religious and psychological markets of America are full of the latest remedies for the doubts, fears, and struggles of searching people. But Campbell's atonement theology contains elements that meet a widespread hunger for acceptance and truth. Those elements include a consistent reassurance of God's love and mercy, a realistic appraisal of human lostness, a sturdy proclamation of the real salvific effects of Christ's life on earth, and a message of hope for present community and future wholeness. It is a message that can powerfully comfort those who search for authentic acceptance and genuine promise. (Van Dyk 1995: 171)

Her statement 'pastorally oriented to troubled and restless persons…' is not only suggestive for this essay's purpose. It is fundamental. Van Dyk is correct. So helpful is it—that a proper understanding of McLeod Campbell's work and thought will go a long way to responding to the question raised by Paul Pruyser in his classic article, "Anxiety, Guilt, and Shame in the Atonement" (Pruyser 1964: 15-33). Pruyser suggests applying the various atonement theories (Moral, Ransom, Satisfaction) to specific patient problems. However, he also hopes that someone will develop a more creative and multi-faceted understanding of the atonement which will speak to all ages. Unfortunately, he was a clinical psychologist and unfamiliar with McLeod Campbell's work from the preceding century. Noticing Pruyser's challenge, Brad Binau (2002) also seeks to respond with atonement theory to pastoral dilemmas.

As beneficial, as McLeod Campbell's theology is, however, it occurred in a specific cultural context different from our own. McLeod Campbell's theology was addressed to people in nineteenth century Scotland whose theological outlook was far different from our outlook today. This had to do, on the one hand, with the appropriation of John Calvin's doctrine of double predestination and its metamorphosis in his followers, which led to a skeptical hardening of attitude in how people viewed themselves and one another. Was a person among the chosen? Or, were they among those *not* chosen? To put it colloquially, is one a sheep or a goat? The classic Reformed doctrine of predestination or election from Augustine up to Theodore Beza and beyond, which, McLeod Campbell struggled to overcome in his own pastoral work with his people, divided humanity, by God's choice, into two different groups. Thus, this choice had to do, not only with how God saw them, but also with how people saw themselves in

relation to God. In addition to altering the doctrine of election, McLeod Campbell also changed theological emphases and concepts, from the common theology of the day based on the Westminster Standards, dramatically. He did so basing his findings on experience and pastoral care. Where the traditional theology of Mcleod Campbell's day used juridical language, with the emphasis on "justice" "rectitude" "guilt," Campbell used familial language and concepts originating as may be seen in the Father—Son language seen in the New Testament. This was highly unusual. The late Scottish professor James B. Torrance, of the University of Aberdeen, has characterized this different theological language, which McLeod Campbell used as "filial," in nature, as opposed to legal. (James Torrance: 1973) Filial language is the language of family, of relatedness, of intimacy. Mcleod Campbell's pastoral theology, then, is the language of relationship and specifically the relationship of the Triune God to people, and correspondingly our relationship not only in return, but also to one another in light of this prior relation. As such, it speaks volumes to today's church, which still struggles over what theological concepts and framework to use.

McLeod Campbell's doctrine of God, his Trinitarian-incarnational understanding of salvation, and unique therapeutic perspectives sought to "reframe" the images, ideas, and experiences of his parishioners through preaching, teaching, and pastoral care. (Capps 1990: 2001) To "reframe" something is to seek to view it in another way. That McLeod Campbell sought to do this in the midst of his shepherding work is significant for our work today as pastors. This study aims, then, at reflection on Christian shepherding, that is 'care of souls' utilizing the uniquely Trinitarian and Incarnational

pastoral theology of nineteenth century Scottish pastor-theologian John McLeod Campbell.

McLeod Campbell's unique Biblical, constructive, and experience-based theology flew in the face of the traditional theology that surrounded him. As we will come to see, this kind of relationally based Trinitarian and Incarnational language is immensely helpful given the state of mind produced through the melding of cultural, social, economic, and psychological factors that influence Christians today.

Additionally, this study aims to take its cue from the remarks of a well-known pastoral theologian, who while celebrating the successes of the movement over the past several decades, also laments the losses. In doing so, she (Miller-McLemore) echoes the remarks of E. Brooks Holifield, who, in a monumental survey beginning with the pilgrim pastors of early American society to the modern pastor of today, discovered a fragmentation towards the latter part of the twentieth century in outlooks among congregational pastors, pastoral theologians in the academy, chaplains, counselors and specialists. Most emphasized psychology, some utilized the language of yesteryear, some mouthed traditional theological terms while some used therapeutic language—but among none of them was there a clear *consensus* – a **'theology'** (Practical or Pastoral) that was truly practical (Holifield 1983). Not only was there not a clear consensus about ministering, as an outlook and activity but there was also not a clear consensus on what goal ministry has. The author believes this fragmentation still to exist.

To what do we aim to achieve as pastors in the lives of our parishioners? What does our shepherding hope to accomplish? Where are we attempting to go? The questions are valid, crucial, and vital today. Certainly, to use Carl Roger's humanistic

language, it is not 'self-actualization' the term that is used by Holifield to describe the goal of most 'Pastoral Theology' or 'Practical Theology' in the latter half of the twentieth century. As the author will argue McLeod Campbell's theology provides a fundament of ideas in order to proceed in response to these issues.

1.3 Methodology

Even though Dietrich Bonhoeffer argued for the priority of the "Who?" question over the "What?" or "How?" questions—particularly concerning Christology, in Pastoral Theology eventually the "What?" question needs to be addressed. The issue of method must be solved. How are we to proceed? In his lectures, Bonhoeffer argued for the centrality of Christology compared with other disciplines. He noted that, "It is the unknown and hidden center of the University of learning." (1978: 28) While the author does not necessarily disagree with him, in what way are we to proceed? This is *Pastoral* Theology! Methods for engaging in Pastoral Theology abound with new proposals arising quickly, mostly centered on experience. James Poling and Donald Miller, in their book Foundations for a Practical Theology of Ministry (1985) suggest an overarching schema with six different methods.

Making up the different methods are the emphases between two axes. The first axis is the 'critical' method used to relate dialectically the Christian tradition and the culture. The second axis is the relationship between church and society. The typology in the first axis moves along a continuum. There is, in practical theology, a

(1.) Critical scientific method emphasizing a secular discipline which provides the framework and from which the Christian tradition plays a minor role.

(2.) Then, there is a Critical Correlational Method in which there is a 'dialogue' between the Christian tradition and secular sources of knowledge.

(3.) Thirdly, there is a Critical 'Confessional' method which uses the secular sources of wisdom minimally, while the Christian tradition is of primary importance.

Consequently, in the first method cultural and scientific norms carry more weight than the Christian tradition. The cultural and scientific norms provide the framework. In the second method, the sources are equal. Secular sources of knowledge are neither greater than, nor, lesser than the sources of Bible and Christian Tradition. There is thus parity between both. In the third model, the sources of Bible and Christian Tradition carry more weight that the secular sources of knowledge. Each model weights the sources differently moving from the emphasis of secular sources over Christian Tradition and Scripture to the exact opposite at the other end of the spectrum, where Christian Tradition and Scripture are emphasized. The relationships between the two sources might look like this depending on the model,

1. **SECULAR SOURCES** and Christian Tradition and Scripture

2. **SECULAR SOURCES** and **CHRISTIAN TRADITION AND SCRIPTURE**

3. Secular Sources and **CHRISTIAN TRADITION AND SCRIPTURE**

Then, within these three major types (1, 2, 3) of model in which secular wisdom is related to theology along a gradient from major partner to minor partner, there are two minor categories within each—"A" and "B" each focusing on 'A' society, and 'B' the church.

So then, in **1A** we see that "Practical theology can take the form of a critical science whose purpose is the formation of society" (1985: 36). Then at the opposite spectrum,

is **Type 1B**: "Practical theology can take the form of a critical science whose purpose is the formation of the church" (1985: 38).

Type 2A: "Practical theology can take the form of a critical correlation of the Christian tradition and contemporary philosophy and science in its concern for the formation of society" (1985: 42). Then at the opposite spectrum:

Type 2B: "Practical theology can take the form of a critical correlation in terms of method which focuses primarily on the formation of the church as a community of faith" (1985: 47).

Next is **Type 3A**: "Practical Theology can take the form of critical confession with a primary emphasis upon the church's vision for a larger society" (1985: 50). Once again, this is at the opposite end of the spectrum:

Then there is Type **3B**: "Practical theology can take the form of critical confession that is centered in the practice of a concrete community of Christian faith in mission" (1985: 57).

The issue in the previous types is whether the change sought occurs with the Church as the primary target or society. As one looks closely at the Types there is a range from one to the other.

Concluding, Poling and Miller argue that there are three types of routes or methods in Practical Theology:

(1.) critical science,

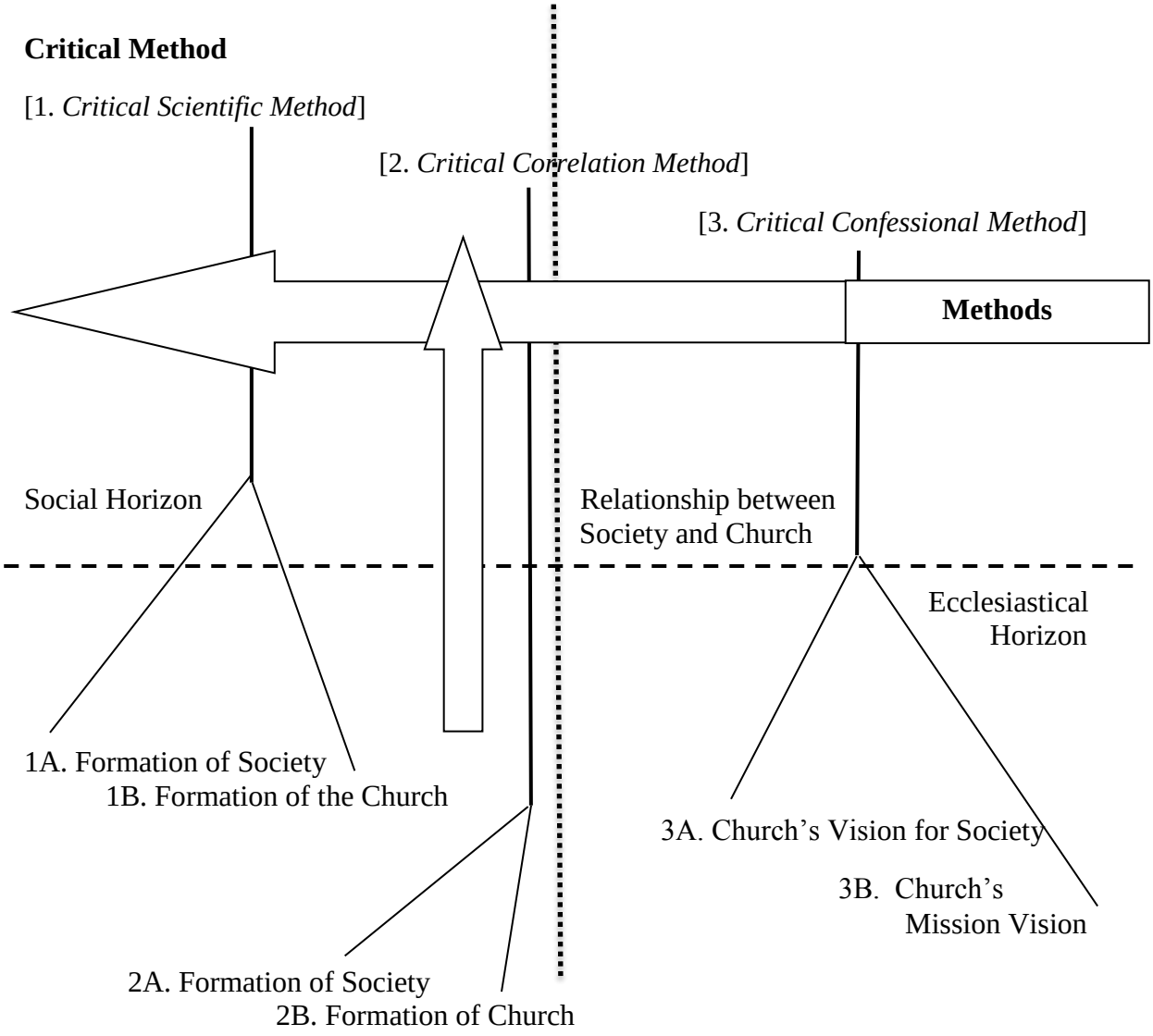
(2.) critical correlation, and finally

(3.) critical confession (1985: 60)

The three models initially proposed, use of secular sources to Christian Scripture and Tradition operate on a range. That is the first aspect of Practical Theology. What is the relationship between the sources we seek to use? Next, with the three types of Practical Theology, there is the question of how the each theology seeks to influence Church or Society along a spectrum.

(See next page for illustration)

TYPES OF PRACTICAL THEOLOGY—POLING AND MILLER



Poling and Miller cover all the possibilities, of the use of sources and their emphasis in Practical Theology. They move from emphasizing in one model secular

sources over Christian sources to equality between both sources and then, finally, to emphasizing the exact opposite in the last model. They also highlight, Practical Theology emphasizing either Church or Society, depending on what it seek to influence. Their schema is valuable. Each Practical Theology proposed by a particular author will fall somewhere within their typology.

In addition to Poling and Miller's own recommendation, Fuller Professor Ray Anderson suggests a "Christo-praxis" model (2001). Anderson's thesis is simple. Ministry precedes theology. Ministry produces theology. Ministry, as Anderson defines it, is not first something, which we as human beings do. Instead, ministry may be understood as that which God has accomplished on humanity's behalf through God's own ministry of revelation and reconciliation in the world. God's ministry begins with Israel and it culminates in Jesus Christ and the Church. (2001: 39) Practical Theology for Anderson is both Trinitarian in structure and Christological in its basis for ministry. Anderson understands ministry, not as something that human beings do by themselves, but rather in conjunction by participation with the Holy Spirit's on-going work of restoring broken humanity. Our humanity has been reconciled, in Jesus Christ, and taken into the life of the Father through the person and work of Jesus Christ, beginning with his incarnate birth, and continuing right up to his ascension at the Father's right hand. Anderson, like all Practical Theologians engages in a reflection on praxis, which understands to be related to competence in ministry. Praxis, for Anderson, may be understood in Aristotelian categories. The Greek philosopher Aristotle is one of the first to address the concept of "praxis." For Aristotle the outcome of an act sheds light on the integrity of that act. Christo-praxis, for Anderson, involves three conditions, which

illustrate competence in ministry. The first is discernment, which is the recognition of the congruence between the Christ we see in Scripture and the Christ we see in ministry. The second is the application of discernment "where God's Word is both proclaimed and practiced in ministry with the result that Christ as truth both touches and is touched by human need." (2001: 34-35) The third is credibility which is the transparency of method with the lucidity of thought that makes the presence of Christ plainly evident and worthy of trust in the event of ministry. (2001: 35-36) Anderson seeks to answer the question about integration, next. How may the task and challenge of ministry coalesce with its foundation, which is none other than Jesus Christ? Part of an answer is allowing the resurrection of Christ to become a hermeneutical criterion. Christ himself provides a heuristic framework out of which we may interpret ways in which life is made new. A person's restored dignity, wholeness and equality may be seen in Scripture as evidence of God's work in our lives. For Anderson there is a correlation between what God has done, antecedently, in Scripture and what God may do in our lives today. The Risen Christ is active through his Spirit in ministry today. This work and ministry offers us a hermeneutical paradigm through some of the difficult and seemingly intractable ethical and moral dilemmas, which aggravate the church today. Another opportunity for integration is an accurately stated theological anthropology. Anderson follows both Barth and Torrance in looking to Christ's own activity in the incarnation as revelatory about humanity. Christ takes our humanity in the Ascension into the presence and person of the Father, which endorses human beings. In so doing, we are liberated truly and allowed to respond to such grace with the gratitude of love as authentic response both to God and to neighbor. Anderson has been influenced greatly in his proposal by Karl

Barth and his doctorvater T. F. Torrance. There are some important similarities between Anderson's model and the one in this dissertation.

Don Browning, the doyen of Practical Theologians, (1991) proposes in his Fundamental Practical Theology four different 'moves' that build upon one another as part of the one over-arching 'Fundamental practical theological' process. Browning's work is so important to consider that the author will spend considerable time in explicating his work, highlighting what is crucial and important. Browning, however, is not above critique.

Princeton Theological Seminary Professor Deborah van Deusen Hunsinger, reflecting both on the work of Karl Barth and on her own clinical psychological training, suggests another method, which she says is based on the Chalcedonian Creed. Her "Chalcedonian model," in which she suggests there is unity in diversity and priority over equality emphasizes two different aspects of truth. Not able to settle the relationship between psychology and theology, Jung and Barth, she decided instead in setting both side by side. Rather than preferencing one source over another, she preferences both sources not in dialogue, but instead in maintaining their uniqueness as one stands beside the other. Practical Theology, therefore, maintains the separateness of the two perspectives content to let each offer its own wisdom.

Emory University professor James Fowler (1985) proposes a [mutual] "critical-correlational" model, recently revised by John Swinton and Harriet Mowat (2006) both from the United Kingdom. Fowler's model is critical, in that it is not correlational or dialogical without reflection and decision. It is correlational in that there is a

relationship, what might be called a mutually beneficial association, between two or more disparate disciplines. German Theologian Paul Tillich originally suggested a correlational model for theology in his three-volume Systematic Theology. It was not critical simply because it was one way. Questions were proposed by society and culture, which Theology sought to answer using language that society and culture could understand. Don Browning suggests that a critically revised correlational program in Practical Theology attempts "to correlate critically those questions and answers that are derived from various interpretations of the Central Christian witness with those questions and answers that are implicit in various interpretations of ordinary human experience." (1983: 50) What this means for Don Browning is that there is a critical correlation between "such norms for human action and fulfillment that are implicit in various interpretations of ordinary human experience." (1983: 50) Thus, to make Browning's point even more explicit, "the critical correlation occurs between various *interpretations* of the norms of action and fulfillment." There is never, for Browning, a pristine Christian event or raw uninterpreted experience. (1983: 50)

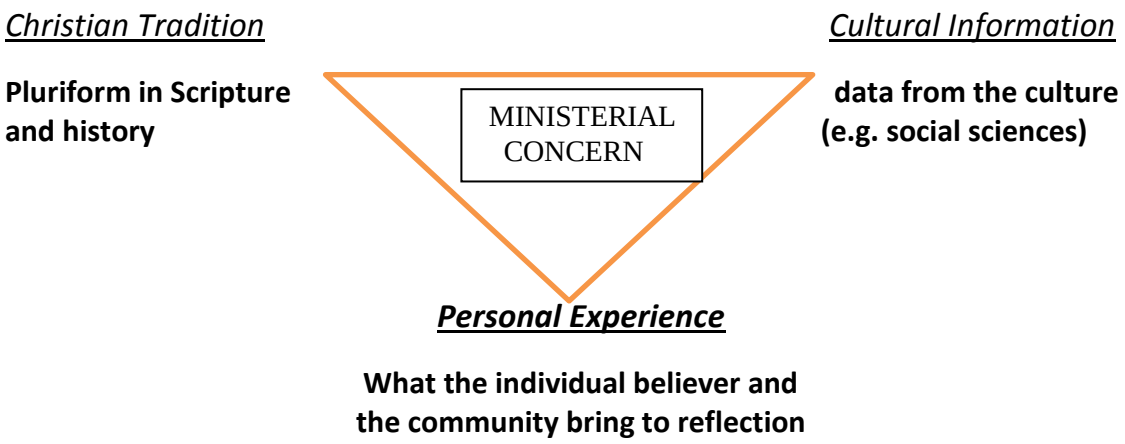
David Tracy, a colleague of Browning's in Chicago, offers in his book Blessed Rage for Order (1975) his own revised critical correlation model in the interplay between Scripture, Church Tradition and experience. British thinkers Swinton and Mowat utilize the work of James Fowler when they suggest that practical theology has four important points to keep at the forefront.

(1.) Practical theological inquiry is **critical**
(2.) Practical theology is **theological reflection**

> (3.) The **locus of investigation** in Practical theology are not simply the practices of the Church and the experiences of Christians, meaning that Practical Theology is not ultimately parochial, and finally
> (4.) The primary task of practical theology is to ensure and enable faithful practices and living. (2006: 4-7)

As we have seen, there are varieties of methods available. However, the methodology that this dissertation proposes to be used is based on the scheme of James D. Whitehead and Evelyn Eaton Whitehead in their book Method in Ministry: Theological Reflection and Christian Ministry. (1980) They put forward three sources in conversation with each other, the Christian Tradition and Scripture, Personal Experience (of the minister and others), and Cultural Information (data from the social sciences). (1980: 14) Used by the minister as resources, the Christian Tradition and Scripture, Personal Experience and Cultural Information, the correlative dynamic moves through attending to these assets in listening and reflection and then assertion of a preliminary proposal (neither nonassertive or aggressive) and finally in the decision to action. The model they propose looks like this,

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION IN MINISTRY



All three disparate sources provide both stages and resources for reflection and then finally action. When reflecting upon the Christian Tradition the minister must do so with elasticity and hermeneutical flexibility. Cultural information with be both positive and negative. It may even be conflicted in some cases. One must be able to sort through the dense information at hand. Finally, there is the experience of the minister and the community, which offers a resource just as important as both the Christian Tradition and Cultural Information. There is to be an active dialogue between each source. From these three sources, the minister is to be able to suggest a particular action in response to the issue. One aspect of this model, which the author seeks to modify, is the concern that such a methodology will issue simply in application. That is it becomes simply problem-solution. The author believes a further correlation between the initial proposal, the action taken, and further alteration is warranted.

Holding the Whitehead's scheme in mind, this dissertation specifically utilizes the work of John McLeod Campbell in dialogue with the three challenges for Pastoral

Theology. The lack of the assurance of God's love, anxiety and shame are the presenting issues. However, as the Whitehead's only have, like Tillich, the initial correlation and then response to the presenting issue or issues, acknowledging this weakness, we will instead use as an additional part of their proposal, the [mutually] *'revised critical correlational model'* proposed by John Swinton and Harriet Mowat in their book titled Practical Theology and Qualitative Research (2006). In Swinton and Mowat's proposal, the correlation is critical in that it is mutually revised and revising. The movement, then, is not just one-way, as in Tillich's correlational method, but rather is continuous, in that it folds back in on itself continuously. When proposing a solution to the issue or issues, the minister realizes that this is merely the first step. Such action will in turn lead to further reflection, attending, assertion and once again a decision on how to act. In important ways, their method seems to have some things in common with Friedrich Schleiermacher's understanding of Practical Theology. In other ways they eschew Schleiermacher's program in favour of divine agency, revelation, and ethical norms—not just in the church, but also outside of the church as well.

An additional inspiration for proceeding with this study, which has been immensely helpful, is I.T.C. (Interdenominational Theological Center) Professor Ed Wimberley's work in No Shame in Wesley's Gospel: A Twenty First Century Pastoral Theology. Wimberley's book has been most suggestive. Wesley and Mcleod Campbell come from different contexts, succeeding generations, and their theological emphases are different. Based on their dissimilarities in thought as a Reformed pastor and as an Arminian pastor, background, experiences and time-period—it will come as no shock that their theologies are not quite the same. While struggling, however, with how to

proceed, using Mcleod Campbell in conversation and discussion with modern pastoral theology and the secular sources of wisdom with which it dialogues, and the Bible, Wimberley has laudably, beneficially, and helpfully, pointed the way.

We are closer to making progress on our journey. Although, as we continue to move forward, we will keep in mind Mennonite Theologian John Howard Yoder's concern regarding the primacy of the biblical/ theological data in relation to that of the world's (1994: 1-20). Yoder suggests that in relation to secular studies claiming to be Christian, which then tack on "a Christian" vision of ethics to the opinions, ideas, and abstractions, this particular process of proceeding, vis-à-vis—a supposed Christian social ethic, is a too-ready willingness to bring the biblical tradition into an **'equal'** dialogue with philosophical, secular, and historical traditions. The concern is that the Bible is just one voice and norm, rather than the main one. Indeed, in this 'dialogue' Yoder unapologetically gives priority to the Bible and Christian tradition. His fear is that the Christian norms he is attempting to discover and discern will end up being taken less seriously than the other norms. In response, Yoder wants to begin with the biblical text, assuming it is both normative and prior to with regard to any dialogue or discussion regarding the form, content or practice of 'theology" (1994—footnote 17, 12).

In this Yoder is not alone. Practical Theology, without revelatory guidelines, becomes inherently rational, 'universally rational,' (Metz 1980: 27) Thomas John Hastings suggests that the fallacy of this program is that one seeks to use reason to try to escape the bounds of reason which have caused the difficulties to begin with. (Hastings 2007: 6) That is, we are enmeshed irretrievably in reason, but in seeking to escape, we seek to use that very thing in which we are enmeshed. Swinton and Mowat, themselves,

prefer emphasizing or weighting "revelation" to reason. They write, "God and the revelation that God has given to human beings in Christ is the starting point for all Practical Theology" (2006: 11, 83) and "We recognize and accept fully that theology has logical priority…." (2006: 89) The issue of weighting one dialogue partner over another in this correlational approach has long been a concern for Practical/ Pastoral theologians. The reflection on what norms take precedence has led James Fowler to make an important observation. This one is worth pondering. In discussing the relationship between all the dialogue partners, he suggests that we as children of the Enlightenment have all too often sought to use *reason*, "in such a way that *critical reason* tries to overcome the limits of *critical reasoning* by the mediation of *reason* alone." (1985: 57) Reason has its **limits**.

With regard to human reason and its limitations Swiss Theologian Emil Brunner, interestingly enough, wrote at great pains to indicate how traumatized our reasoning capacities were, both in his book Man in Revolt (Brunner 1939) and also in his book Revelation and Reason (Brunner 1946). Brunner noted that in our minds we are alienated from God. (1939: 241) We seek a God we create, think, and as such can control, instead of the true God. (1939: 242) By contrast, we are prone to 'self-deification.' (1939: 249) Reason, by its nature, is altered by sin and thus is shut up inside itself and does not recognize outside sources that are 'supra-rational.' (1939: 242-243) It seems reason *qua* reason is bad; however, Brunner demurs arguing that it does have its place. Having to choose between irrationality and reason, however, Brunner notes there is no difficulty in selecting reason. He writes,

> It is not the reason as such which is in opposition to faith, but only the self-sufficient reason; and this means that, the reason which sets itself up in the place of God, the reason which wills to understand God in itself instead of itself in God, the arrogant self-willed reason….reason is right whenever it listens to the Word of God, and does not think that it is able to proclaim the divine truth to itself. (1939: 244)

Now, while God has created us to be stewards of creation and to use our minds, they have become tainted. In Brunner's understanding, we are like a usurper who has sought to overtake a city through a coup. Seeking to wrench it from its rightful ruler, we seek to replace such with our own authority. A governor, so to speak, is needed to heal, correct, and assist reason. He writes,

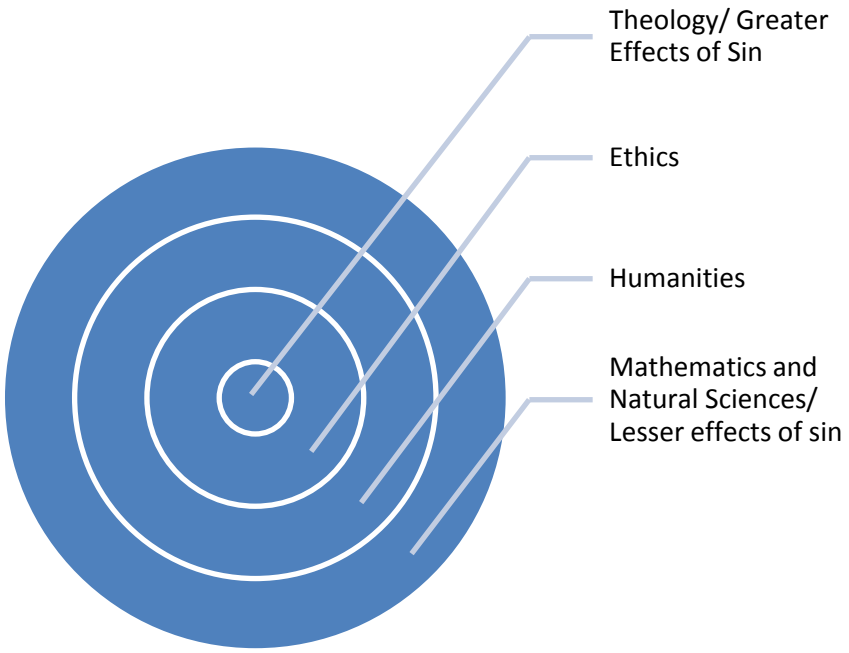
> The creature in its creaturely independence, in its own creaturely being can be known by the human reason. This belongs to the right of dominion which has been granted to it. Where, however, personal being is concerned, the freedom and the responsibility of man, scientific neutrality ceases; there it is the whole that matters, the truth, for which no specialists are competent, the truth which only becomes self-evident in the act of decision for or against the Word of God, the truth which is inevitably missed by the reason which desires to have the last word to say to itself. The more therefore that we are concerned with the 'personal heart' of human existence, the less sure is reason, the more limited is the autonomy which can be ascribed to it, the more sinister becomes its self-sufficient attitude and its claim to recognition. (1939: 248)

In light of this, Brunner writes in Revelation and Reason that our Christian belief does not put our intellect or our reason on the sidelines, but that rather than de-commissioning it—as it is taken up and healed by God's Word through faith that reason becomes of use, really of use, to us. (1946: 429) He writes, "Rational thought is not abandoned—for faith itself is truly rational thought about God and about life as a whole—but all that is

got rid of is the sinful misuse of thought, the illusion of reason." (1946: 429) Contrary to popular thought, regarding faith is that "reason is not annihilated by faith, but it is set free." (1949: 429) Without faith and without our reasoned guidance by God's Word, our intellect is severed from God and we are held captive to the arbitrary sway of instinct. Brunner clarifies, we have been given minds by God and insofar that we use them for practical matters, they are useful. Common-sense is God's good gift. (1939: 250) Our intellect may perceive the finite, the scientific, and the possibility of living life beneficially on a daily basis. However, sin binds us. Moreover, it seeks for reason to be self-sufficient, autonomous, emancipated. (1939: 254) Ultimately, through the (mis)-use of our 'reason' we desire to become our own *masters*. He writes,

> If a person studies anatomy or physics it will be impossible to tell from his scientific work, pure and simple, whether he is a Christian or an unbeliever. But his faith or his unbelief will come out very clearly in his way of thought and life as a man. The more that knowledge has to do with the world as world, the further it is removed from the sphere of sin, and therefore the more 'neutral' it becomes. (1939: 255)

One gets the impression that Brunner has knowledge as a totality in its variegated forms beginning from the center and slowly, by concentric rings moving outward. (see graph)



Graph reproduced from Stephen K. Moroney in <u>The Noetic Effects of Sin: An Historical and Contemporary Exploration of How Sin Affects Our Thinking</u> (1999: 32)

The knowledge most interior is that which has been affected by sin. The outermost knowledge is least affected. (1946: 429) Finally, Brunner quotes the Apostle Paul at one point and I think the quote is eminently germane, "Bringing all reason into captivity to the obedience of Christ." (2 Corinthians 10:5)

Reason as it is brought under the **repentant influence** of Jesus Christ is, however, of use. Ingolf Dalferth helpfully offers a series of theses on rationality, which bear note:

1. What is rational is not limited to what we can prove.

2. What is rational need not be a self-discovery.

3. Rationality is not the prerogative of natural science.

4. Rationality pertains primarily to method and not to content.

5. The notion of a 'rational belief' is ambiguous.

6. Rationality is not uniform, but comes rather in different sorts.

(1988: 4-5)

Clarifying the use of reason and our ability to use reason is important for our purposes given the variety of ways in which reason is used in the theological enterprise. Reason and rationality must be, in the author's judgment guided by what Calvin termed **"pietas."** He writes importantly, in the Institutes and I quote at length from the Beveridge translation,

> …first of all, the pious mind does not devise for itself any kind of God, but **looks alone** to the one true God; nor does it feign for him **any character** it pleases, but is contented to have him in the **character in which he manifests himself** always guarding, with the utmost diligences against transgressing his will, and wandering, with daring presumptions from the right path.
>
> He by whom God is thus known perceiving how he governs all things, confides in him as his **guardian and protector**, and casts himself entirely upon his **faithfulness**,—perceiving him to be the source of every blessing, if he is in any strait or feels any want, he instantly recurs to his protection and trusts to his aid,—persuaded that he is **good and merciful**, he reclines upon him with sure **confidence**, and doubts not that, in the divine clemency, a remedy will be provided for his every time of need,—acknowledging him as his Father and his Lord, he considers himself bound to have **respect** to his authority in all things, to **reverence** his majesty, aim at the advancement of his glory, and obey his commands,—regarding him as a just judge, armed with severity to punish crimes, he keeps the Judgment-seat always in his view.
>
> …Besides, it is not the mere fear of punishment that restrains him from sin. Loving and revering God as his **father**, honoring and obeying

> him as his master, although there were no hell, he would revolt at the very idea of offending him. Such is pure and genuine **religion**, namely, **confidence in God** coupled with serious fear—fear, which both includes in it **willing reverence**, and brings along with it such legitimate worship as is prescribed by the law. And it ought to be more carefully considered that all men promiscuously do homage to God, but **very few truly reverence him**. (1957 [Calvin 1559]: 1.2.2—emphasis mine)

What this might look like obviously involves grace. Repentant thinking requires God's intervention. As we shall note, this change requires a conversion of sorts—an intellectual conversion. This is an alternation in the frame of one's reference. This requires an adaptation of the construct with which we currently operate.

As we shall see, John McLeod Campbell had a salutary understanding of salvation. His approach blends faith, life experience, action, and thinking, divine and human activity into a unified whole that finds incarnate expression in living in union with Christ in an authentic, grace filled and empowered life of discipleship. His pastoral theology thus took a heuristic framework hammered out in his pastoral ministry, which learned from his people as he cared for them, helped them, encouraged them, and taught them. In turn, his learnings from them and his continued study of Scripture influenced his developing and ever evolving theological and therapeutic pastoral theology. In an oft-quoted exhortation, one aged gentleman when visited by McLeod Campbell, counselled him to give them (he, his wife, and the congregation) "plain doctrine, because we are a sleeping people." (Andover Review 1892: 554) McLeod Campbell would have understood that knowledge was a unity. He would have eschewed Browning's suggestion that too many of us have "no encompassing faith, no ultimate concern, no real

unity to our lives." (1987: 1) Ultimately, on Browning's view our sense of reality is a patchwork quilt made up of different cloths, patches, fabrics and so on. McLeod Campbell would have disagreed. The various strands of reason, for McLeod Campbell, as it was constantly being re-schematized, and revelation worked together as an important tool in Pastoral Theology.

1.4 Towards an Incarnational-Trinitarian Pastoral Theology

Over the course of the author's ministry beginning in the summer of 1989 on internship and extending up to today, the issues with which John McLeod Campbell struggled in the light of his parishioners needs still resonate. Many have struggled with anxiety and shame. Quite a few have wrestled with a lack of the assurance of God's love. As we've previously noted:

In **Chapter Two** we will discuss methodological issues. This is a long chapter and much ground needs to be covered. Important decisions have to be made about how to proceed, what may be used, and what may not be used. The importance of revelation, critical realism, the Incarnation, the Trinity, the nature of theory, and praxis all need clarification.

Chapter Three covers the emotion of self-assessment termed "lack of assurance" of God's love. The chapter will delve into the history behind this phenomenon, its reasons, and the theological issues responsible. With special reference, we will look at John McLeod Campbell's preaching from his Sermons and Lectures (1832) and his Notes of Sermons (1830). We will try to envision how he sought to "reframe" or alter his

parishioner's "constructs" through rhetoric in order to assist them therapeutically in growth.

Chapter Four will cover the relatively more modern phenomenon of anxiety. We will study it from a variety of perspectives. Using John McLeod Campbell's preaching discovered in his Sermons and Lectures (1832) and Notes of Sermons (1830) we will observe both his use of rhetoric and therapeutic Pastoral Theology as it occurred in preaching, teaching and pastoral care. Once again, we will draw upon his resources to see how his work sought to assist his parishioners in growth.

Chapter Five covers the modern psychological issue of shame. We will also look at this emotion and judgment from a variety of perspectives. Once again, we will look over McLeod Campbell's shoulders to see how in his Sermons and Notes of Sermons he might have addressed this difficulty through his therapeutic Pastoral Theology.

Chapter Six will approach the issue of atonement curatively, therapeutically and will offer McLeod Campbell's atonement theory as one possible salutary and theological response to hurting people. Several competing models will be described, critiqued and then a response will be offered. In all of the chapters, we will keep Jim Lapsley's criteria before us of the hermeneutical nature of Pastoral Theology as it begins in praxis *and* theory and moves to praxis and then back to theory.

1.5 Summary of Chapter

In this chapter, we established the nature of the scheme of Practical Theology we will use, that of James and Evelyn Whitehead's Method in Ministry: Theological Reflection and Christian Ministry. In response to the presenting case or problem, the minister negotiates between three poles of information. The first is that of the Christian Tradition and the Bible, the second is that of the cultural information/ secular sciences, and the third is the experience, both that of the minister, and that of the individual or church. The minister's proposes a particular course of action, following that synthesis of information. We also suggested that there needed to be a further hermeneutical spiral closed back in on the process, so that it might be truly critical and adaptive. We also surveyed a variety of proposals by various authors to orient ourselves to the field of Practical Theology/ Pastoral Theology. We discovered that there are many schemes. Don Browning's proposal A Fundamental Practical Theology is the most popular among Practical Theologies, but it is not without its own weaknesses. Ray Anderson's is a distant second. We will explore further Browning's weaknesses in Chapter 2.

Having established the Whitehead's, James and Evelyn, proposal as the method we will use here, we are still required by weaknesses in their scheme to adapt their work for our purposes. Part of the adaptation of their proposal for Practical Theology occurs here, by our focusing on the ministry and constructive Pastoral Theology of Scottish Pastor/ Theologian John McLeod Campbell. Their first source is that of the Christian Tradition and Scripture. For our purposes, we have placed the work of John McLeod Campbell in that first pole as source. We do this because of the inherently theological nature of the discipline of Practical Theology. We will also adopt a more advanced

model of correlation, than that of the Whitehead's, that of the mutually revised critical correlational model suggested by John Swinton and Harriet Mowat. As we do so we will start with theology as perhaps the important orientation and basis, then we will move through the sources of the social sciences consulting them, using in particular critical realism for our epistemological basis, reflecting as we do so also on our personal experience and that of others. Finally, we mentioned the three different kinds of presenting cases, that of a lack of assurance, that of anxiety, and finally, that of shame. In our next chapter, we will reflect on methodological issues.

CHAPTER TWO

Beginning the Conversation

Methodological Considerations: What Makes "Theology" Pastoral? What Makes "Ministry" or "Pastoral Care" Theological?

A Prolegomena of Sorts

2.0 Practical/ Pastoral Theology is not Tools of the Trade for the Parson

In my first year of seminary at Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, Georgia, (USA) the curriculum called for the freshman students to be introduced to the theology and praxis of ministry. Among the issues with which we struggled in that particular class was the goal and purpose for our care for people as ministers, particularly in hospital or chaplaincy settings. In addition, my presuppositions regarding ministry were also examined. Each of brings ideas, imaginings and experience to the practice of ministry, which is perhaps driven most by the ministers we have experienced while growing up. Yusuf (not his name) was a Georgia State University student from the Sudan that had been left a quadriplegic because of a car accident. His family was poor and thus they remained in the Sudan. He was one of the individuals I was given to develop not only a relationship with (in a particular wing of the nursing home) during that first class, but to learn through trial and error, and practice, what ministry was to be about. Early in our conversation, at the beginning of the semester, which occurred through him pointing, by using his mouth and a stick, at the various letters on a board etched with the letters of the alphabet I held up in front of him, he asked me if I would read the Quran to him. He was a Muslim and his condition prevented him from Islam's practice. This presented an interesting dilemma. He knew I was a Christian and that I

was a chaplain. However, it was obvious that he could not read the Quran himself. This question from him raised a whole host of issues for me about the purpose of our care for others. What exactly is care for others? How should it take place? Are there limits to this care? Yusuf's question put these issues and more front and center for me to deal with in some tangible way. Don Browning, author and Practical Theologian, has asserted that in our current pluralistic environment we should carefully reflect on the purpose, ethics, and goals for our ministry to others. (1983) With those issues in mind—of rationale, aims and standards, this chapter delves even further back than Browning suggests and examines methodology in Pastoral Theology/ Practical Theology.

Regardless of the minor differences between Practical Theology and Pastoral Theology both throughout much of their history has consisted of what might be colloquially called 'tools of the trade for the parson.' The praxis of ministry has been seen and understood in the application of doing—preaching, administration, teaching, pastoral care, leading worship, counseling and so on. There is a hint of this in the academic division in Universities and Seminary's today. The practical area is often staffed with specialists in one discrete discipline or another; Preaching/ Homiletics, Pastoral Care, Christian Education, New Testament etc. Each teacher has a specialty, a tool or tools, which they seek to impart to the student. They are specialists, but they are seeking to educate generalists. The curriculum is developed and developing constantly. There can be no denial, that in training for the ministry, this 'preparation' (particular praxis) is important. It is not all of Pastoral or Practical Theology, nor should it be. The specific tools are important, but what is also needed is a 'toolbox' in which to house the various implements. One issue for ministry is the coordination of these tools together

into a workable framework or holistic outlook for ministry itself. Those who have been ministers know that one switches necessarily from counseling in one hour to administration in the next, then onto visiting in hospital, and back to the office to prepare the sermon, while also getting ready for a meeting later that night. The question which each minister must answer in their own grind of the week is the issue of the meta-framework or foundation underlying all of this specific functional work.

This was brought home to me in my relationship with The Rev. Ellis R. Oakes who was a minister predecessor (1970-1982) of the author's at the more than two-hundred year old Rocky Springs Presbyterian Church in Laurens, South Carolina (USA). The original structure had been built around the time of the Revolutionary War. This was the third building since. Long since retired and content with vegetable gardening and spending time with his beloved wife Keith, he and I had developed a friendship as colleagues. Initially, following a funeral of a church member in the first week of my ministry there, he upon introducing himself had promised to stay away from the congregation's members so as not to interfere with the author's ministry to them. Indeed, following our mutual introductions that was the first thing he said to me! "John," he said to me, "I want you to know that I will not hinder or hamper your ministry among these people." "I will not contact them or visit them, so that you can develop your own relationships among them." The minister that preceded me, but had followed Ellis had warned him away following his arrival on the scene eight years previously. He and Ellis had bumped into one another at the store, Ellis had introduced himself and been warned away. I assured him that this was not necessary and that he was to feel at home among the members of the congregation and was always welcome at the church for various

events. He was always to feel welcome and to assume we were colleagues, whether it was at a meal at the church or our visiting an old friend who was a parishioner. I mentioned to him that this was not a competition. This set the right tone in our relationship. In fact, prior to my ordination the Sacrament of Communion was to be celebrated. I could not do so, because I had not been ordained. So, I invited Ellis to officiate at the Lord's Supper, following the sermon, in fact, I think I got him to preach that Sunday, and I would assist him. This further illustrated to him my good intentions. He was delighted to be back among the congregation. During our long conversations together as we continued to get to know one another better, I learned from a faithful, kind, hard-working, thoughtful mentor of deep and abiding Christian faith. He shared the successes of his ministry and his failures, but most importantly to this young pastor was the philosophy he possessed about ministry, which he reiterated repeatedly, albeit in different ways using various stories, proverbs, and comments. To say that love was the foundation of his ministry sounds trite, but after being immersed in ministry myself for the last twenty-nine years, I discovered that this verb "love" is harder than it sounds, particularly with difficult church members. Loving the lovable is easy. Loving the difficult is far harder to accomplish. Ellis also suggested to me that we as pastors have a particular and unique ministry among all the helping professions available. His counsel to me was to be a “pastor.” We were not counselors although we counseled. We were not teachers although we taught. We were not just preachers although we preached. If, as we have suggested, based on James Lapsley’s definition, that Pastoral Theology is a sustained reflection on the care of persons *and* the reasons that we approach this care in a particular way, for Ellis, the foundation of all ministry, regardless of the particular action

at the time, was the love of God in Jesus Christ shared with us through our call, salvation, forgiveness, and in turn, sharing this love we had received with others. We do this **as** pastors. This is a particular calling. It is a peculiar kind of helping. It is ministry. We have, as he pointed out to me on more than one occasion, to do with **God** (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) and his relationship with people. This aspect was very enlightening. He could have discussed particular aspects of the ministry—the "praxis" or "doing" if you will, but instead focused on the basis, the foundation, the toolbox, the *raison d'etre* of ministry with me instead. This was the right approach to take with a young minster freshly graduated from seminary. When I arrived at Rocky Springs, I previously had completed a year and half-long internship as an assistant pastor in a church in Wichita Falls, Texas. I had undergone one unit of Clinical Pastoral Education (C.P.E.) at Atlanta Baptist Hospital the summer before in Atlanta, Georgia. I did not need the specifics about ministry. To put it another way, I already knew the "how-to-do." I felt like I had a pretty-good handle on that. Instead, it was the "why?" question. The issue, which he sought in his own way with me, was the goal or purpose inspiring our ministry. Behind all the doing, what do we hope to accomplish? In other words, what is the basis for our ministry? It was a question about the big picture. What is ministry's goal? What is **our** aim? Reflecting on the experience of ministry is important. Stephen Pattison argues along similar lines regarding the usefulness of ministerial growth outside the academy. We need to be reflective. (Pattison 2007: 208-209)

Pastoral theology has too often been thought of as restricted, or limited, to the clerical paradigm. Within this paradigm comes 'practical' issues' regarding what the minister does. Ministry becomes, in this view, about the specifics of praxis, practice, or

activity; “How to’s ….” How does one do administration? How does one "run" a church? How does one "do" a funeral? Questions about doing can multiply. Even the designation “pastoral” reminds one of the minister and church. While it necessarily involves the church, Pastoral Theology or Practical Theology as it is suggested here in this thesis is not merely the explication of various aspects of ministry—like homiletics, church administration, ethics, and pastoral care and so on. Although those specifics are important and should not be dismissed or overlooked. It seeks to be more comprehensive—more foundational, indeed more inclusive. One of the goals of this study is the discernment of a toolbox. We have highlighted the Whitehead's approach to ministerial issues. The author, however, wants to push back their suggested methodology even further. Pastoral theology, then, requires reflection upon its particular practices, activities, and even the theory inquiring into its uniqueness among the disciplines. The study, it must be noted, of particular procedures—the "doing" is certainly effective, in its own time and place. However, the reason behind these particulars is perhaps more important. Forestry, to use a well-worn metaphor, concerns and focuses on not only the particular and individual trees, different as they are, but on the aggregation together of individual trees—the **forest** as well. To use the metaphor loosely—we are interested in forestry here.

The subject of this chapter, then, is a conversation behind the method of the tending to of parishioners, the looking after and helping of people both within and without a congregation, the healing of emotional and spiritual wounds presented in differing contexts, and sustaining aspects of faith, hope and love, in short: a Pastoral Theology of ministry. Though at one time in its history, Pastoral Theology, devolved

from a universal and comprehensive understanding of reality touching all aspects of existence—unfortunately metamorphosed into something little more than the mundane issues of 'How to preach,' or 'What to do when making a call,' 'How to be an administrator." One will not discover in this chapter the **application** of theology. One will try in vain to discern in this essay: 'tools of the trade for the parson.' (Forrester 2000: ix)

The goal of this chapter, then, to put it another way, is an open dialogue or conversation about Practical Theology, its constituents, its method, its background, and its purpose. Even though Karl Barth decried the discussion of methodology in favor of just jumping right in and *doing* dogmatic theology, part of the conversation about Practical Theology as a discrete discipline involves method. One important suggestion regarding method, which coalesces with Ellis Oakes' remarks to me, comes from German Feminist theologian Dorothee Soëlle (1975), who observes that theologians should seek to enlarge the borders of our language and outlook, by

(1.) Translation,

(2.) Elimination, and

(3.) Repetition.

By these three different words of *translation, elimination, and repetition,* she means that we are to articulate in today's language precisely *that* content regarding Christian thought which needs re-articulation, or as she puts it—*translation*. The pastoral function of doctrine is constantly evolving. Theology will always be necessary, but emphases

change. One generation might need a particular doctrine's prominence, while another generation might need something diametrically opposed. Schleiermacher, the doyen of nineteenth century liberal thought, following Kant's glass ceiling, argued that Christianity was the sensation of our dependence on a higher being, which he called God. Everything flowed from this intuition of dependence. In the twentieth century, Karl Barth suggested that theology instead involved a response to God's word in its threefold form—Incarnate Word, Scriptural Word and Preached Word. Theology is not cast in stone, but is a living, breathing thing. It evolves. For Soëlle the issue is how theology speaks to the issues of today. Thus, translation for Soëlle is first, and this also fits nicely with both the Whitehead's schema for helping, involves meeting people where they are while explicating theological concerns.

We are, in addition, in doing theology, to get rid of that which contradicts a commitment to love, eliminating it because if our action or praxis is not based on love then it is of no use to us in our work. Love should be the *raison d'etre* behind our action, or should be. Love is the point to it all. Ellis Oakes, my dear predecessor at Rocky Springs, would firmly agree with her. We love because we have first of all been loved. We minister because we desire to witness to that love while putting it into incarnate action.

Finally, we are to, even if feebly, reiterate the beauty of the tradition. We are to keep that of importance in the tradition, the necessary **core** that cannot be translated or eliminated, because to do so would be to lose something crucial, and valuable, in the process. There is for Soëlle a foundation, which must remain. Even though now we see through a glass darkly, to paraphrase the Apostle Paul in First Corinthians, there is

always something vital in the tradition which needs kept. (Soëlle 1975: 7-8) Then, we shall know *as* we are known. Soëlle's remarks bear continued thought and reflection for Practical Theology. Soëlle's view about the centrality of love for theology is, to my mind, fundamental and educative (while also keeping in mind her two other concepts of elimination and translation). Hers is the first voice in the conversation, which we should hear.

This author believes Soëlle's comments for Pastoral or Practical theologies are crucial and valid. They are, in fact, from the author's point of view a beginning. In this chapter, we shall attempt to show why and how John McLeod Campbell's work is an inspiration for the exercise here of a fresh articulation of what may be called a **therapeutic Pastoral Theology**. McLeod Campbell would firmly agree with Soëlle. Everything must be done in love with love being the basis for ministry and theology. Ministry, he would agree, must be done in love, because of love, with love. Jeremy Ayers (2002) of Duke University uses this phrase, *therapeutic*, about John Wesley's theology and I find it a beautifully rich and fertile phrase to apply to McLeod Campbell's own pastoral and theological work. Therapy is the English word derived from the original Greek word θεραπεύω. It may be defined as "to do service or serve," and "to treat, cure, heal." (Abbott-Smith 1981: 206) Therapy thus may be understood as the treatment of disease, injury or a disorder, as in my former calling in Sportsmedicine, as by some remedial, rehabilitating, or curative process. (http://www.dictionary.com/browse/therapy) A therapeutic theology seeks to do the same, primarily through carefully chosen words, but also through instructive actions.

McLeod Campbell reworked the Reformed tradition of which he was a part. As he did so, his pastoral concern and theology coalesced so that we see in word and deed God's work in Christ among us. In translating the reigning theology, he argued against this occurring only in a legal sense—being as the theology he was taught, was based then on Western Roman ideals (**juridical**—with an emphasis on law). McLeod Campbell overturned the traditional categories translating them so that Christ's person and work was understood then in a **filial** sense (therapeutic). This emphasis, filial, in nature, is relational. Because relationships are at the heart of the Triune God's being and existence, God's sharing his relationship with human beings made sense to him. Historically, the theology, which McLeod Campbell overturned, has its origin in Roman law and jurisprudence. The second understanding, the translated theology closer to McLeod Campbell's, may be seen in the Eastern Orthodox Church. Along the way, he eliminated in his *therapeutic* Pastoral Theology that which was not in keeping with love. God is love. McLeod Campbell understood this to be nonnegotiable. For McLeod Campbell ministry was about sharing that love, through Christ, which has its origin in the being of the Father of our spirits. This love is received by us and then manifested in our response of love of neighbor. There is a closed circuit, in a sense in McLeod Campbell's reasoning. Love comes from the Father. It proceeds through the Son and is mediated to us through his life and work. The Spirit awakens us to the truth and reality of this love, which John Newton rightly called "Amazing." Experiencing this love, we share it, in turn with those both near and far. As one reads McLeod Campbell's Notes of Sermons, Sermons and Lectures, Fragments of Expositions, and On the Nature of the Atonement, one continues to be impressed by his constructive and pastoral use of the fundamentals of

the Christian tradition in creative ways. God's therapeutic ministry to us of love flows through us necessarily into the lives of others through our ministry to them as we participate in God's ongoing ministry through Christ.

As he sought to minister to his parishioners, he was conscious that he was not doing this by himself. He understood ministry was not just, what he did. All too often we make ministry to others about what **we** do, what we feel, what we hope to achieve. We speak of my ministry. This individualistic connotation of ministry runs counter to McLeod Campbell's relational emphasis. This is a recurring theme in this thesis for it is a Unitarian view of ministry. God becomes little more than Aristotle's god at the edge of the universe minding nothing but itself. We are left, unfortunately, to our own devices. McLeod Campbell understood ministry rather to be a part of Christ's larger ministry taking place by and through the Holy Spirit. God is active in people's lives. God is constantly ministering to them. Sometimes this is in small ways. Sometimes it is in large ways. Sometimes it is even in spite of us. Duncan Forrester states, "The Christians' work is, therefore, **a participation** in the work of the Holy Trinity, and in doing this work, the knowing will come." (Forrester 2000: 8) He could be quoting John McLeod Campbell, although McLeod Campbell was interested also in the knowing <u>within</u> the doing.

McLeod Campbell's use of the concept of **relationship**, over that of his Scottish church tradition's more common legal terminology, stemming from Roman jurisprudence with its emphasis on law is unique. His use of filial idiom, of relationship, in some measures, predates importantly Twentieth century Scottish philosopher John Macmurray's emphases in his 1953-1954 Gifford Lectures. Macmurray shied away from

the Cartesian model of thinking as being descriptive of the human condition and instead focused on human nature as constituted above all by our relationships with others. Macmurray's point is fundamental. Above all, and this cannot be stressed enough, is McLeod Campbell's emphasis on Christianity as **relational**, not legal, in nature. In this emphasis he preceded those who today call for an understanding of the human as constituted by our relationships.

Methodist theologian Randy Maddox (1994) points out that during McLeod Campbell's era Christianity was characterized by a Latin understanding of law, imputation, guilt, and forgiveness. In contrast, Eastern Orthodoxy took its concepts from the early church fathers living outside of Rome's influence in the Byzantine East and in so doing emphasized a more therapeutic concern for healing and being in their doctrines of theosis, participation, and salvation. Theosis in the Eastern Church's understanding is a quickening by grace, a sort of divinization of the human. One only needs to compare the thought of Tertullian, the great Latin thinker of Rome with that of Irenaeus of Lugdunum, or even better yet, Athanasius of Alexandria to see that this statement is correct. This idea has its origin in Paul's assertion that, "For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God." (NRSV 2 Cor. 5:21) Irenaeus, already mentioned, observes that in his writing *Against Heresies* he was merely, "following the only true and steadfast Teacher, the Word of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, who did, through His transcendent love, become what we are, that He might bring us to be even what He is Himself." (Schaff 2001: 763) McLeod Campbell's voice is one that we shall privilege when mining the tradition.

McLeod Campbell, when compared with his contemporaries, was widely read in the early church fathers, Martin Luther, and the historic confessions of Christendom. So it is no surprise that his theological and pastoral concerns mirror Eastern Orthodoxy's emphases. An emphasis on sources is important. Keeping them is fundamental, but translating them for today is required as Soëlle points out. This also, needs to be remembered.

We must likewise take to heart Canadian theologian Douglas John Hall's emphasis on the **context sensitive nature** of theology. This is a third thing to consider. The *sine qua non* of all faithful and genuine theological thought, in Hall's view (1991), is *contextualization*. As a Canadian, Hall argues that he cannot reproduce a European theology. Because he is not European, nor, is the North American context out of which he lives and writes. To be aware of the context sensitive nature of theology is to consider this when engaging in one's own faithful Christian thought and praxis. This means taking into consideration the issue, or issues, which might drive reflection and action *here* and *now*. For example, Swiss theologian Karl Barth, perhaps the twentieth-century's greatest theological luminary, during his visit to the United States in 1962 called for American theologians not to reproduce European theology, not even his theology of the *Church Dogmatics*, but instead to work towards a theology—as he put it—of '*freedom*.' (https://karlbarth.unibas.ch/fileadmin/downloads/Chicago.pdf [accessed October 23, 2015]) In saying this, he advised Americans not to have an inferiority complex when in the presence of Europeans, nor a superiority complex when in the presence of those who live in the Third World.

The author acknowledges that **humility** is a mandatory trait for a Pastoral Theologian to have! We must be open to learning from others! Hall writes, "The point of praxis is not to substitute act for thought, deed for word, but to ensure that thinking is rooted in existence—and committed to its transformation." (1991: 21) The gospel, Hall notes later, is and must be *about* praxis. (1991: 30) This is an important statement. All too often theology descends from the pulpit or arises in theological tomes answering questions that no one is really asking. In rooting thought and action with one another, the challenge is to overcome the artificial and modern propensity for the displacement of thought from act and act from thought. If theology is not about action, we are then left with nothing better than Aristotle's self-contained and isolated god, which is of no use at all. Why, then, spend time reflecting upon this? The point is to hold both theology and action together. Each must inform the other so that one may become more serious about holding both in concert. Then in a profound statement, Hall charges us with the following words,

> "What the moment demands of us is not that we produce theologians capable of competing in the intellectual Olympics of the world church, but that we raise up a community of thinking Christians who are able to bear prophetic witness to the truth of God as it manifests itself in the life of the world—not some theoretical world, and not somebody else's world, but our world, our problematic First World." (Hall 1991: 20)

Hall's statement is important to consider. He suggests that "Thinking Christians" are what the world needs today. Thinking Christians, who not only reflect upon the truth, but who are able and willing to "**bear** prophetic witness." Thinking, Prophetic Christians are needed who **witness** to the "truth of God" in the midst of today's culture. This truth

of God manifests itself “in the world.” Hall’s counsel is important to hear today and to respond constructively.

A preliminary characterization of Pastoral Theology/ Practical Theology will/must pay attention to the Triune Revealing, Revealer and Revealed God witnessed to in Scripture as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the difficulties of people and their lived experience, the voices of the Christian tradition, and wisdom from the Social Sciences as sources of its initial construction. However, it will not stop there. It also will seek to bear a faithful witness and praxis to God and the truth of God as it reveals itself in our experience in the world. Practical Theology must mature in loving action. This is another aspect to the Whitehead's approach, which cannot be overlooked. Augustine once noted, rightly, in my opinion, “All truth is God’s truth.” He writes in On Christian Doctrine (II.18. 28) "A person who is a good and true Christian should realize that truth belongs to his Lord, wherever it is found, gathering and acknowledging it even in pagan literature, but rejecting superstitious vanities and deploring and avoiding those who 'though they knew God did not glorify him as God." (Schaff, 1886: 1230) It will also focus most notably on the person and work of Christ as this has revealed itself in our and/ or our neighbor’s experience and living, and that love must be the overall arching theme of this theology. Practical Theology as the author envisions it will and must continue an ongoing reflection upon the lived experience of people. In addition, it must also take into account the contextual nature of its work in seeking to inculcate freedom, true freedom, in people, ultimately issuing in holiness—and then it will, from this preliminary construction, critically continue to reform itself according to Scripture and experience. However, this is but a first comment within our ongoing conversation…

2.1 Reaching for a Preliminary Meta-view of the Sources for a Trinitarian-Incarnational Pastoral Theology

German Lutheran theologian Wolfhart Pannenberg dealt early in his career with a variety of issues in which he sought answers to the questions troubling him; the books are Basic Questions in Theology, Volumes 1 and 2. (1969) Pannenberg raises methodological questions and provisional answers in both volumes. Pannenberg's later three-volume Systematic Theology was published later in his academic career. These exploratory articles helped him articulate what was important to him. He continued to question and write until he reached his mature position seen decades later in his Systematic Theology. Establishing parameters, declaring limits, deciding on norms is important for moving forward. The same is true in any endeavor. In this chapter, we will reflect on methodological questions and we will not rush as we do so.

Following Pannenberg's lead, after a fashion, in this chapter the author seeks a **provisional explication** of one part of "a" Pastoral Theology that is shaped by the Triune God of love and grace. Secondly, we will also focus on our response, the praxis of gratitude to God's initiative and grace. We will range far and wide as we move towards the materials of a comprehensive framework for understanding the practical and pastoral nature of theology and its engagement and practice in the world. This, then, seeks to be a **meta-view** patterned after, in some regards, the difference between Aristotle's two works *The Physics* and *The Metaphysics*. Aristotle's *Physics* dealt with the observable world around us—the particular. Aristotle's *Metaphysics* dealt with that which was beyond us and concluded with the Unmoved Mover at the edge of the Universe, the Original Cause,

and the quintessential element, aether, in which this god existed. This was the universal. We will take Aristotle as our guide, after a fashion, as far as delineating between the particular and the universal. While the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is not simply an Unmoved Mover, Aristotle's important division is observed. It is the author's conviction that a Practical Theology or Pastoral Theology that is faithful to its discipline needs not only to deal with the particular, but also to deal with the larger framework. It is within this framework that it functions. Ultimately, the subject of Practical Theology is the relationship between God and humankind. The nature and character of the Triune God of love and grace as this God has revealed himself as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is fundamental. All too often, the discipline of Practical Theology has forgotten, as a theology that it necessarily deals with **God.** This Triune God of love and grace has everything to do with Pastoral Theology.

In seeking to reflect upon this larger picture, this "meta" view, the question is how *meta-physics* could and should influence a Pastoral or Practical Theology that seeks to be self-consciously Incarnational and Trinitarian. The question here is how the unknown, spiritual and unseen realm, may influence the physical, known and acknowledged realm. The question at stake is how the spiritual and unseen may touch the physical and known while both shaping and guiding it. Without an answer to this question, we are left with a disjunctive deistic dualism, in which God does not interact with the world. God does his thing in his realm. We do our thing in our realm. There is evidence, however, of God's action in our world. This is seen preeminently in the incarnation of Jesus Christ. Thus, this interaction is evidenced not only in revelation, but illustrated in the life of the individual in discipleship, the scientist at work in her laboratory, the social worker aiming

for justice in the neighborhood, and by the church in fellowship and ministry. The goal in each case is discovery. This requires repentant transformation of thought and act and a more authentic discipleship in all spheres. Even in science. Stephen Pattison makes our point when he states "Theology combines many of these methods and insights (learnings and information across the spectrum of disciplines) together in a distinctive way which is directly related to practice and ordinary living." (2007: 208) By repentant transformation, we mean not only a change in our status with God, and the salvation through which this occurs, but a radical conversion and change of attitude in how we think, how we see, and how we live, in the light of this relationship. The Apostle Paul writes to the churches in Philippi, "Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus." (2.5 NRSV) Paul also writes to the Corinthians, "'Who can know the LORD's thoughts? Who knows enough to teach him?' But we understand these things, for we have the mind of Christ." (2 Cor. 2:16 TNLT) We have the mind of Christ. What could Paul conceivably mean by this bold, outrageous statement?

This **repentance** is a complete change in orientation, in outlook, in how we frame and interpret the universe. In Philippians 2 the Apostle Paul writes, "Have this mind in you which was in Christ Jesus…." He counsels the Christians at Philippi to think not only as Christ does, but to think *with* and *through* his mind. In Romans 12:2 he writes, "Do not be conformed to this world, but be *transformed* by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God,—what is good and acceptable and perfect." What does he mean by this? The author believes that Paul desires nothing short of **an epistemological revolution**. What this means is that under the influence of the Spirit of God's work in us, we should think differently in response to God's initiative and

grace. As French Existentialist philosopher, Jean Paul Sartre declares in his Being and Time, "If every metaphysics in fact presupposes a theory of knowledge, every theory of knowledge in turn presupposes metaphysics." (Sartre 1956: l) Ethics, that is, our behavior flows from the knowledge gained upon reflection of our actions which itself is inspired and shaped by that which flows from metaphysics, which in turn is determined by our behavior. The Triune God of love and grace illuminates our understanding at the same time as saving, reconciling, redeeming, and sanctifying us. Our response flows out of that work of grace in our gratitude. There is a circular movement here, which is never ending. Theology[1] leads to praxis[1], which leads to theology[2] which leads to praxis[2] and so on…

This study attempts slowly, then, to make clear God's work (in spite of us, and our debilitating sin), *upon* us and *in* us through the incarnational person and mediatorial work of Jesus Christ as this is facilitated by the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Such a grasp of reality should lead to us seeing, perceiving, and understanding truth, in a different light. This is the crux of the conversation in John three (3) between Jesus and Nicodemus. Jesus speaks of a new way of being and of living. Nicodemus struggles to understand. Jesus is the way, truth and life. This is much for Nicodemus to comprehend. "How?" he asks. But all things are possible with God. This can lead to our repentance, indeed it should, not only in living life, but also in how we reason and think. **Repentance** is more than simply a change in our existential perspective; it is more than just being sorry for our sin, or in trying to secure our future salvation. Instead repentance is a transformation, if you will, in the way one sees, reasons and thinks—and ultimately in how one lives. Harry Stack Sullivan (1953), a vastly underappreciated Interpersonal

Psychoanalyst, both illustrates and simplifies this movement when he talks about this modification in terms of our rethinking and growth from the “not me,” to the “the bad-me,” and finally moving to a self-evaluation which is the “good me.” The goal for our lives as Christians, as illustrated by the Apostle Paul in Romans 12, is for our lives to become more congruent with the divine reality of the gospel. Paul observes that in light of the gospel we are to present ourselves to God as a living sacrifice. We are to be holy in so doing, but such is pleasing to God—this is our true and proper worship. The world both inspires and creates a particular pattern or model for us, a cultural captivity, out of which we live. However, we are not to conform to the pattern, or model, the cultural captivity, of this world. We are instead to be transformed by the renewing of our minds. Then and only then are we able to test, understand, and support what God's perfect will is for all.

The early Church fathers were convinced that with the advent of Jesus Christ something phenomenal had taken place within space, time, and reality. The cosmos was different. We are different. We may not know it, or understand it, but we are. The author affirms this. Reality has been transformed and changed. Let me offer an illustration: Years ago when the author’s daughter was a toddler, she saw her Father in the swimming pool in front of her. She stepped down onto the steps leading into the water, she then stepped off the second to the last step—assuming nothing would change. Everything changed. She landed on the bottom of the pool. There was no air! She was now in a different medium. She soon realized that you can’t breathe water! She was shocked. One cannot be in water without changing one’s behavior. One’s reality determines one’s thought and actions. The early Church fathers were at great pains for us

to understand this truth and reality. This, then, elucidates after a fashion what God has made of us in Jesus Christ (and not only us, but of the world/ creation). Things are different. We cannot simply carry on as usual. The writer to the churches in Colossae writes,

> 1[19] For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in Christ, [20] and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.[21] Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. [22] But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation— [23] if you continue in your faith, established and firm, and do not move from the hope held out in the gospel. This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant. (Colossians 1:19-23—NIV)

Everything has been reconciled to God. We were once alienated from God. Indeed, we were enemies. Our relationship with God has been reconciled because of Jesus Christ. His life and work has transformed reality. As such, we are now holy in God's sight. What are we to make of these words? Do we dismiss them as *hyperbole*? Are we to ignore them? What, if we take them seriously? This has huge implications for our three-fold dilemmas of first, a lack of assurance, second, anxiety, and finally, shame. Paul desires that we take these words as a description of our reality. Creation is *different* so the text indicates. Alienation has been overcome. Our enmity of mind has been healed. It continues to need therapy, however, of repentant thinking. Christ presents us to the Father as holy. As we believe, we participate in this changed reality. Faith here may be read as understanding and *as* knowledge—as we work out our salvation with fear and trembling. Athanasius, in his treatise "On the Incarnation" advocates that our creation

has been “renewed” because of Christ’s birth, life, ministry, death and resurrection. Salvation, in addition, has been wrought, because of him. Athanasius writes, “the good Father by Him (Christ) gives order to all things, all things are moved by Him, and in Him are quickened…its (creation) re-creation (ἀνακαίνίσιν) has been wrought by the Word who originally made it. For it will not appear inconsistent for the Father to have wrought its salvation…” (Athanasius, Bindley [n.d.]; 48-49, Thomson 1971: 136) Along these lines Missiologist Leslie Newbigin, influenced by both Athanasius and Augustine, observes that the gospel is about our perceiving and living in light of a “new plausibility structure,” which has come into existence in Christ. (Newbigin 1995: 93, 28) For Newbigin the heart of the gospel is a new ‘fact.’ Our English word ‘fact’ has its origins in the Latin word ‘factum’ which means ‘something done.’ God, for Newbigin, has acted in Jesus Christ and this is ‘a fact.’ It has occurred. This changes all things. (Le Roy Stults 2014: 125) Reformed theologian T. F. Torrance agrees, noting that for Athanasius and the other Church fathers “the human nature of Jesus, the incarnate Son of God, had indeed been created by God as the beginning (ἀρχή) of all his ways and works for our salvation.” (T. F. Torrance 1993: 62) Creation has been changed. We have been changed. What is required is that our minds accept this new way of existence. We must live accordingly.

There has been too profound a change in reality to overlook it. In order to make our way through this changed metaphysical landscape Orthodox theologian G. Florovsky speaks in his writings of the ‘Scriptural Mind.’ (Florovsky 1972: 9ff) He writes,

> No man can receive the gospel unless he repents—"changes his mind.” For in the language of the gospel "repentance" *(metanoeite)* does not mean merely acknowledgment of and contrition for sins, but precisely a "change

> of mind"—a profound change of man's mental and emotional attitude, an integral renewal of man's self, which begins in his self-renunciation and is accomplished and sealed by the Spirit. (Florovsky 1972: 10)

Is this not a worthy goal for the Christian—to let our minds be saturated with Scripture, so much so, that they become transformed (and more Christ-like) in the process? **This is repentant thinking.** The author once had coffee (in January 1996 in Charlotte, NC) with Scottish theologian T. F. Torrance, arguably the most important English-speaking theologian of the last fifty years. What was most impressive during our visit was not his erudition, not his knowledge of Karl Barth's theology, not his huge interaction with science in his works which he could call to mind at any time, although all of this was phenomenal (even at 86), but it was his comment, made as an aside, on how much he read and meditated upon Scripture. He was 86 at the time of our meeting. He shared he had read the Bible devotionally since a child. He read one chapter from both Testaments each day. Often it was from the Greek New Testament or from the Hebrew Old Testament. Occasionally it was the King James. Sunday was different; he read quite a few chapters. In this reading, he had he said completely read the entire Bible through 3-4 times a year. I took note of this comment. Think of what that adds up to from the time he was 5 or 6 and beginning to read all the way to the time of his age at our talk! A conservative estimate would put the number close to four hundred times. Surely, Torrance is an illustration of the "Scriptural Mind," about which Florovsky talks? One issue, which continues to confront the Church, is the lack of Basic Biblical knowledge among congregants. This is, undoubtedly part of the problem.

A productive Pastoral Theology, as far as the author is concerned, will have this **'Scriptural mind'** as one of its goals. Paul writes in First Corinthians 16:2, "Who has known the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?" But **we have the mind of Christ**.'" We have the mind of Christ—speak of the present Scripture reality of the *now* and not *yet*! We possess! The spiritual and mental growth of parishioners requires patience, endurance, love, discipline, and accessibility on the part of the pastor in dealing with his or her people. It also requires a constant refashioning of one's outlook. This is, as Harry Stack Sullivan points, a two-way refashioning. We affect others and they affect us. This, however, is not the psychological process of *actualization* suggested by Rogers. Thus, the inculcation of this repentant thinking, as part of a Trinitarian-Incarnational approach to Practical Theology ought to shape every aspect of ministry.

Carl Rogers, one of the doyens of psychoanalytic therapy in the sixties, seventies, and eighties speaks of the therapist's role in the *actualization* of people through acceptance. (Rogers 1961: 1980) He writes, "Effective counseling consists of a definitely structured permissive relationship which allows the client to gain an understanding of himself to a degree which enables him to take positive steps in the light of his new orientation." (Rogers 1942: 18) Roger's influence regarding both "acceptance" and "actualization" is huge. These concepts, however, seems pallid in comparison with the self-giving love the Apostle Paul speaks about in 1 Corinthians 13.

By contrast, Scripture speaks of one person's interactions with another in a far deeper, greater more self-giving and accepting way, Martin Buber spoke of an I-Thou relationship (1970), and the Apostle Paul spoke of this relationship with the word agape (ἀγάπη). This 'relational' understanding of the interaction of two people is based on

Paul's understanding in 1 Corinthians 13, a Scripture passage which we have all too unfortunately relegated to weddings. We remember here Dorothy Soëlle's earlier admonition regarding love. Again, Carl Rogers quotes Soren Kierkegaard's dictum as a direction for life, "To be the self that one truly is." (Rogers 1961: 166) The therapist's thinking, in this view, is to encourage the patient towards authenticity and acceptance of self, individuality and the real. One is always growing and becoming, because life is complex. This means that we should be open, and finally, more trusting of ourselves. (Rogers 1961: 167-175)

Rogers' work shaped a generation of helpers. The author in a private study done in college at the University of South Carolina in 1987 interviewed numerous pastors of different denominations. This was part of the work for my degree's minor in Psychology. Every pastor interviewed had been shaped by Roger's views in psychology and pastoral counseling. Compared to the Scriptural mind about which Florovsky speaks, actualization as Roger's suggests seems sallow. Notably absent from Roger's understanding of actualization is the transformation of people through the incarnate person and saving work of Jesus Christ. Actualization, as a concept, in the author's view, is a poor substitute for the *agapic* love of the New Testament.

The New Testament tells us that it is God's love alone, in Jesus Christ, shared by the Holy Spirit, which transforms people, and which is far richer and deeper than the mere "acceptance" of the therapist towards client as Carl Rogers has it. It is, in the author's experience, this kind of *agapic* love that aids others—in developing a mind constantly renewed—what Florovsky calls a **Scriptural mind.** This occurs through nurture, friendship, mentoring, counsel—but also preaching, teaching and pastoral care.

Harry Stack Sullivan would have termed this ministry "consensual validation." This kind of action and solicitous care is precisely how John McLeod Campbell engaged in ministry in Row and after in Glasgow.

It is here that Scottish philosopher John Macmurray's concept of **persons in relation** becomes crucial and fleshes out the dynamics of relationship. For Macmurray, we must turn away from egocentricity if we desire to be whole. Instead of inward turning, we must be outward turning. We exist, then, as not only minds thinking—as French philosopher Rene Descartes suggested, but as a self that must interact with others in order to exist fully. We exist, then, not on thinking, not in introspection, but only in dynamic interaction with others. (1961: 24) This idea that we, as persons, are **constituted** by our relationship with others is important. There is no "I" without a "you." There is no "you" without an "I." We *are* our relationships, which are *necessarily* personal. (Kirkpatrick 2005:105)

In order to know another we must enter into a personal relationship with them. In so doing, we may be changed and transformed as much as they are. The idea of an isolated individual self is a fiction. (1957: 38) Harry Stack Sullivan suggested much the same thing in the interpersonal relationship between patient and counselor. Both enter into a relationship that changes both, not just one. (Chrzanowski 1977: 39) This communion between people can have and has had **transformative** effects. So far we have spoken only of people. There is a divine person, which enters into relationship with us also. The work of the Holy Spirit in relationship with persons also changes and transforms them. T. F. Torrance calls the relationship change that occurs in the interaction between the Holy Spirit and persons "personalizing." By this, Torrance

means, that through this relationship we are made more human. This fellowship and communion is transformative, personalizing.

A meta-view of Practical Theology takes seriously the relationship between the Triune God of love and grace and human beings. The word **relationship** is fundamental. Andrew Purves, of Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, writes,

> It is not we by our actions who make theology practical (the old notion of practical theology as applied theology), but God, by virtue of what God does, who makes knowledge of God inherently a practical knowledge. Churchly practice arises out of our sharing in the practice of God, and it is only properly and appropriately practical and theological insofar as it does this. Nothing could be more practical than the teaching about who God is in relation to us and the concern to live in that relationship with God as the fundamental or constitutive basis of what it means to be human in the first place, and the church, in the second. (Purves 1998: 223)

A meta-view of Theology *as* centered in the dynamic between God and human is practical because it is centered in the response by people to what God has done in Christ, this involves action.

2.2 Making Sense of Life through the Lens of the Gospel

We have begun the conversation about what makes an effective Practical Theology or Pastoral Theology. We have suggested, following Dorothy Soëlle that love is the foundation. Important also is the elimination of that which is not in keeping with love and translating that which is so that it may be better understood. We have also suggested that God's love in Jesus Christ for human beings has transformed reality. We

have been transformed. Being changed and knowing about this change is different. We have highlighted the importance of relationship. In addition, we have suggested that repentant thinking that is in keeping with this transformation is called for in human beings. The Bible calls this "having the mind of Christ." While Practical Theology attends to Scripture and Tradition, the Social Sciences, it also attends to the living of life and the questions raised by this living.

A vignette to begin the reflection on living: *I received a call from a church member early one morning. I had just barely finished eating breakfast and drinking my coffee. The elderly woman was sobbing on the other end of the phone. Her sister's daughter had gone into the bathroom following breakfast, taken the gun she kept for protection, placed it against her head, and pulled the trigger. To say the parents, when I arrived, were in shock was an understatement. She had quietly eaten breakfast with them, although she seemed a little distant, excused herself from the table and committed suicide. So, there I was, the professionally trained clergyman called in for triage (one might say). Their tears, their heartache, the shock, the question why, and their disbelief all hung in the air when I entered their house, just around the corner from the church. I represented God in their way of thinking. At one point during the morning, I was asked point-blank by the mother, "Preacher, what are you going to say about my daughter at the funeral?" How was I to help the grieving mother begin to make sense of this tragedy? Where was God, she wondered? Why did God allow this tragedy to happen? Where, as believing Christians, did they think her daughter had ended up—heaven, hell, somewhere in between? Was she in heaven they wondered; because at one time suicides were thought to be outside of God's grace? The bodies of suicides could not be buried in*

hallowed ground. On what resources was I to call? Next, "What was I going to say in the context of worship, of witnessing to the resurrection, about this lady and her choice, about God's activity and disposition in and through this event? There were a whole host of issues presenting themselves from the time I was called by the family until following the funeral.

Pastoral theology or Practical Theology has always had its origins in a question or questions inspired by the issue or issues about living with which people struggle. This struggle is its impetus. Their struggle, however, is a necessary part of the process of life and growth. When we are learning a new skill, riding a bike for example—we invariably fall off or crash. It is a part of the process of learning to ride the bike. Life may be compared with learning to ride a bike. (Elio Frattolari 2002) We are always revised and revising ourselves as we live in the light of a variety of facts. Seeing and understanding in and from a new perspective while living, not previously considered is valuable. The goal, then, as Christians, is to see issues, whether ethical, biological, theological, and so on in a new light (repentantly), and to respond appropriately. This is faith-thinking, which is transformative thinking.

In the author's experience, one guide in working this living out is John McLeod Campbell. McLeod Campbell's work both as pastor and author evidence both a helpful methodology and suggested authentic response to the claims of the gospel. McLeod Campbell relied on his study of Scripture and a close reading of his parishioners, the living human documents, which then led him to articulate his 'preached' and 'taught' Pastoral Theology. In one aspect, McLeod Campbell surely follows the universal approach seen in Gisbert Voetius, arguably the 'father' of Practical and Pastoral theology.

(Shuringa 2000: 153) Adolescents may believe that those who have lived before them are not helpful or wise in answering questions about living. However, mining the tradition is important and valuable. The questions with which we struggle are not new ones. The wisdom of those who have struggled with existential questions is valuable for us. Knowing how someone might respond and what they thought about questions and issues raised in living have proven for the author to be of immense assistance. It is one aspect and something to keep in mind, a retrieval of the past and its translation for today when identifying resources for a Practical or Pastoral Theology.

2.3 Gisbert Voetius as a Beginning of Pastoral Theology

We neglect the history of important people and their work to our detriment. They are not dead and gone; they and their ideas, as Karl Barth once observed, remain among us through their writings. There was a time when I like most adolescents thought my parents were pretty dense. As I matured I realized that most of what I faced, they had already experienced, learned from and moved on. I realized then that listening to them and learning from them was quite valuable. Our predecessors who lived in the past all have wisdom. Some, if not all of what we experience, has already been experienced by them. We, in a manner of speaking, stand on their shoulders. Gisbert Voetius (Voo'-chess: 1589-1676) was perhaps the premier Dutch Reformed theologian of his era. A quick glance at his date of birth and death is enough to assure us that he is **pre-modern**. It is even more obvious that Voetius, upon a reading of his remarks regarding 'practical theology' precedes our modern, perhaps now postmodern, era. Voetius suggests that

theology is essentially universal in scope, thus arguing that Practical Theology should be all-inclusive, combining in its viewpoint not only theology, but ethics, spirituality, polity and ministry. (Kapic 2012: 326) In some ways this view is similar to Schleiermacher's. Voetius writes,

> 1. "Practical theology" may mean, in the broad sense, all theology that follows Scripture or is based upon it, whether expressed in commentaries, *loci communi* (common places), or catechisms, because all theology among pilgrims on earth is in its nature practical, and no portion of it can be correctly and completely discussed unless it is developed practically; that is applied to the practice of repentance, faith, hope, and love, or to consolation or exhortation. (Beardslee 1965: 265)

The sources of theology for Voetius begin with Scripture, and then move outward towards commentaries, catechisms, and reflections upon Scripture. The development of this theology, however, does not stop there. It continues in praxis. Its goal is the development of the person in their Christianity. Voetius argues here that we are **pilgrims**. We are traveling forward through life. This is an interesting image. While it is not the image of bike riding of Frattolari, the movement is important. It has to do with living life faithfully, and secondarily, successfully. There is, for Voetius, a particular way of being a pilgrim on a journey that is important. It is a behavior, a practice, a way of seeing the world whose hallmarks are repentance, faith, hope, and love. Can a contemporary Practical Theology or Pastoral Theology learn anything from this proposal? While we as children of modernity divide "theology" into distinct specialties, each with their own particular methodologies, it is clear that from a reading of Voetius that he considers theology, while having discrete, unique and different perspectives, a

unity. Theology for Voetius is multi-perspectival, but, nonetheless, a unity, and universal. Such a view seems quaint to us today, with our seminary and university faculties all containing particular professors with discreet specialties.

Voetius, speaking of theology 'practically' outlines what is necessary, and continues,

We must begin with knowledge of four sources:

> (1.) an exposition of the Decalogue,
>
> (2.) a presentation of moral theology, or questions of morals,
>
> (3.) a presentation or settling of cases of conscience,
>
> (4.) and, theological guidance [*consilia*], or its preparation, systematizing, and communication by spoken or written word. (Beardslee 1965: 289)

The means and help for the proper decision on moral questions and cases are:

> (1.) a sound knowledge of Scripture;
>
> (2.) the use of intelligence and trained judgment in connection with the *loci* or in theology, whether positive, apologetic, or practical, and in church polity;
>
> (3.) knowledge of the [liberal] arts and philosophy, especially logic, metaphysics, politics, and all practical philosophy. This should include a knowledge of history and of biography [*exempli*] ...the casuist cannot afford to be ignorant of jurisprudence. (Beardslee 1965: 300)

One will immediately notice the emphasis by Voetius on God's law and ethics. Here, the importance seems to be on **behavior**. Many modern Practical Theologians would applaud his starting point—Voetius begins with Theological Ethics. Immediately

following in importance, however, for Voetius, is the issue of salvation. What does it mean to be saved? What is salvation? How may one know if one is saved? How is one to be guided towards an assurance of our salvation? Notice also the importance of Scripture for Voetius. Adhering to the Reformation principle of the authority of Scripture, Voetius highlights this source as the starting point for theology. Then comes the establishment of doctrines based on the *Communis locus* (common places) of Scripture (following Lutheran Reformation theologian Melanchthon). In the divinity course, which his students undertook in preparing to be church pastors, Voetius advised them in the following way,

> It has been my custom to tell our students that in order to serve congregations successfully there are three books with which one needs to be familiar: Scripture, one's own conscience, and his church; this latter, also he should use in the settling of cases that have been referred to them, or that they themselves have brought up ... (Beardslee 1965: 301)

Voetius highlights the importance of Scripture here. In so doing, he reiterates common practice for this time. Next in importance is how conscience speaks to us. Finally, also important is the tradition of the Church as this may be found in those who have previously written on this topic. Practical theologians today would disagree with Voetius on the sources and norms of their theology, but his is an important historical voice.

Edward Farley, in his history of the academy and practical/ pastoral theology, suggests that Voetius' view of pastoral theology was universal in scope and was, therefore, in his words, a theology of *habitus*. It simply was. Voetius was uncritical in this way. His context and view of the world and of God shaped his thinking. Voetius'

work involved the entire understanding of life and theology. Today, we might describe it as a sort of applied theology. Undoubtedly, given our place in history, and modernity, we cannot return to what Ed Farley labels as a *theologia* of habitus. (Farley 2003: 19) Our world is too drastically different.

McLeod Campbell's Pastoral Theology, because of his methodology and outlook, is closer in nature to Voetius' broad description. However, it does fall into the category described by Rodney Hunter, as theological reflection *upon* pastoral experience (and pastoral experience influencing theology). According to Russell Burck and Rodney Hunter (Hunter 2005: 867-872), three types of Pastoral Theology can be discerned from the literature on the subject and from actual practice in the field. They are as follows:

1.) They highlight clergy education—formulating principles, theories, and procedures which aid in growth.

2.) They are conceived with the theory and practice of pastoral care and counseling in mind.

3.) They are a form of theological reflection in which pastoral experience serves as a context for the critical development of a basic theological understanding. (my emphasis)

In surveying the background of Practical Theology or Pastoral Theology in this chapter, we are trying to understand what has gone on in this type of theology in the past. At the same time, we want to orient our own proposal in the light of our learning. No

effort occurs as if it alone was *sui generis*! In taking account of the past, we seek to position our own effort within the stream of work, which has made up the discipline. A part of this requires methodological decisions to be made. In addition, choices have to be made about what to accept, what to reject, and what criteria will be used.

One type of Practical Theology that Hunter and Burck isolate in their list is that of theological reflection on experience, which is critical and evaluative, and which is aware of the context in which it occurs. From this provisional frame of reference, necessarily, it undergoes further continuous critical thinking and adaptation. On this view, Pastoral Theology is a type of 'contextual' theology that may consider topics like illness, salvation, death, hope, family, sexuality, God, personhood, or faith. Pastoral experience serves as the impetus behind the development and growth of a theology. It does so, certainly, from the perspective of the shepherding care given by the pastor to a congregation. It also includes as much information, critically received, from other disciplines as possible. They serve as an adjunct. This is a way of *doing* theology pastorally. (Hunter 2005: 867) McLeod Campbell would easily fall into this last category of Hunter and Burck's.

Pastoral Theology not only utilizes experience as a basis, but also seeks to draw knowledge from as many sources as possible—it is multi-perspectival. While we may preference some sources over others, each is to be measured and weighed—this is the point of critical correlation. There is a dialectical movement back and forth among the various sources. Understanding and knowledge must be multi-perspectival as it begins, but through critical reflection on the continual movement of theory and praxis, arrives at a new articulation of the truth. Thus, it may be influenced by more than one source.

This is the point of the Whitehead's model of using Christian Tradition as one source, Scripture interpretation as another, Church History and Theology (Doctrine), as another part of the basis, with the Social Sciences and personal experience included. Seward Hiltner, one of the greats, persuasively argues for the necessary relationship between secular and sacred sources of information and wisdom in a pastoral theology. He writes, "We need also to utilize any knowledge and wisdom we can get from any source—to the extent that it helps to clarify the meaning of the gospel, the nature of man's need, or the processes by which the riches of the gospel may be brought into revitalizing contact with that need." (1959: 14)

2.4 Living to God as Foundational

In this study the perceptive reader will note that each item discussed may be understood to be a part and parcel of a circular investigation which aims to state and also revise different aspects of this investigation. Thus, we seek to be multi-perspectival. This is not unlike Karl Barth's circular approach seen in the Church Dogmatics where Barth states a topic and then in his investigation and then explication circles around that topic from all sides, both to clarify and to correct or amend. So, we've mentioned Dorothy Soëlle's emphases, the importance of agape-love, we've talked about the Trinity, and repentant thinking, and we've rehearsed Gisbert Voetius' emphases in what would now be termed "Practical Theology." The varying perspectival circle is well under way.

Another perspective worth consideration is something like William Ames' definition of theology from the Marrow of Sacred Divinity (1639: 1) where he writes,

“Divinity is the doctrine of living to God.” This definition is important. "Divinity," for Ames involves action. It involves praxis. This praxis is a particular kind of accomplishment. "Living," is the particular praxis in which Ames is interested. Doctrine for Ames is the "how." Ames’ proposal is expanded in the following explanation. He writes, “It is called a doctrine, not as if the name of Intelligence, Science, Sapience, Art, or Prudence were not hereto belonging for all these are in every accurate discipline and especially in Divinity…” (1639: 1) William Ames’ understanding of theology as response to the gospel of God’s initiative in Jesus Christ and the importance of grace is important. Our 'lived' response to God’s prior actions is living *to* God. His statement here of “living to God” needs remembrance and translation. David Shuringa highlights the concern of the author’s work, in his dissertation, when he says, “Only a properly functioning practical theology can provide effective guidance for the church’s praxis, or ministry.” (2000: 151) Practical Theology or Pastoral Theology has an important perspective to consider when it contemplates itself as a discipline concerned with “living to God.” What might that look like today? Living to God today, arguably, is just as important as it was thought to be in the past; although, sadly, it is not often considered in our present culture. The issue remains. How does one live to God?

That this living to God can be a difficulty is seen from the suggestion of Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor that there are three fundamental issues or aspects of our North American culture, which must be dealt with if we as a society are to flourish,

(1.) Individualism, (centrism of the person)

(2.) Instrumental reason, (reason preferenced in decision making) and

(3.) Loss of freedom leading to disaffection (innumerable opportunities).

(Taylor 1991: 1-12)

This has led, so Taylor argues, to a massive turning inward. Rene Descartes' example and program, Cartesianism, has triumphed. We have exalted both individualistic centrism and the use of reason. We as a society, and as individual persons in that society, have developed and grown in a specific way because of cultural conditioning. We emphasize the notion of individuality when compared with earlier understandings of societies' communal nature. Taylor writes of this attitude, "There is a certain way of being human that is my way. I am called upon to live my life in this way, and not in imitation of anyone else's. But, this gives a new importance to being true to myself. If I am not, I miss the point of my life, I miss what being human is for me" (1991: 28-29). That this introverted observation and resultant self-construction runs counter to the claims of the gospel is an understatement. If Taylor is correct, and the author believes he is, then the pastor or Practical Theologian faces this issue. It must be tackled from the ground level. Practical Theology is required to present an alternative to modern societies' emphases.

Taylor's comment begs the question of the centrality of the Triune God in life. In addition, there is also in his comments an anthropological centering of the self, about which Helmut Thielicke warns (1974: 1990). The exaltation of self (*superbia*), as the

gospel has it, stands at odd with the admonition of the Biblical writers (James 4:10, 1 Peter 5:6) that we are to decrease in our own stature– so that Christ (within us) may increase. Humble yourselves, Scripture tells us, that we may be lifted up by God. This requires a change in outlook. It requires repentant thinking, in order to make sense. Reason has its place. In Christianity, the way of true humanity is seen in Christ's unfettered and unrestrained relationship with the Father, as McLeod Campbell notes. (1856: 122) It is not seen in individualism. This relationship offers Jesus Christ the ability to let go of self and embrace others. This is true freedom. McLeod Campbell points out that Christ's purpose here on earth may be summed up with the phrase, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God." (Hebrews 10:9) The process of moving from concern for self, centrism, to concern for others (neighbor) is one aspect of the gospel. This provides a challenge for the Practical Theologian.

I believe that it is incumbent upon Pastoral Theology not only to recognize the prevenience of the Triune God's ministry to the world and to us, but in response to such action for us to inculcate and foment a relationship with God *as* Father, mediated *through* the Son, strengthened as we are in doing this *by* the power of the Holy Spirit. The Triune God is effusive relationship. This relationship is so effusive; it reaches out to us in incarnate effulgence. This is 'living' to God as Ames has it. "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God," is the proper orientation for us. When this occurs, our place in the world is realigned. Living in this way may require us to live counter-culturally. Part of this relationship with God includes our seeking for and after God's will in our life and in the lives of those around us. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven, we pray in the Lord's Prayer. We will be restless, discontent and self-centered until we do so.

Paradoxically, and against all human common sense, this changed and altered attitude will **increase** our freedom, while also decreasing our sense of proud individualism. Heightened also for us will be the sense of *koinonia*—of fellowship and community with others. The Church is the location where those journeying as disciples may assist one another forward. Discipleship is never a solo affair. As one is a member of a congregation disciples learn to "bear one another's burdens and thus fulfill the law of Christ." (Galatians 6:6)

2.5 What of Jesus Christ?

Taylor's view, quoted above, excludes the person and work of Jesus Christ. We are, to this way of thinking, essentially on our own. It is to be granted that Taylor is not seeking to be prescriptive, but merely descriptive. In Taylor's view, there is no congruency between what Christ has made of us in the incarnation and who and what he calls us to be and do in our lives, simply because Christ is not part of the outlook. There is also no connection, between who Christ desires us to be, and the people we are supposed to become as Christians. We are the masters of the ship on which we sail. Unfortunately, there is no compass and no map. We are, then, little more than a rudderless ship, leading to the inability to handle—much less solve- current issues. Taylor asks how the individual beset by the thinning ozone layer should respond. What is to guide us? Should we leave the issue to scientists? Politicians? If we do seek to solve current issues, we do so with only our best interests in mind. We march merrily onward with no guidance save our own, with not a care in the world. Another example of

the human inability without divine guidance comes from the Apostle Paul who states that he never wants to boast of anything, save the cross of Christ. (Galatians 6:14 NIV) Paul then seeks to redefine life from that perspective. For Paul it is the cross, which takes precedence, because through this means God has redefined reality. That this statement in our day seems odd would be an understatement, where we seek to outdo one another with the latest house, clothes, car, gizmos, or gadget. This may be an indicator of how much progress needs to be made until our lives become more harmonious and congruent with the gospel. Cartesianism and consumerism need to give way to Christo-centrism! Calvin writes in Book III, Chapter 6 of his Institutes of the Christian Religion, "The object of regeneration, as we have said, is to manifest in the life of believers a harmony (*symmetria*) and agreement (*consensus*) between God's righteousness and their obedience, and thus to confirm the adoption that they have received as sons."

As we proceed in this chapter, we will seek to discern the epistemological bases for a Pastoral Theology or Practical Theology that is both Trinitarian and Incarnational. We will reflect on a theology that has its dialectical basis in both theory and in praxis. In so doing we will examine one current example of a fundamental practical theology suggested by one of the preeminent practical theologians of our day, Don Browning. Any Practical Theology or Pastoral Theology, which seeks to establish its own place, methodology and objectives, must consider Browning's work. This will lead to our reflection upon the dualist basis for much of today's thought and a counter-proposal for a more unitive frame of reference that has its basis in the Incarnation.

That our current lived situation (in the U. S.) leads to or instigates these spiritual dilemmas and emotions of self-consciousness – of a lack of assurance, anxiety, and

shame will be examined at some length later in the dissertation where we will examine each of them individually; now we turn—necessarily—to methodological issues. These three different emotive terms individually mean diverse things; but broadly speaking there is enough overlap for our purposes to be of benefit to us. Each condition named—a lack of assurance, anxiety, and shame—suffers from the symptom of a lack of love. Alternatively, the issue may be the perceived lack of love, which is also a commonality. So, what is Practical Theology? What is Pastoral Theology? How ought we to engage in is? Then, in the doing of it, what do we seek to accomplish?

2.6 The Importance of the Shepherding Perspective in Pastoral Theology

We begin with what seems most important. This is a unique outlook. It is perspective, which provides impetus for ministry. There are, in initially surveying the field, almost as many methodological proposals for doing Practical / Pastoral theologies, as there are theologians. If it is no longer viable to treat theology as universal and all encompassing, then something—some constructive frame of reference- must replace that overarching concept. We could spend significant time interacting with the different proposals. Given the varied suggestions extant, a literature review could occupy significant space! This could conceivably never end, so for our purposes, some proposals take precedence and are more important.

We begin with the notable American pastoral theologian Seward Hiltner. In the Twentieth-century Hiltner sought to re-establish the field and its importance. Woodward

and Pattison suggest in their "Reader" that Hiltner "perhaps did more than anyone else to establish and foster pastoral theology as an area of serious, distinctive academic and practical concern." (Woodward and Pattison 2000: 27) Seward Hiltner, of Princeton Seminary, from a generation ago, is considered the "fountainhead" of American Pastoral Theology. Though Anton Boisen was Hiltner's teacher, Boisen did not write nearly as much as Hiltner did, nor did he have the same kind of literary influence. In addition, Boisen was not as concerned with an all-encompassing method.

To begin with, Hiltner argued that Pastoral Theology occurred from the results of the disciplined study of **Christian shepherding**. (Hiltner 1958: 15) Hiltner also argued for the operational or functionally centered purpose of Pastoral Theology. In contrast, Pastoral Theology was not logic-centered like Biblical studies, Ethics, Church History, for example, whose purposes are different. (Hiltner 1958: 20) It was praxis centered. Or in his words, "Pastoral theology is the **operation focused** (my emphasis) branch of theology, which begins with theological questions and concludes with theological answers, in the interim examining all acts and operations of the pastor and church to the degree that they involve the perspective of Christian shepherding." (1958: 24) I take his use of the word "operational" to have the same connotation as praxis, action, activity and so on. Within Pastoral Theology, for Hiltner, there are three areas,

1.) Shepherding,

2.) Communicating, and,

3.) Organizing.

However, Hiltner's proposal even though paradigmatic for much pastoral theology, betrays almost an instrumentalist and pragmatic mien. Praxis and practice seem to override logic. Doing *seems* to both precede and preclude theory. Could this be because Hiltner is American? Pragmatism runs deep in the United States. For example, "Organizing," (in one respect) sounds an awful lot like administration. While there are theologies of administration and liturgy, counseling and practice—Pastoral or Practical theology, so the author asserts, should have a much larger meta-view in mind. It should be more all-inclusive. The question always has been if Hiltner's proposal is too centered in praxis to the exclusion of theory. In addition, Hiltner's method leans heavily on Paul Tillich's "method of correlation." This is to one-directional. Hiltner writes, "We believe that a full two way street is necessary in order to describe theological method." (Woodward and Pattison 2000: 45) What are, one might ask, the controls in either direction of the correlation? On this view, every discipline is the equal of every other. Is this in fact the case? Should there be a preference? This is an important question.

The author worries about a watering-down of this discipline if there is no order, no preference. What keeps Practical or Pastoral Theology from devolving into something else altogether, particularly if the Christian Shepherd (Pastoral) perspective and the theological perspective are not privileged. Granted, Hiltner wasn't completely happy with his own method and himself suggested a dialectic of, or for lack of a better term, "interconnection" or "interpenetration," recognizing that to stay on either side of the dialectic was to become over-matched on the one hand by practice devoid of theory or on the other hand, theory devoid of practice.

Hiltner's use of the shepherd imagery, though, is suggestive. It responds to Dorothy Soëlle's suggestion about the primacy of love in action in theology. Indeed, Hiltner wrote a suggestive book on it titled, The Christian Shepherd (1959). The figure of the shepherd has its origin in the culture and context of Palestine. The metaphor was used by the Biblical writers to suggest something important about God, the king, and of Jesus Christ. A Shepherd's livelihood depended on the sheep for which he/she cared. This was not easy. There were always pastures to move the flock towards, greener and less foraged. Water was a constant necessity. Thieves were a common problem (so the gospel of John notes). Wild beasts, wolves, bears and lions constantly threatened the flock. On the one hand, then, the shepherd had to be gentle enough to keep the notoriously skittish animals from stampeding; they would readily recognize him by sight, smell, and voice. On the other hand, he needed to be strong enough to repel that which threatened both him and his flock. In particular, our popular perceptions regarding shepherds have been, without question, influenced by the language of the Twenty-Third Psalm and the image of Jesus in John's Gospel as "The Good Shepherd." This metaphor and model remains a viable one within the church conveying much in its use. The author believes it is programmatic.

Even though Carroll Wise argued against this imagery in his book The Meaning of Pastoral Care (1966) substituting the Pauline concept of 'reconciliation,' in its place, in my judgment the shepherding metaphor is more apt. Shepherding for Hiltner "is always present as a readiness to emerge when called for by particular need, but it becomes the dominant factor in the situation only under particular circumstances…[because] it is one of the modes of outreach of the gospel to men in need." (1959: 14) Even though we are

not literal shepherds herding sheep, the biblical metaphor is and continues to remain not only suggestive, but also part of the blueprint.

However, in Christian Life Patterns: The Psychological Challenges and Religious Invitations of Adult Life (1982) the Whiteheads, Evelyn and James, characterized the minister (or religious educator), not as a shepherd, but rather as a *sheepdog*! Australian Shepherds as a breed of dog for herding cattle come immediately to mind. The author has seen them in action. They are restlessly mobile and frenetically active. They are constantly on the move. While the author appreciates their attempt at substituting imagery, I have never quite warmed to that characterization—primarily because we have enough frenetic ministers who feel busyness helps justify their existence. Australian Shepherds continue to move behind both cattle and sheep, constantly on the attack—they are restless as a breed. With the shepherd image is indeed suggestive, Pastoral Theology, writes Hiltner "needs to be as systematic as is any other branch of theology. That which distinguishes the center of its system within the body of divinity is its inquiry after and drawing conclusions from the exercise of the shepherding perspective." (Woodward and Pattison 2000: 41) The Shepherding perspective is a vital part of a planned, methodological approach to Pastoral Theology. Hiltner also reminds us here that the experience of care likewise plays a part in the construction of Practical Theology.

2.7 Pastoral Theology's Generative Problematic

While Hiltner is a valuable resource, we must move on from him. Another Practical Theology or Pastoral Theology model is that of James Loder, also of Princeton,

but more contemporary than Hiltner, who suggests that in Practical Theology and Pastoral Theology there is a "generative problematic." (Schweizer and van der Venn 1999: 359) The issue is in why doing Practical Theology or Pastoral Theology is challenging. It is evident from his language that Loder does not think they should be. Yet, they are difficult. Why, then, is this the case? Why is doing Practical Theology or Pastoral Theology troubling? Loder states that the reason this is so, is that two distinct separate, incongruent realities—the Divine and the human—are at work within the difficulties raised by the discipline. An adequate rationality asserts Loder is required to meet this obstacle.

Loder looks to Jesus Christ for an answer. How may two distinct, incongruent realities align together productively? In response, he proposes that the theological Chalcedonian formulation of 451, which proposes the dynamic asymmetric relationality between the two natures of Christ, but at the same time, the 'indissoluble differentiation,' and 'inseparable unity,' between God and human being in the one person of Jesus Christ is required to respond adequately to this difficulty. (Schweizer and van der Venn 1999: 359) His proposal is similar to Deborah van Deusen Hunsinger's in Theology and Pastoral Counseling (1995). Both Loder and van Deusen Hunsinger have appropriated this idea from Karl Barth's Christology. They have both found it useful methodologically. It is an interesting approach to take. It is a stimulating approach in that each particular subject or discipline on either side of the divide is allowed to have its say—and to assert its truth claims—without interference from another subject. What one sees, however, in this method is the indissoluble differentiation. There are ultimately two

competing truth claims. What is one to do? Which takes priority? How does one proceed?

As thought provoking as this approach is, is there not a dualism that is unbreakable between both asymmetric categories, which cannot be overcome? Van Deusen Hunsinger does not suggest a means to overcome the 'indissoluble differentiation' between the two sides of the generative problematic. Instead, she lets both sides stand in tension. Each discipline's normative criteria are necessarily generated and developed internally, with no critique available from either side because of their difference. (Van Deusen Hunsinger 1995: 217) Correlation is not even attempted, critical, or otherwise. There is no dialectic or synthesis. While there is a multi-perspectival approach in van Deusen Hunsinger's method, what if the two disciplines contradict each other? What is left are two competing truth claims. The author acknowledges the strength of the work, but the lack of critical correlation is a serious weakness. Is truth a unity for Van Deusen Hunsinger?

In approaching situations this way, one allows, however, according to Loder, (different from Van Deusen Hunsinger) for a certain transformative **interaction** between theology and the human sciences. Where God is **negated** by the human sciences (where God is ignored), their **negation** is in turn **negated**! Theology argues for a God intoxicated view of things. This, traditionally, stands in contradiction to science or psychology. Fresh understandings, then, are reappropriated where theological concepts become normative and are allowed to interact with the sciences, but not so when they themselves negate learnings from the human sciences! Thus, what one receives is an asymmetrical bi-polar relational unity, thus reflecting, ultimately the Chalcedonian

model. There is for Loder, a critical correlation of sorts. The living center of this particular approach, for Loder, is worship where praise and prayer, and the liturgies of Word and Sacrament are articulated—being guided by this methodology's findings. (Loder 1999: 360) Loder's suggestion is something to keep in mind. Given my work in Lutheran Christology, particularly the Lutheran Christology of Second Generation German Reformer Martin Chemnitz the author finds Loder's approach more congenial.

One of the issues lurking in the background that Loder seeks to address is not only the nature and character of theological method; it is **the very nature of theology itself**, and of its pressing forward for gains. Related also is the issue of the relationship between theory and praxis. It may be argued that these are two indissoluble and different facets. That this is an issue is precisely because *we* are an issue—to take a maxim from Scottish Theologian T. F. Torrance. Perfection and the infinite do not require explanation, but the *finite* and *imperfect* do. (Torrance 1996) Loder is not alone here, in their own ways Ellen Charry (1997), Colin Gunton (2003), Karl Rahner (1997), Catherine Mowry Lacugna (1993), William Placher (1996), and Wolfhart Pannenberg (1976) all indicate that for our modern sensibilities the pairing of theory and praxis is indeed an issue, whereas for our predecessors—**it was not**.

In the early church, as Gordon Mikoski suggests in his Emory doctoral dissertation (2005: 20ff) Trinity, Christian life, Sacraments and theory and practice were all integrally interwoven; however, as history progressed the diverse strands which were so closely linked and woven together began to fray. These notable theologians suggest diverse reasons and different periods as responsible for the origin of the difficulty.

2.8 The Unfortunate Eclipse of the Trinity

Anyone who spends time reading through the literature of the Enlightenment soon discovers an intense assault on Christology. Whereas in the early and medieval periods theology and philosophy were a unity, indeed knowledge itself was a unity, beginning with modernity the assault began. Knowledge itself was under attack. One only need mention Immanuel Kant's Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone (1793) as an illustration to prove the point. Kant had no reason for Jesus Christ. Thus, he was eliminated. Adolf Harnack's book What is Christianity, with his thesis that Christianity is nothing more than the Fatherhood of God and the universal brotherhood of man," merely solidifies the point made (1908). Jesus diminishes radically, even if he is still kept as part of the picture. Christ, in this view, becomes merely an interesting teacher *or* God-intoxicated holy man. As the world is mechanistic in nature functioning according to immutable law (Laplace), *a priori* the incarnation could not have happened. Because a Christology that is against rationality and reason seems impossible, and is based on prior closed mechanistic conception of the world, the belief in and doctrine of the Trinity then also becomes knotty. Thus, one has an Arian Christ and a severely deflated, hierarchical Trinity *of sorts*, if one has a Trinity at all.

Karl Rahner, the great German Roman Catholic theologian bemoans in his work The Trinity the lack of a well-conceived and thought out constructive and dogmatic theology of the Trinity. (Rahner 1997: 10) One reason for this lack is that Trinitarian theology declined somewhere between the theology of Bonaventure and Thomas Aquinas. Rahner, however, lays the majority of the blame at Aquinas' feet. Aquinas

published two different treatises according to Rahner—one devoted to God's unity and another, separate one, on God's Tri-unity. He writes, "…the treatise on the Trinity occupies a rather isolated position in the total dogmatic system. To put it rather crassly, and not without exaggeration, when the treatise is concluded, its subject is never brought up again. Its function in the whole dogmatic construction is not clearly perceived." (Rahner 1997: 14) This is an interesting observation, because the same could be said in Protestant circles of the Reformed theologian Schleiermacher. Rahner clearly intends to propose something different in his own essay. This is important. As Colin Gunton notes, "In the light of the theology of the Trinity, everything looks different." (1990: 7)

Paul Fiddes, of the University of Oxford, has written a very suggestive book titled Participating in God: A Pastoral Doctrine of the Trinity (2000). His topic is evocative. Theology, for Fiddes, is a kind of worship. He begins his study by moving from experience to doctrine, because this is how the early Church fathers worked. However, he is not arguing against revelatory disclosure. He seeks to use both. He notes "…our experience of ourselves and others must always be understood in the context of a God who is present in the world, offering a self-communication which springs from a boundless love." (2000: 8) Initially, Fiddes addresses the idea of 'person' in how it relates to human persons and then in a greater fashion to the Triune God as three persons. He writes,

> "I aim to develop an image of God which is appropriate to the demands of experience in pastoral care for others…I intend to explore ways in which this pastoral practice shapes our doctrine of God, and conversely how faith in the Triune God shapes our practice." (2000: 7-8)

Fiddes' goal is worthy and coalesces beautifully with this study. The aim of a pastoral doctrine of the Triune God should be to ask why it should make a difference to view pastoral issues from a perspective, which takes God seriously in a conceptual manner. He is also intrigued by how experience might be shaped by our engagement. (2000: 33) Fiddes also asks, "…how *participation* in this triune God affects both our images of God and our acts." (2000: 8) Fiddes is a thoughtful author and this book is remarkable. From the perspective of the author, however, John McLeod Campbell attempted to do just this in the last century. It may have paid dividends for Fiddes to have consulted him. Fiddes, nonetheless, raises the important question of the importance of the Trinity for pastoral work.

Ellen Charry, Princeton Professor, shows that it was **modernity**, which diminished the kind of emphases seen previously. Modernity overlooked and disregarded that taken for granted by the early Church fathers, namely both the sapiential and pastoral nature of theology. (Charry 1997: 5) The Enlightenment, in her view, encouraged "a healthy dose of skepticism," where an older pre-modern theology by contrast, whose emphasis is sapiential and aretegenic, has "trust built in at the outset." (1997: 7) Anselm's rubric "faith seeking understanding," because of this mindset necessarily falls away. Citing John Locke (1632-1704), David Hume (1711-1776), and Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) as responsible for the adaptation of theology from pedagogical, and formational, to ratiocentric and concerned with truth, she sees modernity as the watershed for the change in emphasis. (1997: 8-11) In this assertion, she is not alone.

Colin Gunton (1993) likewise argues that with modernity the importance and indeed fundamental, for theology, understanding and reliance on the Trinity for

Christianity dissolved (Clumsy sentence). He locates the beginning of this trend around the time of Augustine (300's), with his theology culminating in the eclipse of God towards the end of the medieval period. (Gunton 1993: 28) Indeed, he argues that for most of the Western world, 'God…is single, simple, and unchanging." (Gunton 1993: 24) Thus, God is a monad. The result of this, seen in the theology of Gunton, himself, is a critique of the difficulties plaguing modernity, including its understanding of God. He writes, "The unity of God has been stressed at the expense of his triunity, and to that extent the modern critique must be understood as a recalling of theology its own Trinitarian roots. (Gunton 1993: 39)

At any rate, we have digressed, so back to Charry's critique. Theology, heretofore, had blended what we term discrete divisions or aspects of theology, like evangelistic or apologetic, practical or systematic into a whole, but following the Enlightenment theology became split into discrete concentrations becoming more interested in epistemology, or "the intellectual justification of the faith." (Charry 1997: viii, 5) In addition, theology also became interested in "theological method," she notes citing Charles Wood. (1997: 5) Charry's critique is very important to reckon with.

In the author's practical experience, the unity of God among laypeople and ministers is often emphasized to the exclusion of the Triunity of God. What we are then left with, is the word "God" functioning unfortunately as a name. Let me give one example, as a member of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry for Trinity Presbytery (Presbyterian Church in the United States of America) I and a committee of two others were responsible for interviewing Candidates for the ministry. This committee, in our denomination, journeys with the ministerial candidate from the

beginning of their sense of call until their ordination. No matter what their seminary background, no matter how diverse—when questioned, all were more comfortable focusing on God's unity than on God's Triunity. Perhaps this is merely a Reformed symptom! It may also have something to do with our education. Some theologians might argue so. One person in particular, when I asked him about how God was active now in his life, quickly mentioned God and then went into detail describing how he viewed God's providence. When I asked him in particular about how the individual members of the Trinity were involved in his life, he quickly shot back in exasperation, "Isn't that modalism?" Hence, so Unitarian has our thinking about God become that we place the Trinity behind the unity of the persons in God. The Trinity it may be argued is the backside, and thus the less important aspect, of the One God.

Yet, the Christian faith confesses God **as** Father, Son, and Spirit—nothing more, nothing less. Colin Gunton notes that, "God is no more than what Father, Son, and Spirit give to and receive from each other in the inseparable communion that is the outcome of their love. Communion is the *meaning* of the word: there is no 'being' of God other than this dynamic of persons in relation." (1990: 10) When discussing the Trinity the trap is to speak about God as substance or being, then move to Father-Son-Spirit language. It requires a change in our way of looking at things to understand this. So Unitarian is our thinking that it will take a sharp alteration in our framework to keep from making this mistake.

In this vein James B. Torrance (1997) is right when he asks people what occurs in worship, and invariably the response to that question is with some kind of acknowledgment that we are worshiping, praising, and singing to God. It is about what

we do, so the answer goes. The relationship, on this view, that exists is between God and us—us and God. We sing, we pray, we give our money and God receives. Torrance is quick to point out, however, that such a view is Unitarian at heart. It belittles Christ's role as mediator. It overlooks Christ's priestly work that is ongoing. In addition, if worship is about us, then it engenders weariness. It places everything as our responsibility. We enter the sanctuary, we listen to the liturgy, we pray, we read the Scripture; unfortunately this view is human-centered. Instead, he cautions, worship is rather what the Son, Jesus Christ does before the throne of the Father in the power of the Spirit, and in which by grace we are allowed to participate—being lifted up *beyond* ourselves by the Spirit into the very life and love of the Triune God of grace. This is the point of the Sursum Corda.

J. B. Torrance's view helpfully takes the stress of the subjective off us and places it back upon the objectivity of the ministry and great high priesthood of Jesus Christ where it belongs. Torrance, it may be said, in doing so also takes the Sursum Corda seriously. The minister before Communion instructs the congregation, "Lift up your hearts." The congregation responds, "We lift them up to the Lord." This mediation and ongoing Priesthood by Christ is important for Practical theology or Pastoral theology and needs to be noted.

Catherine Mowry Lacugna suggests that it was as far back as the Council of Nicaea that the fissure between theology and practice began to show itself. In her mercurial and fascinating book God for Us: the Trinity and the Christian Life (1991) she points to the catholic assembly at Nicaea as responsible, how ever so slightly, for the disruption between God as triune and God as involved with and in the world. The

classical terms used are *economic trinity* and *imminent trinity*, although Lacugna (who died far too young from cancer at the age of 44 in 1997) prefers the terms *theologia* and *oeconomia*. Essentially, Lacugna argues that the life of God does not simply belong to God alone, but is shared with us in the person and work of Jesus Christ and the activity of the Holy Spirit. God reaches out to us in passionate and embracing love.

At issue was the debate with Arius, over Christ's relation to God, which led to the difficulties the church now finds itself in regarding its poor doctrine of the Trinity. (1991: 36) She writes, "…the theology of God (and Christology) shifted noticeably after Nicaea (1991: 36)…the ultimate effect was the drastic separation between the mystery of God and the mystery of salvation." (1991: 37) The consequence, for Lacugna, is that by the end of the fourth century these concepts (*oeconomia and theologia*) had undergone considerable change and their meaning was now firmly set. That there was a separation is an understatement; a part of the problem was the difficulty of answering the question, can Christ suffer? Christ, however, clearly suffers in the gospels on the cross. Then, if Christ indeed suffered, and he was *homoousios* with the Father, it could be affirmed according to logic that God suffered. Classic thought was that God was impassable. Out of this debate, a transformation takes place with theology becoming the science of God in God's self; the economy is the sphere of God's condescension in the flesh. Theology will become limited to the imminent trinity, while *oeconomy* is reduced finally to the incarnation. (1991: 43) Lacugna goes on to show how this split adversely affects worship, the Christian life, and doxology leaving us with a metaphysical doctrine devoid of any relationship to our lived experience. In doing so, she issues a clarion call to rediscovery of the triune God and this trinity's desire for relationship with us.

As this is the case, we are allowed in response to realize that the Triune God is a given. The Trinity is not a construct, nor is it a projection. At the heart of the issue for the person in the pew is how God is involved in his or her life. Modernism has bequeathed to us a God that is more Unitarian, than Trinitarian, and Deistic than involved with human beings. God is seen to have started the universe with a big bang and now running the show is up to us. The world and our place in it is simply one part of the vast mechanism we know as the cosmos. (Dijksterhuis 1968) Pastorally, this raises questions over God's presence and purpose in and for a person's life. It also raises the question of our relationship to God. Is God active in our lives? Have we been left irretrievably alone? If God is active, then what does God want of us?

While affirming that the incarnation was an act of God, probably only during Advent and Christmas Eve, the average person in the pew does not know how to relate this event to the various happenings in their lives and in the lives of those around them. As Charles Gore reminds us, it is possible for Christianity to lose its true centre by focusing on what he calls the **'unduly subjective.'** (1896: 4) That is, the interiorly felt personal emotional responses to Christianity. The search for a specific emotion may lead astray and cause more problems than help. As Christians what is of most import for us are 'ready wills,' then 'developing faith,' and finally 'lives gradually sanctified by correspondence with Him.' (1896: 4) Furthermore, if some do mention Christ and speak of his life and death, and then his resurrection and ascension, there is little mention of what Christ is doing now on our behalf. Most parishioners feel he is on vacation. Many, in the words of the Apostles' Creed think he merely sits now at the right hand of the Father doing nothing until "he will come to judge the quick and the dead." As Colin

Gunton notes, "To be a human being is to be related to the Father through the Son and in the Spirit, and it is the character of Christian experience to realise that relationship." (1990: 5) A Pastoral Theology or Practical Theology must take these concerns about the nature and character of God to heart and seek to move forward constructively in assisting others to discern whether their views are accurate or incorrect.

2.9 The Issue of *Sapientia* vs. *Scientia*

Wolfhart Pannenberg suggests that Abelard used the descriptive word 'theology' in a universal way, understanding theology "to describe **sacred learning** as a whole." (Pannenberg 1976: 7) It seems (if I understand Pannenberg correctly), that the twelfth century is the watershed between taking theology as *sapientia* and *scientia*. If theology as *sapientia* is concerned with life and with praxis—theology as *scientia* is interested in *auctoritas* and *ratio.* (Pannenberg 1976: 228) Theology as wisdom faded thereafter and it could no longer understand itself as distinct from and superior to the natural sciences and philosophy. (Pannenberg 1976: 12) Indeed, from this century onward, theology sought to defend its importance and veracity using criteria common to other fields of knowledge. That this was required seems to be, because of theology's inclusion in the university, and the questions how and what constituted theology's knowledge.

From the thirteenth century on, notes Pannenberg, theology because it was included among the university disciplines—altered *how* it was understood. Gordon Mikoski (2005) makes the observation, following his reading of Pannenberg, that this change of theology from life to speculation mirrored its movement from the cathedral and

monastery to the university. That its base and context was now changed makes a huge difference. This cannot be emphasized enough. (Mikoski 2005: 24) There was no going back. However, the majority of its practitioners followed the new university's understanding of theology as a science (following Aristotle), there were a few that continued to try to believe that theology should not and could not be divorced from real life. Pannenberg lists William of Auxerre (1150-1231), Alexander of Hales (1185-1245), and Bonaventure (1221-1274) as theologians who were not convinced that theology was or should be treated as a science. Pannenberg writes, "They were inclined to emphasize the practical side of theology aimed at the awakening of fear and love of God as the highest good." (Pannenberg 1976: 231) This particular conversation about our attitude to God inspired a lack of assurance in God's love and unfortunately, this continued up to, and through the Reformation (and may be particularly noted in the theology of the Post-Reformation).

2.10 How God's Nature and Character changed

William Placher, of Wabash College, prior to his death, in his very well written and profound book The Domestication of Transcendence: How Modern Thinking about God went Wrong (1996) notices a difference between Aquinas (1225-1274), Luther (1483-1546) and Calvin (1509-1564) and those who followed regarding the doctrine of God and the importance of the Trinity. He goes on record saying that he does not want to argue for a particular date for the decline of the Trinity, but points out, regardless, the

change in continental confessions between Luther's and Melanchthon's (1497-1560) Augsburg confession of 1530 and the Westminster Confession of 1647.

One only has to note that the position of God changes drastically, for example, from John Knox's confession in 1560 to that of the British divines assembled in London who produced the Westminster Confession of Faith in 1647. For example, with the Scot's Confession the doctrine of God comes first. It is preeminent. In Westminster, however, the doctrine of God takes second place to the doctrine of Scripture. Placher writes, "Prior to the seventeenth century, Christians whose fundamental belief was in a *Triune* God thought of God as engaging in self-revelation, as reaching out toward humankind in grace. Self-revelation and grace were central to God's identity as they knew it." (Placher 1996: 165) That this adaptation will become a problem for John McLeod Campbell and remain a problem to today is one argument of this essay. One may note this in most of the theological textbooks of the day. For example, one might note, although there are others, Herman Bavinck's The Doctrine of God (1977), Charles Hodge Systematic Theology (1981), and Louis Berkhof's Systematic Theology (1969). The list could go on. If for theology, the doctrine of God became problematic and underwent cultural shifts, it is undoubtedly an issue (if not *the* issue) for Pastoral Theology.

With the Enlightenment, drastic changes occurred in how God was viewed and whether God was still involved with humanity. Ludwig Feuerbach raised precisely the issue in his Essence of Christianity. (1843) Religion is merely anthropocentric; since God does not exist, save in our imagination. One may argue that God's absence from Freud's theory of psychoanalysis and that of his followers is the natural progression of this

change. At this same time, Christianity experienced perhaps the greatest theologian since Calvin. His name was Friedrich Schleiermacher.

2.11 Schleiermacher and the Trinity

One key illustration of just this transformation is Friedrich Schleiermacher's doctrine of the Trinity. Noting where topics are in theological tomes speaks volumes; as we learned from William Placher previously when he pointed out regarding what doctrines take priority. If one turns to the pre-eminent Reformed theologian of the nineteenth century and peruses his The Christian Faith the placement of doctrines reveals what is most important to him. Schleiermacher's doctrine of God, in his table of contents, is his second topic. What is revealing, however, is that in perusing the table—the doctrine of the Trinity is the very last one treated. While arguments have been made by some that for Schleiermacher the Trinity is last simply because it is most important, I am unconvinced of this. Indeed, even though Schleiermacher himself notes that the doctrine of the Trinity is "the coping stone of Christian doctrine," (Schleiermacher 1976: 739) the way he goes about elucidating his doctrine of the Trinity is akin in my mind to a Christology from below—which Colin Gunton notes becomes essentially "a divinized man." (Gunton 1983: 23) The word that Schleiermacher uses (1884, 498), "Schlußstein" may be translated into English as capstone or cornerstone. (Ziefle 1997: 261) If one reads Schleiermacher's appendix on the Trinity, one realizes that his reflection is once or twice removed from our realization or supposition. Schleiermacher would use the term "consciousness of redemption." Is this not similar to Gunton's suggestion regarding the

attempt to do Christology from the ground up? What do we end up with Schleiermacher's attempt at doing a doctrine of the Trinity from the ground up?

Roger Olson and Christopher Alan Hall note that for Schleiermacher the Trinity is "something less crucial" and "wanting." (Hall and Olson 2002: 92) The great Basel theologian Karl Barth states that the Trinity, for Schleiermacher, "does not have constitutive significance for him." (Barth 1932: 295) Indeed, probably in what is now a classic statement Claude Welch in his book In This Name: The Doctrine of the Trinity in Contemporary Theology notes that "the controlling motive in Schleiermacher's judgment of the Trinity is his conviction that the doctrine in itself is an unnecessary and unwarranted addition to the faith. It means well, one might say, but is misleading and overreaches the mark." (Welch 1952: 5) Although Francis Schussler Fiorenza makes a good case (in an article on Schleiermacher) in the Cambridge Companion to Schleiermacher that this is not so, I am not completely convinced by the argument. (Marina 2005)

As we have seen through this rather brief summary of the changes that were wrought in the doctrine of God over the centuries, the importance of the Trinity waned. If polymath and genius Isaac Newton suggested that from time to time God was needed to intervene to keep the system of the cosmos in good working order, Pierre Laplace (1749-1827) of France did not even require God to intervene at all—so causally determined was the universe in its function. He had, or so he said, no need for that hypothesis (God) at all. He and the world functioned fine just by themselves. Today, God is hardly a topic worth thinking about so secular is our environment. In speaking casually with people, God is usually the last subject mentioned, and is never mentioned in

polite conversation. Yale Law professor Stephen L. Carter notes this very thing in his book The Culture of Disbelief: How American Law and Politics Trivialize Religious Devotion. (1993) Academia and Politics, common culture in the United States (and Canada), all function by pressuring people of faith to minimize their religion in order to carry on in a secular culture. This is precisely the issue for Muslims today in North America. Charles Taylor observes, in his book A Secular Age (2007) of a "naïve" belief in God as characterizing earlier periods, while for our 'secular' age, a "reflective" belief is perhaps more accurate. This reflective belief in the Trinity must be hard won—as is its centrality in life and godliness.

2.12 Theory and Praxis examined

Given the integral relationship between theory and practice in pastoral theology, some discussion seems relevant. (Anderson 2001: 14) What is the relationship between the two for a Practical Theology or a Pastoral Theology? What occurs if theory takes precedence? What is the case if praxis is dominant? It would seem, as we have seen with Seward Hiltner, that if theory precedes praxis—operationalism and functionalism occurs. One might call this the dreaded name of "applied theology." That is, methods, techniques, strategies become focused on the dreaded word *application*. However, beginning with Marx (arguably), and certainly Aristotle, the issue of the relationship between theory and praxis became predominant in philosophical thought. Marx in particular highlighted praxis. One could claim that this emphasis of Marx's leads to an

impoverished theory and theology. Change becomes important, simply for changes sake. Looking into this idea further is not optional.

The acknowledged fountainhead of "practical theology" in its modern university form is, once again, the brilliant nineteenth century German theologian Friedrich Schleiermacher. In his conception, practical theology stood at the summit of a bevy of university theological disciplines like philosophical theology and historical theology, biblical study and ethics. Though practical theology undoubtedly existed prior to Schleiermacher's paradigm shifting work at the beginning of the nineteenth century, he may be said to have brought it truly into the academy and modern era. Klaus Penzel writes,

> …even though Schleiermacher is certainly not the father of Practical Theology, he was, nevertheless, the first to constitute Practical Theology as an academic discipline in a theological faculty, by clearly delineating its nature, task and procedures and by thereby firmly establishing it as a necessary part of the integrated theological whole. (1982: 2)

Schleiermacher's technical treatise on Practical Theology shifted the paradigm. Theology would never again be the same. In his little book of lectures titled Brief Outline on the Study of Theology Schleiermacher seems to separate theology, specifically the philosophical theology and the historical theology which precede practical theology, from its applicability in our lives—which seems to culminate in and to be the point of practical theology. (Schleiermacher, Tice 1977: 91)

The German word Schleiermacher uses in §257 (in the smaller print), "*eingreifen*" may be translated in a variety of ways. It can be rendered in English as "intervention, intrusion, engagement in, to mesh with, and to take action," (Ziefle 1997, 68) but Tice

has chosen to translate *eingreifen* as "applicability" which is also accurate.[1] Schleiermacher puts it this way, "…practical theology is also conceived with regard to the immediate **applicability** (my emphasis) of its results within a particular moment of life." (Schleiermacher, Tice 1977: 91)

Richard Crouter suggests that Schleiermacher views practical theology as implementing the gains made from the other branches of theology. (Crouter 2006: 123) In this vein, Crouter writes, "practical theology (for Schleiermacher) is *technical*, an art or skillful craft that links thought to practice." (2006: 123) For Schleiermacher, Practical Theology is about implementation—artfully so, skillfully enacted, but *implementation* nonetheless.

Frank Woggon points out, however, that for Schleiermacher, it is not just Practical Theology which is "practical," or that requires execution, but rather "Theology (all of it), thus, is ultimately *practical and task-oriented."* (Woggon 1994: 2)

In thinking through Schleiermacher's comments on Practical Theology the issue is raised squarely regarding the relationship between theology and practice or praxis. Ed Farley says that it was in the period just preceding Schleiermacher's work here that the modern problem of the relationship between theory and practice originated. He names the Pietists like Jakob Spener, N. H. Gundling, and J. H. Walch as "altering the genre of *theologia* from a practical habitus or disposition to content."

Now, once this has occurred **application** becomes an issue, indeed, "the problem is immediately created of discerning practical *ends* beyond theology, and the means of

[1] I owe this point to my dear friend Nik Gantner, a native of Munich, Germany (whom I've known since I was thirteen) and now a resident of Rockford, Illinois—and an excellent mechanical engineer who still cringes at my mispronunciation of German theologians whenever I attempt to quote them and of German words whenever I try to pronounce them!

obtaining those ends." (1983: 61) Given the modern phobia towards the application of theology, Schleiermacher's remarks are interesting and beg the question. That there is an ongoing problem remains critical and pressing—unfortunately.

This issue immediately arises, and remains dicey, as we have seen, in any discussion of Pastoral Theology in its modern form, or Practical Theology, for that matter, as Ray Anderson notes. (Anderson 2001: 14) Every pastoral theologian must deal with the relationship between theory and praxis. We all seem to know what theory is ("abstraction divorced from actual life!?"), but what about 'praxis?' We need to go back and reflect on just what the word actually means. Our English word, praxis, comes from the Greek word πράσσω**,** which means *"do, practice, collect, or act."* (Newman 1993: 142) With this in mind, how *does* one proceed? Does theory precede practice, so that theory in this view then simply becomes *applied*? Some would argue that this is indeed the case. Schleiermacher certainly believed so. Pastoral theology is littered with practitioners who have done just this.

We have rehearsed how God has been viewed historically. We have emphasized the importance of the Trinity. We have highlighted Schleiermacher's approach and then asked the question about the relationship between theory and praxis. One approach we shall discuss next is the model which has application as its objective.

2.13 Preaching as Pastoral Theology *applied*

Eduard Thurneysen's book A Theology of Pastoral Care is one long proposal for a theology of the Word of God as it is used by the minister in 'counseling' with (to) the

parishioner. Essentially, Thurneysen's work is preaching (loosely defined) to a particular person. Thurneysen writes, "As we take the Word of God as our measure, we confront the decisive criterion which must be operative…the Word of God alone can feed and nurture the soul, can awaken it and preserve its life." (Thurneysen 1962: 29) On this view, the minister rehearses and repeats, applies, narrates and paraphrases Scripture in conversation with parishioners. One could *almost* call this preaching—it certainly is a kind of specific rhetoric. He continues, "The conclusion is unavoidable that pastoral care must be practiced. But it must be pastoral care in which the Word of God retains its self-sufficiency and stands over against all human piety and in which man does not cease to be its pupil." (Thurneysen 1962: 31) The categories one is to use in visitation are undoubtedly to be extrapolated from the Bible.

For Thurneysen, the Bible, as it did for Barth, creates its own agenda and it is to this agenda that we must listen. An agenda inspired by Scripture undoubtedly including confession, repentance, encouragement and challenge, solace and coaching. Again he writes, "…the teacher whose pupils we may be and by whose teaching our souls are cared for can be none other than Holy Scripture." (Thurneysen 1962: 51) And finally,

> Being created for the sake of the Word, however, means that man exists as an 'I' who hears the Word of his God. Personhood is the category of his existence as man. Therefore, the proclamation goes out to mankind not only in general, but it also proceeds from person to person. When it carries the proclamation, which addresses everyone, into the life of the individual, it becomes pastoral care. Here it assumes the form of a conversation that continually seeks, and shows concern for, the individual man. Pastoral care that did not know this care for the individual, that did not know the immeasurable worth even of his soul before God, would be no genuine pastoral care. None must be lost; each is to be striven for in conversation since he, too, is one called of God and is to become certain of this call. Therefore, a doctrine of pastoral care that knows its business will

> have thoroughly to investigate the right form of this conversation and its implementation. (Thurneysen 1962: 66)

The urgency felt in Thurneysen's words is palpable. In general, it seems as if for Thurneysen pastoral care is (only?) the communication of the gospel or Word of God, from person to person, whose main content is the call for confession and then declaration of the forgiveness of sins by the pastor in conversation with the individual person. Yes, but. The image, which comes to mind, is that of the banking model mentioned by Brazilian Liberation theologian Paulo Freire. Content is placed in someone. The teacher or preacher hands to or pours information into another. Preferably, the other has an open head! That this may be construed as preaching at the other as "care" is questionable. Notice the use of the word "implementation" in Thurneysen's previous remarks.

There is much, in Thurneysen's work, that is very appealing for the author. His work resonates with me. However, one criticism is that Thurneysen's work could have been enhanced by examples of conversations in which he engaged in this kind of pastoral theology with parishioners. What does this look like? How does it sound? In the author's experience, Thurneysen's proposal might be possible (certainly not with everyone), but only after laying quite a bit of groundwork. Many call this rapport. The author would highly emphasize listening over speaking during this building of a relationship.

The projection by people upon the pastor of their guilt and shame, and the misinterpretation by them of even basic words spoken by the pastor as condemnation seem to require, not only a wider Practical Theology or Pastoral Theology, but also a greater and more elastic theology of grace. There is some truth to Freud's argument

regarding transference. For example, in the author's experience, it is almost impossible to say to someone (in whatever context), "We miss you at church," when they have been absent for several Sundays, without it coming across as condemnation for their absence. The goal of the remark is, "We really do miss your presence among us at Church on Sundays, because you are a valuable part of the congregation's life (and the pastor's life)." Instead, however, almost without fail is the hearing by the other party of "WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN?" "**Why** haven't *you* been *in* church?" "You have received a black mark in the pastor's book, several in fact!!" Guilt, shame, and condemnation, occur without even trying, instead of conveying grace and relationship. For too long this has been the case. Recently deceased theologian John B. Webster, of the University of St. Andrews, is surely correct when he proposes the desperate need today for a theology of grace,

> Modern Christian thought…eager to establish connections with worlds outside the gospel, rarely takes the time to explore the primacy of grace in its ontological dimensions….If we are to make some headway here, it will have to be by taking with great seriousness the Christian confession that the new reality brought about in Jesus Christ is a reality….Making sense of this theologically will entail the development of what John Milbank has called a 'counter-ontology': a theory of reality which is unafraid to go against the grain by taking its clues from the Christian confession. (Webster 1998: 95)

Webster may have been a Dogmatician, with a specialty in Karl Barth and Eberhard Jüngel's thought, but his remarks are surely germane for the field of practical or pastoral theology. His comment about 'a counter-ontology' is exactly right. Not only is there a change in our understanding of ontology that is required, however, but also a

corresponding change in our epistemology. Going against the grain is what the greats have always done. Somehow, as people, we have lost the sheer familiarity of grace that Augustine, Luther, and Wesley experienced and which they consequently communicated in their ministry through their words and their actions. They lived in an entirely different realm than we do. Could this be one reason that Thurneysen's proposal for a pastoral care was virtually ignored in the U. S. following its publication? It may have been because no one quite knew what to make of it or what to do with it. The author wonders whether we really believe in the change promised by the gospel.

One can also argue that Barth's theology for all its power never really caught on in the United States and Thurneysen's work is, tied as it is to Barth's, unfortunately part of that failure. Even though Thurneysen's approach intends to be focused on grace, and undeniably leads to this conclusion upon a close reading, the author's suspicion is that it was ultimately interpreted as imperative at the expense of the indicative and as ethics and condemnation (or would be in actual practice). Instead of a gracious declaration, it would have been perceived as heavy, dense, thick and probably condemnatory.

The Biblical and theological words and phrases used in the past are no longer used readily by parishioners and so the minister's words would come across as almost a foreign language; quaint, distant and disconnecting. In the Southern United States, the colloquial term for the minister or pastor is "preacher." Thurneysen's Pastoral Theology unfortunately emphasizes the speaking of God's word even in private counseling that it ends up making this term true. There is much to appreciate about Thurneysen's work, but ultimately we must not take his approach to heart without heavy modification.

2.14 Implementation? Practice? Or Application?

We come back to our discussion, following our side note on Thurneysen's work, of the relationship between theory and praxis. Which is first, the chicken? Perhaps it is the egg. Or, theory and practice? The question of the relationship between theory and practice in some ways resembles that of the question regarding the chicken and the egg. The other issue regarding theory and its relationship to practice is that if it is applied, then *application* becomes an issue. How is something applied? In what way is it applied? Application itself, in the form of practice and doing, takes precedence. Then, if application is an issue one becomes tied up in its results, which become all important. Regarding praxis, Duncan Forrester notes, "…practical theology cannot be conceived exclusively with the activity of Christians or the Church." (2000: 9) It is not just about activity. Theological critique and analysis of people's actions and practices outside the Church are important.

Particularly is this the case in the American context. The question necessarily following, at least in the American church, is that of "Does this work?" "Will we get more members?" "Will it help us raise more money for such and such a project?" And so on. What began with "a" theology of care has then become twisted and warped into becoming "technique" and "method" with theology virtually disappearing and the pragmatics of application taking over.

Schleiermacher's point is well taken in his "A Brief Outline," but raises issues with which one must deal. The important question of "Why?" we doing this somehow gets lost in the shuffle. At the same time, on its worst days—if theory is about simply

thinking or abstraction without action—emphasizing praxis, on the other hand, may lead to sheer 'busyness' or 'dogmatism' devoid of devotion, with no real goal in sight. The question "Why are we doing this?" will invariably lead to the seven last words of the church—*because we've always done it this way!* Just ask an elderly woman in the church why something has been done, and then suggest something different and the response speaks volumes! The look of incredulity is enough.

Practice, without a clearly defined theology, simply becomes driving around without a map and hoping somehow that one will end up at one's destination, *if* one keeps driving long enough. Unfortunately, the church has become subject to this on too many occasions. Briefly, here, the author believes with Gerben Heitink that, "Praxis is directed from, or interpreted on the basis of, a specific theory." (Heitink 1999: 148) However, this is not the end of the matter!

2.15 Praxis, Christo-praxis, Participation, and Theory

In order to understand, truly, the issue we must go back to the beginning—almost the very absolute beginning of philosophy. In Practical Theology/Pastoral Theology, the relationship between *theoria* and *praxis* (theory and practice) is an oft-discussed question. The distinction for us between theory and practice has its origins not in this dichotomy between two different aspects, by the shift during the Enlightenment, or even by the suggestion from Schleiermacher, that theology must be implemented or applied. It has its origins, rather, in one of the greatest philosophers of all time: the Greek thinker **Aristotle**.

In his treatise, the Nichomachean Ethics (350 B.C.E.), Aristotle distinguishes between theory and practice. The noun πρᾶξίς (1094a) appears in the very first sentence of Aristotle's Nichomachean Ethics (Bywater 1962: 1). Every πρᾶξίς "(course of) action" aims, says Aristotle, at some good. Praxis as simply praxis is reserved solely for animals. Animals lack intention and reflection in praxis; human beings, however, are different. Praxis, which aims at some goal, is within the purview of human beings. There is a purpose for praxis. Important, then, for Aristotle, is not just πρᾶξίς in general, but εὖ πράττειν (present infinitive active of πρᾶξίς) which may be translated as "to act well, to transact well, to do well, to perform or to practice well (1095a) (Liddell-Scott 1882: 1263). Praxis *qua* praxis without goal was disqualified. This orientation of 'acting well' was the kind of life towards which a free citizen aimed. Intention, for Aristotle, was everything (Lear 2007: 152).

Now, for Aristotle, praxis was related to the fact that there were three different kinds of life. One kind of life was the seeking of happiness (flourishing), another was the contemplative life, and finally, the last, was the political life. Aristotle understood that there was indeed a difference in shading between three different kinds of life (Lobkowicz 1967: 3). Praxis, however, is human activity that aims at that which is good. This direction of our action is an end unto itself. However, appropriate praxis leads to the good life. Aristotle writes in his Nichomachean Ethics, "τρεῖς γάρ εἰσι μάλιστα οἱ προύχοντες, ὅ τε νῦν εἰρημένος (τὴν ἡδονήν) καὶ ὁ πολιτικὸς καὶ τρίτος ὁ θεωρητικός (Bekker 1831: 1095b). *"…there are, he writes, we may say, three especially prominent lives, the one just mentioned* (εὐδαιμονία or Enjoyment, "Felicity" [Arendt 1989: 31]), *the life of Politics, and thirdly, the life of Contemplation"* (McKeon 1941: 938).

Each of these ways—as a life—was open for consideration. For Aristotle, though, engaging in these three different lives suggested two intertwined aspects—theory engaged in as enquiry, contemplation, and reflection was but one aspect of the human person's attitude or disposition, with the other important part or aspect being praxis, which was to engage in some art, business, politics, or affair—with the resulting goal of doing it well. Praxis, rightly enacted, leads to εὐδαιμονία (*eudaimonia*)—happiness, human flourishing, felicity, well-being, and enjoyment. The highest good, however, which action, πρᾶξίς, may achieve is politics (Gold 1977: 107).

Narrowing this understanding down further, however, is that when Aristotle speaks of theory and practice, he means in one case—the life of contemplation or reflection (ὁ θεωρητικός), which is the goal of the philosopher *qua* anthropos (ὁ Ἄνθρωπος φιλοσόφος), and in another case—the life of politics (πολιτικοῦ βίου), which is a practical life centered in active citizenship (Lobkowicz 1967, 4). Thus, for Aristotle, praxis or political action is seen, first, as an end in itself, that which, secondly, embodies the highest end for man, and finally, that which expresses the fullest and most complete form of man's work (Gold 1977: 108).

If, for Aristotle, the political life is one of active engagement, then the philosophic life is one of consideration and detachment (McKeon 1941: 1279). In his Metaphysics, however, by way of a side note, Aristotle remarks that the First Cause or Unmoved Mover as Mind / God is the most divine existence among all phenomena. As such, "οὕτως δ᾽ ἔχει αὐτὴ αὑτῆς ἡ νόησις τὸν ἅπαντα αἰῶνα (Lambda—1075a)" (Therefore, the contemplation [or knowledge] of itself (by God/ Mind), by itself, occurs or exists

throughout all eternity—*author's translation*). (Aristotle, Bekker 1837: 237) Contemplation by God *of* God is supreme. What might this mean for praxis?

Now, when Aristotle used the word *theoria* 'theory,' what did he mean by it? It is, for Hannah Arendt, The Human Condition the experience of the eternal. (1989: 20) Arendt argues that theory took primacy of place for Aristotle. She writes, "…primacy of contemplation over activity rests on the conviction" that nothing humans can or may do will ever equal the beauty of creation. Thus, "eternity discloses itself to mortal eyes only when all human movements and activities are at perfect rest." (1989: 15) For Aristotle, and for those preceding him, the word θεωρία had the connotation of 'looking at something like a sporting event, thus a *spectating*, or *observing*, and *watching*.' (Liddell-Scott 1984: 317) So, in the case of Aristotle, theory is reflecting on the eternal.

As we have seen in Aristotle's Metaphysics λ, contemplation by God *of* God is primary. God, thus, thinks or contemplates God eternally. Interestingly, the New Testament evangelist Luke uses this same word for the crowd's reaction in roughly equivalent fashion in his gospel after Jesus' death. The crowds surrounding the event of his crucifixion, the 'spectacle,' if you will, following the centurion's pronouncement of his innocence, grieve themselves at the injustice. Thus, Luke (23:48) writes, "καὶ πάντες οἱ συμπαραγενόμενοι ὄχλοι ἐπὶ τὴν θεωρίαν ταύτην (to this spectacle), θεωρήσαντες τὰ γενόμενα (having seen, witnessed), τύπτοντες τὰ στήθη ὑπέστρεφον" (Aland 2013: 241). In classical Greek usage, theory could also be translated: '*contemplate, inquire, speculate, or reason* (Liddell-Scott 1984: 317).' In classical philosophy, praxis is clarified by thought. Arendt writes (with Aristotle in mind), "the term *vita active* (praxis) receives its meaning from the *vita contemplative*…" (1989: 16)

The word praxis, from which we derive the English word 'practice,' or 'action' suggests for Aristotle the ethical activity and the political behaviour arising from the freedom characteristic of the polis/ city by which citizens are allowed to act (Lobkowicz 1967: 11). Bernstein suggests that the distinction, in Aristotle, between the two is that there are sciences and activities that are concerned with knowing for its own sake. There are other aspects of life where producing is most important. One word that Aristotle uses in this regard is: (φρόνησις) phronesis.

Phronesis is "thought with a specific intent, practical wisdom, thoughtfulness, prudence." (Liddell-Scott 1882: 1694) Bartlett and Collins in their translation of Aristotle's Nichomachean Ethics translate phronesis as "prudence." (2011: 313, 318) It is the application of knowledge to the tasks of daily living. Don Browning makes use of this particular concept in his magnum opus A Fundamental Practical Theology (1991). Phronesis as practical and sagacious stands opposite those areas of life in which man's ethical and political sensibilities reign supreme. Hans Georg Gadamer notes that phronesis is a particular kind of knowledge directed towards a concrete situation. In addition, phronesis is a kind of knowing "what is good for one's self." (1996: 21) Now back to praxis.

Praxis is about doing, but even more so it, as we have noted, is about living well (Bernstein 1971: ix-x). This is similar in intent to what John Swinton suggests regarding the meaning or purpose of praxis. Praxis reveals theology in a tangible form and really, indeed our actions are themselves a 'kind' of theology. Thus, theology is not something simply to be contemplated or thought, it is instead something that is lived and experienced by a particular community. (Swinton 2000: 11) For Browning, the inkling

that praxis is never divorced from pre-existing concepts and ideas leads to the reality that our ministry is never like John Locke's *tablua rasu*, but instead comes pregnant with theory. The issue at hand, that is—the activity itself—is never just solely praxis, but *informed* action, which is then critically studied and reflected upon, analyzed and adapted within the situation in which its need arises. Practical theology, thus advocates acute, theological examination of our theory-laden practices in the context of calamity, as well as in our daily living.

In consulting Brazilian educator Paulo Freire, we find that "Reflection (*theoria)* is essential to action (*praxis*)." (1993: 35) The goal of such is the transformation of reality. This occurs in two distinct stages, (1.) where the oppressed unveil the world of oppression and through praxis commit themselves to its transformation. (2.) When reality has been transformed pedagogy becomes not just for the oppressed, but for everyone. In both stages, however, "it is always through action in depth that the culture of domination is culturally confronted." (1993: 36) Freire and the other Liberation theologians have picked up the oft-repeated dictum of Karl Marx in his Theses on Feuerbach, when he writes in thesis 11, "philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways; **the point is to change it**." (McLellan 2000: 173) Marx's foundational point was that one must prove the truth. It is not enough to postulate, one must also produce. He writes, "Man must prove the truth, i.e. the reality and power, the this-sidedness of his thinking in practice." (McLellan 2000: 171) Thus, Freire argues that action without critical thought is just activism. He notes that true reflection leads to action. Authentic praxis arises from critical reflection. (1993: 48) Freire writes, "Liberation is a praxis: the action and

reflection of men and women upon their world in order to transform it." (1993: 60) Reflection and action must interact radically.

In a display from his book Pedagogy of the Oppressed Freire points out that,

Action
Reflection } **word = work = praxis**

Sacrifice of action = verbalism
Sacrifice of reflection = activism (1993: 68)

If action sacrifices reflection, it becomes merely "activism." When our speech is denied of the proper dimension of action, it becomes only "verbalism," which is, "merely idle chatter." However, to speak a true word, one that is dialogical, holding together action and reflection "is to transform the world." (1993: 68) Such can only exist through a profound love, —commitment both for world and humanity. Human beings are "beings of praxis." Human activity "consists of action and reflection: it is praxis; it is transformation of the world. And as praxis, it requires theory to illuminate it. Human activity is theory and practice; it is reflection and action." (1993: 106)

German philosopher Hans Georg Gadamer notes that, "as a kind of answer to the question, 'What is practice?' I would like to summarize: Practice is conducting oneself and acting in solidarity." (1998: 87) Practice is about living. Practice is about relationship. Practice is about alignment. Gadamer remarks that the modern dilemma regarding the relationship between theory and practice is rather odd, because the real issue is in the various kinds of knowledge, not their application.

When Aristotle uses the word "science," what he means is a kind of practical philosophy—a particular area of knowledge excluding theoretical knowledge like mathematics. Politics and its study was the noblest part of practical philosophy. Physics, mathematics, and metaphysics (theology) are different kinds of knowledge compared to politics. Gadamer finally states that the opposition between theory and praxis was that of a contrast between different ways of knowing, not an argument over science, and its application. Praxis, thus, originally had a different connotation. So did theory. Indeed, *theoria* itself is a practice. (Gadamer 1998: 90)

For Liberation theologians Leonardo Boff and his brother Clodovis Boff theory and practice operate dialectically. Theory (faith) and praxis (love) together are both root(s) of liberation theology. The primary question for theology is the answer to the relationship between salvation and the historical process of humanity's liberation. (Gutierrez 1986: 45) The Boff brothers write, "Theology is always a second step; the first is the 'faith that makes its power felt through love' (Gal. 5:6). Theology (not the theologian) comes afterward; liberating practice comes first." (2011: 22-23)

The Boff brothers advise that there are three different kinds of praxis. The first is Socio-analytical (or historico-analytical) mediation which operates in the sphere of the world of the oppressed. This is the why oppression exists question. The second is hermeneutical mediation, which operates in the sphere of God's world. This phase of the equation is the discernment of God's plan to assuage oppression. The third stage is practical mediation, which blatantly operates in the sphere of action by following the course or courses of action discovered as arising from the first two stages. (2011: 24) The point here, with this information, is to seek to understand truly the real situation of

the oppressed and poor. From this knowledge, the next step is to ask the question "What does God's word say here?" From this initial multi-faceted heuristic framework, one comes to Scripture.

It is here where the hermeneutical circle comes into play, according to Juan Luis Segundo; this circle "…is the continuing change in our interpretation of the Bible which is dictated by the continuing changes in our present day reality, both individual and societal." (1982: 8) As our reality shifts, so does our reading of the Bible. Both realities, then, are in a constant state of flux. Hence, the hermeneutical circle. Our experience may lead to questions – rich enough, but also universal enough, to force us to change our customary framework from which our understanding of life, death, knowledge, society, politics, and the world arise.

At the very least, what is important is a persuasive suspicion about how we see the world, what we think and how we make sense of it and in response, our ethical and value judgments create a particular theology, which is forced to ask the hard questions. Responding to this view and how we make sense of everything cultivates in us a different way of approaching and reading the Bible. Thus, the circle begins and continues. What is important, here, is the method of theologizing, not particularly the content—although the well-rehearsed conventional answers to our current existential questions and needs are certainly dead-ends. Initially, we should approach the Bible suspiciously, because of how and what we have experienced, forces and shapes us ideologically, to ask the hard questions. This ideological suspicion about everything influences how we read the Bible, and how we do theology. Here, the usual answers conflict with what we know to be the case—because the facts are now different. We have discerned a new reality, thus so must

our answers. Interpretation continues as one set of answers is altered and changes because of additional experiences and information. (1982: 9) This presupposes a profound human commitment, not an autonomous, impartial, viewpoint floating free above the realm of human options and biases. Theology is always tied up with reality, psychological, social, and political, whether it is conscious of this or not. (1982: 13)

Gustavo Gutierrez notes that, "theology is a critical reflection—in the light of the Word accepted in faith—on historical praxis and therefore on the presence of Christians in the world." (1986: 145) Oppression, poverty, humiliation, dependence, debt, and exposure are a part of the knowledge, or 'pre-understanding' according to Gutierrez, which reads and interprets the Bible. Part of this interpretation insists that faith, hope, and charity are included in this reading. This is the hermeneutics of liberation. The Boff's note, "The liberation theologian goes to the scriptures bearing the whole weight of the problems, sorrows, and hopes of the poor, seeking light and inspiration from the divine word." (2011: 32) This reading and interpretation, this hermeneutics, has as its goal praxis (application) over mere explanation. Liberation theology leads to action—an action for justice for the poor and oppressed. It inspires a love for the other person who may never have experienced such love. It also leads to a conversion towards liberating the oppressed, which then leads to a much-needed renewal of both the Church and the society in which we live. More knowledge is gained from critically reflective praxis than just theoria itself. (2011: 41) All represent such actions, which is driven by Liberation theology.

Their compatriot liberation theologian Gustavo Gutierrez defines theology as "critical reflection on praxis in the light of the word of God." (Berryman 1987: 26)

Theology, on this view, is the critical reflection upon liberating praxis as it faces the truth of the imperatives of the gospel. We begin, as believers, with a very rough understanding of the Christian faith. This is called by Gutierrez a 'pre-understanding.' Charity is the foundation for a Christian's action or praxis. To this must be added a commitment to transformation. (Gutierrez 1986: 7) The goal, here, is not just orthodox theology, but orthodox praxis—or as Gutierrez puts it 'orthopraxis.' (1986: 10) Theology, however, does not just promote practice, it critically reflects upon it. Gutierrez notes that "Theology *follows*; it is the second step following the first step of acting, which is faith, and charity. A non-liberative theology that just appropriately thinks the Church's doctrines, but does not act on what is taught and believed is **irrelevant**. This theology is to correct possible aberrations in the way we live as Christians; it is also to correct pitfalls and neglected avenues for pursuing a commitment to more authentic, more concrete, and more efficacious commitments to liberation. (Gutierrez 1986: 145) A theology, however, that starts, with not only the facts, and truths, derived from revelation, but also those discovered through both the world and history, begins in a far different, more faithful place. The point with this information is to make the world a better place. (Gutierrez 1986: 11-15) Theology without a critical-reflection action is merely a kind of language game. (Berryman 1987: 62) Ultimately, Jesus' imperative to 'repent because the kingdom of God has come near, the time has come to believe the gospel' (Mark 1:15 paraphrase) issues in a change of conviction (theory) and a change of attitude (practice), above all else, toward all one's previous personal, social, and religious relationships. (Boff and Boff 2011: 54)

Under appreciated Scottish philosopher John Macmurray, in his 1953 Gifford Lectures titled, The Self as Agent (1958) argues that there is a need to criticize the received philosophical tradition. Philosophy tends as it stands to proceed as if the Self were a pure subject for whom the world is object. *In* this view, what is most important is the Self in its moment of *reflection*. Here, the Self's activity is directed towards the acquisition of knowledge through withdrawal from action and world into an egocentric contemplation. Essentially, then, the Self is, for lack of a better term, self-centered or self-absorbed. Like Narcissus, it cannot turn its gaze away from self. This is the Cartesian viewpoint, which is the result of Rene Descartes' skepticism. Of course, one problem with this is its incipient mind-body dualism. Is the brain and body related? Against this egocentric view, Macmurray argues, "most of our knowledge, arises as an aspect of activities which have practical, not theoretical objectives; and that it is this knowledge, itself an aspect of action, to which all reflective theory must refer." (1958: 12) The dualism of mind and body fail, for Macmurray, to offer a completely comprehensible conception of the self. Assuming that the Self is an isolated individual withdrawn into its own intellectual world, Macmurray argues instead that the Self is a person and that "our existence is *constituted* by the relation of persons." (1958: 12) Macmurray continues, "The truth or falsity of the theoretical is to be found solely in its reference to the practical…it seems indubitable, that all theoretical problems have their ultimate, if not their immediate, origin in our practical experience it seems reasonable to expect that all must find their ultimate meaning in a reference to the practical." (1958: 22) However, the theoretical always controls the practical. This occurs through the determination, through reflection; of the ends of action…it is always legitimate to ask, of

any theory which claims to be true, what practical difference it would make if we believed it." (1958: 23)

Macmurray expands upon this thesis in his next series of Gifford Lectures (1954) which were later published as Persons in Relation (1961). Rather than begin as Descartes had done with the statement, "I think," Macmurray wants to begin with the statement "I act." Thus, he asserts that we exist as persons only in our agency. By this statement, Macmurray wants to avoid the individual's withdrawal into self, as Thinker or Knower, which leads us to become mere spectators. He desires for the person to be participant. Existence and act of the self are the primary datum.

We must conceive of the Self as agent, not theoretically as subject. Human behavior is comprehensible only in terms of a dynamic social reference. (38) What we must do is to substitute the 'I do' for the Cartesian 'I think' as our starting point and center of reference. Thus, we must do our thinking from the standpoint of action. (84) Action is the full concrete activity of the Self in which our entire capacities are engaged. However, thought is constituted by the exclusion of some of our powers and a withdrawal into an activity, which is less concrete and less complete. We assume that acting and thinking are competing and exclusively abstract conceptions. In reality, they are ideal limits of personal experience; and 'acting' is the positive, while 'thinking' is the negative limit. (87) Action, for Macmurray is, primary and concrete, thought is secondary, abstract, and derivative. A theory of knowledge presupposes and must be derived from, and included within a theory of action. (89) "…primary knowledge is the knowledge that arises in action, apart from any theoretical intention—it is this knowledge that we presume experience to be. Theoretical activities, in which the intention is knowledge, fall

within action and have an essential reference to action…in other words, the question that a theoretical activity seeks to answer can only arise in practical experience, directly or indirectly; and the answer can be true or false only through a reference to action. Thought cannot provide a criterion of truth…" (102) Movement and knowledge are inseparable aspects of all action, not separable elements in a complex. Knowledge and movement may be understood as *dimensions* of action. (128) He also asserts that there is by necessity interplay, in all human activities, between theory and practice." (1958: 21) In boiling down Macmurray's arguments to their core, one arrives at his essential tenet, "All meaningful knowledge is for the sake of action, and all meaningful action for the sake of friendship." (1958: 15)

Gerben Heitink argues, "Praxis is understood as the actions of individuals and groups in society, within and outside the church, who are willing to be inspired in their private and public lives by the Christian tradition, and who want to focus on the salvation of humankind and the world." (1999: 151) Praxis is never pure. There is always the historical and cultural situation in which activity takes place. Context is fundamental. We are shaped, whether we want to be or not, by our genetics and our growth in a specific time and place. Praxis is always shaped by a theory. This is the old statement reiterated above—is it the chicken that comes first or the egg? There is always a theory tied to praxis, no matter how simple the theory. Often praxis may be ideologically determined. To argue, as some have, that Praxis must come first is to lapse into a kind of determinism in which people become locked into who they are presently. This deprives people (and God of the power to change something) of the possibility of change. Praxis then becomes fatalistic. (1999: 152) Here, nature triumphs over nurture. Contingence

disappears. Furthermore, Heitink notes "Theory is understood as a comprehensive hermeneutical-theological statement that relates the Christian tradition to experience, to the life and actions of modern humans." (1999: 151) However, the primacy of theory over praxis must also be rejected. Theory may become detached from life. Then Dogma simply becomes doctrine divorced from the daily living of disciples. It may become no more than an imposed truth, heard by people—but ignored.

Heitink concludes that Theory and Praxis are the right and left arm—both are needed to grasp the truth. He calls the union of the two a "bi-polar tension filled combination." There is a resultant dynamic dialectic between the two. This constant circular spiral moves back and forth between both poles. As it does so, it is not the same. With each movement, there is change, transformation and growth. Theory is in constant need of the truth, which only Praxis may discover. Praxis tests theory's truth. Praxis must constantly be corrected and "transcended" by Theory. Thus, Theory must be critical theory, within the context of Practical Theology. (1999: 152)

Praxis must also be critical. It must be evaluated and altered. Perhaps the most important question about praxis is what is its goal? Praxis is fundamental to the thought of John McLeod Campbell but not in the way, the modern dilemma has been framed. All of the previous discussion regarding praxis has human beings' agency and practice in mind. It is man-centered. Praxis is what **we do**. We practice. We act. We work. We…John McLeod Campbell would have argued against this anthropocentric viewpoint quite differently. He did so regarding praxis in his books Sermons and Lectures (1832), Christ the Bread of Life (1869) and On the Nature of the Atonement (1856). For McLeod Campbell praxis was not something that we do, but rather **what Christ does**.

Christ's activity throughout is ongoing with us and through us. Christ acts and does so in accordance with the Father's will. His purpose in life was to do the will of God. Christ is the one *who* **lives**. As such Christ's praxis is preeminent. Our lives occur, with Christ, and within Christ, as Paul, the Apostle, pointed out through union and through participation. It is not we who live, but rather Christ who lives in us, notes the Apostle Paul (Gal. 2:20). Paul uses the preposition "in" repeatedly to describe the relationship between Christians and Christ.

Our acts as Christians are, by God's grace and the ministry of the Holy Spirit, **a participation**, in Christ's ongoing work, worship, and life presented to God; it is **our** life as Christ lives representatively and vicariously in our humanity **for us**. It is **his** life working out his purposes in our living. Here, in McLeod Campbell's thought is the **vicarious nature** of the humanity of Christ. (1896: 97) There is no blending of our person with Christ's person, no bleeding into a physical union. There is division. There is particularity. McLeod Campbell asserts that it is Christ's life, in us, that ascends in work, worship, prayer, and life to God. We participate (κοινωνία) in Christ as we are lifted up by the Spirit. Just as a stained glass window remains a stained glass window even in the dark or when the sun shines through it, there is to be sure a distinct difference between the light that shines and is magnified through the stained glass window and when there is not. That is, our praxis is a participation in Christ's praxis, just as Christ's praxis is a participation in our praxis. (1869: 92) Interestingly, he also says the same thing about the Spirit in the context of worship. He writes, "…it is generally believed that man has to do something in the worship of God. But this is altogether a mistake. Man has no part in it, for the Spirit of God does the *whole*…I ask of you to come and

worship God in the Spirit, not by the *help* of the Spirit." (Jinkins 1993: 44) Just as the two natures of Christ are united indivisibly, without comingling or mixture into one substance, we are knit by the Spirit so closely to Christ that there is an integral participation. In this view, Christ is the light that shines brightly and we are the stained glass window through which the light passes.

Julie Canlis in her book Calvin's Ladder: A Spiritual Theology of Ascent and Ascension notes regarding "participation" that its concept and praxis "is at the center of the Christian faith." (2010: 5) As soon as the word participation is used, the great Philosopher Plato comes to mind. The question regarding Plato's understanding of participation is the question regarding the difference between *methexis* and *koinonia*. Is there a difference? Plato understood "participation" to be μέθεξις. He uses it with the idea of "having a share in" and "participation." Specifically, he understood μέθεξις to articulate his philosophy of participation in which an individual thing shares in its heavenly ideal. A chair participates in the idea of chair. Daniel Keating (2004) notes, that Plato used the concept of participation to account for the relationship of dependence in the world of change and becoming to the world of being. He also notes that Plato used a variety of terms to convey the notion of participation. The various words Plato uses are κοινωνία, μίμησις, εἰκᾰσία, μέθεξις, μετάληψις, μεταλαμβάνω. (2004: 146)

Now, as T. F. Torrance argues in Reconciliation in Reconstruction (1965) the early Church fathers took up the idea of participation (Athanasius in particular). In so doing they used the word κοινωνία to express the relationship between the two natures of Christ, because to use the term μέθεξις is to damage the ὁμοούσιον—the oneness of the Son with the Father. To use the term μέθεξις is to deny the reality that Christ

communicates to us himself, which is "the very life of God." (1965: 184) McLeod Campbell must have been influenced by the section in Calvin's Institutes (1957) where Calvin says

> "…because [Christ is] endowed with heavenly glory *he gathers believers into participation in the Father*…And certainly for this reason Christ descended to us, to bear us up to the Father, and at the same time to bear us up to himself, inasmuch as he is one with the Father." (137: [I.13.26])

This connectedness of the Christian with Christ through our union with him (koinonia) "is at the center of Christian theology." (Canlis 2010: 8) In the author's judgment Canlis absolutely correct.

Canlis suggests the model for this notion of participation is the idea of περιχώρησις seen in the early Church fathers' understanding of the partaking, intimacy, sharing, and fellowship, which each member of the Trinity experiences with one another. The Father shares everything he is and has with the Son, except 'Fatherness.' The Son shares everything he has and is with the Father, except 'Sonship.' This intimate relationship is mediated by and through the Spirit, who remains Spirit, sharing in both, yet remaining Spirit. The Spirit gives the things of the Father to the Son and returns the things of the Son to the Father. One may see this concept illustrated in the Seventh century Church father John of Damascus, when he notes,

> The abiding and resting of the Persons in one another is not in such a manner that they coalesce or become confused, but, rather, so that they adhere to one another, for they are without interval between them and inseparable and their mutual indwelling is without confusion. For the Son is in the Father and the Spirit, and the Spirit is in the Father and the Son,

> and the Father is in the Son and the Spirit, and there is no merging or blending or confusion. And there is one surge and one movement of the three Persons.[2] (Chase 1999: 2002)

In the New Testament, the emphasis in the use of the word participation (κοινωνία) is the idea of personal relationship, mutually coordinated in the particularity of both parties and persons. There is no destruction in this relationship. Instead, there is confirmation and expression. Karl Barth writes, "We have such a relationship, such fellowship, and therefore mutual co-ordination, in unique perfection in the relationship of man to Jesus Christ. (2004: 535—CD IV.3.2)

2.16 Praxis as *Response* to the Gospel—Grace and Gratitude

Praxis is, however, not only participation, but in an important sense, it is also **response** to the gospel. If we limit ourselves to the pair -- theory and practice, then we are left with a conundrum. Various authors have sought to relate the two successfully. However, as a pastor standing in the Reformed tradition I cannot limit myself merely to this pair. As a Presbyterian, I take the prevenience of grace seriously. Thus, I take it as

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[2] **John of Damascus' original words:** Ἡ ἐν ἀλλήλαις τῶν ὑποστάσεων μονή τε καὶ ἵδρυσις·
ἀδιάστατοι γὰρ αὗται καὶ ἀνεκφοίτητοι ἀλλήλων εἰσὶν, ἀσύγχυτον ἔχουσαι τὴν ἐν ἀλλήλαις περιχώρησιν, οὐχ ὥστε συναλείφεσθαι ἢ συγχεῖσθαι, ἀλλ᾽ ὥστε ἔχεσθαι ἀλλήλων.
Υἱὸς γὰρ ἐν Πατρὶ καὶ Πνεύματι, καὶ Πνεῦμα ἐν Πατρὶ καὶ Υἱῷ, καὶ Πατὴρ ἐν Υἱῷ καὶ Πνεύματι, μηδεμιᾶς γινομένης συναλοιφῆς ἢ συμφύρσεως ἢ συγχύσεως. Καὶ τὸ ἓν καὶ ταὐτὸν τῆς κινήσεως· ἓν γὰρ ἔξαλμα καὶ μία κίνησις τῶν τριῶν ὑποστάσεων, ὅπερ ἐπὶ τῆς κτιστῆς φύσεως θεωρηθῆναι ἀδύνατον.

fundamentally important how the word praxis is used in the New Testament, particularly in the title of the book of Acts, where it is not praxis (ἡ πρᾶξις), but praxeis (πράξεις ἀποστόλων).

When considering the concept of praxis, the author does not want simply to baptize Aristotle and his usage. Instead, it seems more vital to ask the question how biblical revelation, Scripture, uses the word and concept. Though this spelling change may be because of a change in case, I take it as suggestive that our practice in pastoral theology is to be along the same track—that is as a response to the gospel. Praxis is a response to God's grace in Christ. If in spite of its separation in our modern Bibles Luke-Acts was once one book originally written as one narrative on one sheaf of papyri sewn together, then severing the disciples' ministry apart from Christ's person and work, as recounted in Luke's gospel, promotes the separation between theory and practice, and is detrimental at the very least. Indeed, it contributes to the modern dilemma.

Thus, praxis is not simply action or practice or deeds 'in general,' but instead on this view praxis is rather the 'acts,' of doing and ministering in light of the person and work of Jesus Christ. Although I would argue that there is thus a dialectical tension between theory and practice (and like the egg or the chicken, discerning which one comes first, is precisely the question), there is a sense in which praxis follows from the gospel and is, therefore, a response. In noting this, however provisionally, one always must be aware of falling into, as Paul Ballard and John Pritchard note, of (an) "applied theology." (2000: 58-61)

Pittsburgh seminary professor Andrew Purves argues that by its very nature Practical Theology *is* practical. He writes,

> "It is important to say that all theology, all knowledge of God, by virtue of the subject matter, namely, the acting and self-revealing God, is inherently a practical theology or a practical knowledge of God. Practical theology is practical for the reason that it is theological: it has to do with God." (Purves 1998: 222)

While Karl Barth is seen by many as the antithesis of praxis, seemingly emphasizing theory to the exclusion of practice in his massive Church Dogmatics, such a belief, I believe is a naïve, facile, and an, ultimately, uninformed reading of his magnum opus. In the Church Dogmatics, if one reads closely there is a constant tension between the two. God's praxis in Christ by the Spirit inspires our praxis in Christ by the Spirit.

Both Don Browning (1996: 5-6) and Michael Lamb (1982: 74) argue against any serious interaction with Barth on the part of the Practical or Pastoral theologian. He is mentioned by them *only* to be *dismissed* immediately. However, if we look to what Barth himself said in CD 1/2 §22.3 about the relationship between the 'theoretical' and the 'practical' we find that he calls it (the relation between the two) a false question or supposition. To separate the two is to make Dogmatics an 'idle intellectual frivolity' 'aloof from life' while for Ethics to do so is to 'suddenly allow ourselves to open a new book: the book of the holy man which is the sequel to that of the holy God.' That is, to emphasize the theoretical to the exclusion of the ethical or practical is to separate it from the real existential concerns of humanity. While, on the other hand, to emphasize the practical to the exclusion of the theoretical is to loosen its mooring from its anchor and grounding.

He asks, "Can the whole idea of a distinction between 'theoretical' and 'practical' rightly be sustained, or does it not imply from the very first a πρῶτον ψεῦδος which has to be resisted in principle?" (Barth 1963: 787) Likewise, in another way, he asks regarding the relationship between Dogmatics and Ethics, "Whether alongside Church Dogmatics there is a special and independent Church Ethics?" (1963: 782) His response to the issue is as follows: "If the eternal being, with which doctrine has to do, is not implicated in its realization in actual life, what kind of being is it? What has it to do with the God of biblical revelation?" Additionally, he asks an important series of questions, "At what point, for example, does the doctrine of the Trinity cease to have any decisive importance, or the doctrine of the Church, or of justification, or of the return of Jesus Christ? At what point especially can we cease to keep in view the doctrine of the incarnation of the Word of God?" (1963: 792)

2.17 Don Browning and A Fundamental Practical Theology

Don Browning was one of the pioneers of the new-old discipline of Practical Theology. Mark Hestenes (2012) of the University of Pretoria notes in a recent article that until his death in 2010 at the age of 76 Browning had served at the University of Chicago, one of the premier theological universities in the United States, for more than forty years. He served first as Professor of Religion and Psychology, and then, second, as the Professor of Religious Ethics and Social Sciences. He was a prodigious writer and had supervised roughly 80 Masters and Doctoral graduates in his tenure as a professor there. (2012: 1) His life's work culminated in his proposal for a Fundamental Practical

Theology, which has become a groundbreaking effort. The author would argue in the discipline of Practical Theology this book cannot be ignored.

British Theologian Alastair McGrath notes that in his own education as a theologian, his doctoral advisor suggested one of two paths. The first was to focus on a particular person and to learn that specific writer's thought from front and back. Only when one knew this particular writer could one proceed forward with one's own work. The second alternative was to focus on a particular doctrine, and follow its development and change through church history. Early on, McGrath chose the second of the options, writing on justification in his doctoral thesis. (McGrath 2001) Considering this suggestion as germane for Practical Theology, I have chosen the first of the two options here. Don Browning is worthy and worthwhile to consider carefully. He is someone to learn from even when in disagreement. While the author is seeking to make the case for the importance of John McLeod Campbell in Pastoral Theology, Don Browning needs no such introduction. For the author, Browning is at once maddening, brilliant, completely wrong and yet eminently instructive. It was clear from Emil Brunner's work on Schleiermacher in 1924 that he had completely repudiated the great theologian and had nothing left to learn from him. Barth disagreed. He considered his work wrong-headed. Growth, then, would occur in a different direction. His colleague Karl Barth, though believing Schleiermacher fundamentally wrong, continued his dialogue with and appreciation of him for the rest of his life. Barth was never done with him.

Perhaps next to Friedrich Schleiermacher's Brief Outline of Theology or Seward Hiltner's Preface to Pastoral Theology the paradigmatic Practical Theology book is Don Browning's A Fundamental Practical Theology. Although there are undoubtedly other

worthy offerings in Practical Theology ranging from Ray Anderson, Elaine Graham, Andrew Purvis to Thomas Oden, Bonnie Miller-McLemore, and John Swinton, Browning's book is an acknowledged watershed in the field.

2.17.1 BROWNING'S EARLY WORK

Given his importance in the field of Practical Theology must situate itself with regard to Browning's major treatise. We will begin with Browning's early work, which laid the groundwork for his later work. Following the summary, I will offer some thought provoking questions concerning Browning's work.

We begin with a brief look at a paper Browning delivered in 1980 which was later published in "Pastoral Psychology" (Vol. 29, - 1980). This paper came about in attempting to answer the question, "What is Pastoral Theology?" In this paper, he builds upon his earlier work The Moral Context of Pastoral Care. (1976) Pastoral Theology or Practical Theology seems to have languished beyond that of pastoral care, pastoral counseling, and pastoral psychotherapy. Browning revealed that his thinking continued following his book The Moral Context of Pastoral Care (1976). For those familiar with this book, it is no surprise that he privileges moral thinking. He does so because our normative theological visions of the various growth stages in human living have not received adequate attention. However, in so doing, he seeks to correlate theological ethics with other social sciences.

Browning is concerned, above all, with helping minister's think about the ethical norms which are a part of pastoral care. Practical moral care is an integral part of the

care given by ministers. He continues in this vein of thought in his 1980 article titled, "Pastoral Theology in a Pluralistic Age."

Pastoral theology needs, in Browning's view (1980: 24), to reboot itself to focus on theological or religious ethics. Pastoral Theology's primary task, then, is to weld ethics and the social sciences to articulate a viable proposal, which will accompany humans throughout their life. Pastoral theology one the one hand, states what an ethical theology of human life should look like, and on the other hand intuit what dynamic, developmental, and other social science perspectives have to offer regarding human growth and development. Having done this, Pastoral Theology should share how it conceives of pastoral caring throughout the different stages of maturation, taking into account culture, personality, individuality, existential concerns. To do this successfully Pastoral Theology must position itself flexibly within modernity, pluralism, secularity, diversity, and varying ethical ideals. The goal is to weave a normative vision of our growth as human beings being guided by a robust moral theology. His proposal includes the following thesis statements for discussion,

> (1.) Pastoral Theology should be understood as philosophical reflection on the major themes of the Judeo-Christian tradition with special regard for the implication of these themes for a normative vision of the human life cycle.

Browning notes Pastoral Theology should be 'faith seeking understanding.' However, a purely confessional view of Pastoral Theology will no longer work in our pluralistic and secular culture. It becomes too parochial if it does not adapt to the various pluralistic, public, and interdisciplinary contexts.

(2.) Pastoral theology must attempt to discern and articulate the relevance to care of both the religious dimension of common experience as well as the explicit faith themes of the historic Judeo-Christian tradition.

Pastoral Theology must be philosophical enough to discern and articulate the ultimate concerns and assumptions behind every act of pastoral care. When able to do so, it can take its place more comfortably within the pluralistic contexts, which characterize ministry today. Those who offer care to others must be aware of their guiding assumptions.

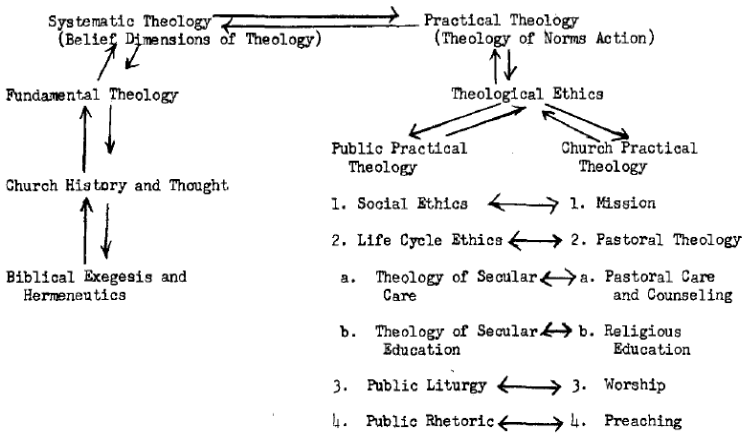
(3.) Pastoral theology should understand itself as an expression of theological ethics, primarily concerned with the religio-ethical norms governing the human life cycle.

The fuller and more complete task of Pastoral Theology is to give philosophical expression to the norms for human life and its growth and development. The Judeo-Christian tradition provides such norms for the human life cycle. Once again, this is a matter of 'faith seeking understanding.' The articulation of these norms is not just for the faithful, but also should be adjudicated and weighed within the market place. Might they have philosophical significance for those who do not describe themselves as Christians? Might there be some benefit in our expressing these norms in public for reflection by the population? A narrowly confessional stance will not be suitable, nor will its language in the public sphere. Pastoral Theology in our increasingly pluralistic and public situation should have an increasingly open and unrestricted philosophical character.

(4.) Pastoral theology should be concerned with specifying the logic, timing, and practical strategies for relating theological-ethical and dynamic perspectives on human behavior.

Pastoral care is most often seen as a religious enterprise, but ignored are the ways it is also, and perhaps most importantly, an ethical enterprise. In what ways should the counsel given by ministers, chaplains, and pastoral counselors be different from that of psychotherapists? If this is the case, what then is required in order to make an informed ethical proposal to someone for whom we are caring? Are there steps? Browning suggests that a philosophical or moral-philosophical perspective can be of service in assisting the sorting out of our theological-ethical options. Advancing our reasoning in a pluralistic culture by communicating in an accessible language is mandatory. Below is a thematic diagram (1980: 29) that Browning uses to illustrate his proposal.

The Organization of the Theological Disciplines



* Arrows pointing both directions is designed to communicate the ways practice feeds back into and influences theory.

Browning advises the reader to note how Practical Theology is understood to be the organizing rubric for theological ethics and the pastoral disciplines of missions, Pastoral Theology, religious education and worship and homiletics. It is Schleiermachian in that Practical Theology is at the conclusion or head of all the other theologies. Then there is the move to Theological Ethics. He also highlights how the ecclesiastical disciplines have their counterpart in the public sphere. This sphere is seen, by Browning, as part of the Practical Theological enterprise.

Browning's initial offering on Practical Theology occurred in 1983 in the book Religious Ethics and Pastoral Care. Many of the themes that would appear later in his magnum opus, occur here. Browning's proposal focuses on two perspectives, the first, the religio-ethical, and second, the psychological. (1983: 12) The issue for Browning, which the book seeks to address, is the place of religio-ethical convictions of ministers and these beliefs inform their care and counseling. If so, then how? Modernity, institutional differentiation, and pluralism are a part of the building blocks of our culture and society. Because of this, traditions of care become confused and diverse. In this sense, they mirror society as a whole. The difficulty of our modern dilemma is that traditions of care have become distinct and discrete disciplines. They have become "differentiated." (1983: 11) Religious belief used to be the organizing canopy guiding the entire field of human difficulties. As such, the differing variety of discrete disciplines fit underneath. This is no longer the case. Browning notes, "…in modern societies the spiritual, psychological, and physical dimensions of our life have become broken apart, both institutionally and conceptually." (1983: 12) This is the problem. Browning's work seeks to address this difficulty. Thus, in our day and time pastoral care must follow

a rigorous blueprint, which has as its base a philosophically oriented practical moral theology or as Browning puts it, a theological ethic.

Browning's thesis is that (pastoral) care and counseling must once again have a foundation in ethics, which does not lose contact with dynamic psychology. (1983: 18) Ethics, he notes, without psychology, lapses into moralism. Care and counseling must be systemic (as in a church) in nature, first. Second, and only then, does it become care of the individuals—who make up the larger congregational system. Recommending moral philosophy as a necessary part of this care, Browning describes and then clarifies both teleological and deontological ethical systems. The overriding question for Browning is how the minister's religio-ethical convictions inform issues of care and counseling. (1983: 13) Browning then goes on to suggest that our care and counseling be guided by the particular discipline of ethics.

As such, Browning offers a breakdown of the different styles of ethics, the first being "teleological," and the second "deontological." He does this because he counsels clergy to know and understand moral philosophy. Both ways of doing ethics, the teleological and the deontological seek to answer the question, "What are we obligated to do?" (1983: 25) Browning offers a thematic diagram highlighting the distinctions of moral theology, and ethics. (On next page)

Figure A.

Some Major Options in Theories of Obligation

Teleological – catchword is "good"

1. **Ethical Egoist—for himself**
2. **Utilitarian** — **act** / **rule** **—for the world**

Deontological – catchword is "morally right"

1. **Divine command—because God said**
2. **Existentialist—authenticity**
3. **Kantian—universalization (1983: 25)**

Browning decries that "our theological-ethical analysis has tended to come in as an afterthought." (1983: 29) We seek simply to offer care. Seeking to be ethically neutral, non-judgmental, however, we in fact are not. Browning argues that we offer counsel based on some vague and diffuse notion of what is best for the individual who has come to us with a problem. Even this vague and diffuse notion of help or good is *in itself* an ethic. We as ministers, however, are theologically and ethically oriented. We offer care, then, laboring under the shadow of "ethical-egoism" in our counsel to others. We may not understand this, given the paucity of our ethical knowledge. Browning notes that this is more than likely the case. Given that our counsel is ethically-egoistic, centering on the individual alone, Browning wonders how we may relate moral theology or theological ethics to dynamic psychology for purposes of guiding pastoral care and counseling. (1983: 46) What is our goal here? Every discipline offers some description of the world according to its own criteria. There is no value-neutral discipline. Even care, which

seeks to be value-neutral, is not. The issue becomes what criteria and what worldview shall we use in offering care?

In seeking to discover some kind of moral theory that may successfully guide the minister in the pastoral care and counsel of parishioners, Browning discusses the relationship between theory and praxis. This fundamental and foundational issue must be understood. Thus,

> Theory *(theoria)* is an abstraction from and reflection of practice *(praxis).* Praxis is the basic or prior reality. The test of good theory is largely the adequacy with which it guides practice. Our theoretical knowledge always comes out of prior practice, prior participation, and prereflective involvement with the practical activities of living communities. The knowledge found in theory is always preceded by prereflective participatory knowledge, something close to what the ancient Hebrews had in mind with the word *yada* (to know or experience, as in Gen. 4:1). (1983: 49)

As may be noted, for Browning, the basic reality is **human praxis**. Theory is important only insofar as it guides and directs praxis. Theory is always derivative. Browning has suggested that the knowledge of ethics guides the minister in counseling. He has touched on the relationship between theory and practice. The overarching dilemma he seeks to redress is that as children of modernity we are faced with the question of how to create an integrated world out of the various fragmented parts of our lives. (1983: 12) Ethics, on Browning's view can do this. As we seek to allow ethics to guide us there are three aspects to remember, (1.) the role of tradition in assisting such formulation (including Scripture and church history, (2.) the role of reason and experience, (3.) Finally, we

should seek insights from the various disciplines (especially sociology and dynamic psychology). Only an ethic which does will escape plain moralism. (1983: 46)

Browning then moves to a description of his proposed five levels of practical moral thinking. They follow the five primary questions we ask ourselves when faced with a moral issue.

> (1.) What kind of world or universe constitutes the ultimate context of our actions?
> (2.) What are we obligated to do?
> (3.) Which of all our human tendencies and needs are we morally justified in satisfying?
> (4.) What is the immediate context of our action and the various factors which condition it?
> (5.) What specific roles, rules, and processes of communication should we follow in order to accomplish our moral ends?
> (1983: 53)

As one may notice, Browning moves from the "is" question to the "ought" question. The next three questions, all involve desires, needs, ethics, context, cultural situation, and finally how we go about satisfying the moral issue which we find ourselves facing. The five levels of practical moral thinking provide us an opportunity to "straighten out our confusion when we get in a muddle." They are an opportunity to "practice rationality." (1983: 54) These five questions lead to five levels of practical moral thinking. They are identified as follows,

> (1.) The first level of practical moral thinking is the Metaphorical Level, which is the most distinctively and formally religious level. The

metaphors we use to represent the ultimate context of experience function to orient us toward that context and form our expectations, teach us to see the world in a certain way, and give us the basic vision by which to live.

(2.) The second level of practical moral thinking is the Obligational Level, which is the most distinctively moral level. This level seeks to answer the question about morality. This level consists of the specific principles, rules, and value judgments by which we are guided and shaped in our moral thinking.

(3.) The third level is the Tendency-Need Level, which is the strata that deals with what humans want, need, and value in the nonmoral sense of the words. Knowledge about human tendencies and needs comes from our own intuitive experience, our religious and cultural traditions and the human sciences such as psychology, sociology, and sociobiology.

(4.) The fourth level is the Contextual Predictive Level involves the sociological, psychological, and cultural trends most likely to influence us. Analysis of our context is important for determining which of the non-moral needs, values and goods are compatible in a particular time and place. As long as the context is static, they may be impartially and justly protected and enhanced. Consequences here are important.

(5.) The fifth level is the Rule-Role Level, which tries to articulate the concrete rules, roles, and processes of communication necessary to construct a world according to the visions, obligations, and possibilities opened up at the higher levels. These are the specific rules and roles for organizing our practical action.
(1983: 55)

Disciplines of theology, whatever the branch or specialty, have unfortunately tended to specialize discretely at the various different strata. None systematically integrates them all. Dogmatic, philosophical, fundamental theologies all pay great attention to the

metaphorical level. Moral or Ethical theology has stuck to the obligational level and been content to do so. All of these theologies have been viewed as abstract and irrelevant.

Finally, the various Practical Theologies have focused on the last three levels—the tendency-need, the contextual predictive, and rule-role levels. They have been viewed as shallow and superficial. Browning believes that these judgments are correct. (1983: 55) His proposal for practical moral thinking intends to operate at all five levels. The hermeneutical and interpretive task for the caregiver is to take the specialty of each level and its assertion for each of the five levels. Not all five levels are addressed by each discipline, what will become obvious is that the first two or three levels have the greatest importance for Practical Theologians. Browning then posits the triangle of practical moral thinking. (Next page)

2.17.3 The Triangle of Practical Moral Thinking

Objective — **Characterological (Aretaic)**

1. Metaphorical	**1. Faith Development**
2. Obligational	**2. Moral Development**
3. Tendency-Need	**3. Emotional-Motivational Development**
4. Contextual-Predictive	**4. Ego-development (Reality perception)**
5. Rule-Role	**5. Rule-Role Development**

Personal (Where the Individual Actually Is)

1. **Faith Development**
2. **Moral Development**
3. **Emotional Motivational Development**
4. **Ego Development**
5. **Rule-Role Development** (1983: 57)

For Browning the correlation between the three aspects of the triangle begins with the objective levels. Each discipline corresponding to the various levels is then correlated with the Characterological level and its various stages. At the same time, account is given for where the individual actually is personally. Browning's search for truth here is perspectival. He understands that the truth may be found in a variety of places. Personal

perspective is also a valuable indicator of direction. It would criticize both the objective levels and the characterological levels.

Practical Theological action goes through four steps.

(1.) The step of experiencing and defining the problem,

(2.) The step of attention, listening and understanding,

(3.) The step of critical analysis and comparison,

(4.) The step of decision and strategy, (1983: 99)

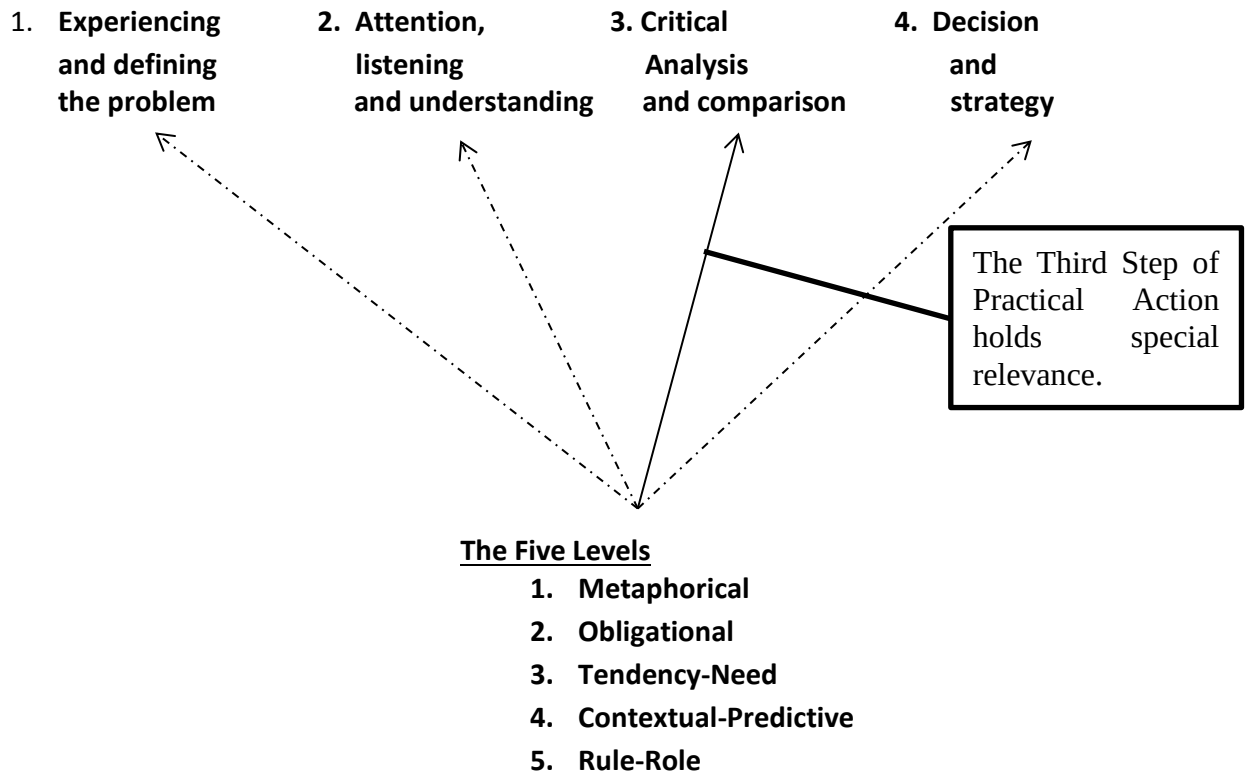
In performing this analysis, we seek to understand the socio-system in which the individual lives with his or her own particular cultural, personal, religious and ethical history. One way of determining this is moving from the questions and addressing them through each level. This is analysis and comparison. This is practical theological thinking.

The five levels of practical moral thinking do not have to be only objective. They may be subjective also. Questions that might be asked in this vein are, (1.) What are their dominant metaphors of ultimacy; (2.) his or her moral style of patterns; (3.) the patterns, modalities, or themes of interaction the individual uses to meet needs; (4.) the social and cultural forces that shape the individual's context; and (5.) the roles and practical rules by which he or she tries to live life.

This guides the process of understanding the person. Now, the usefulness of the process is that it can be used in one of two ways, simply as description or as prescription. That is, what *is* the case? What *should be* the case? Answering both questions is

required for the full task of assessment and diagnosis. In addition, playfulness, flexibility, and imagination need to be involved in finding ways of closing the gap between the normative and the descriptive, that is, between the "is" and the "ought."

2.17.4 The Four Steps of Practical Action Related to The Five Levels of Practical Reason



One may notice that the top shelf is not that much different from the Whiteheads proposal for pastoral action. It is in the five levels on the bottom shelf, which sets Browning apart from the Whiteheads. For Browning, all the problems of care are, eventually, **moral problems.** Browning wonders, what is the moral status of the issue with which we are confronted? Beneath the seemingly trivial differences about how to respond to the

presenting issue, there are sometimes completely different understandings of reality, ethics, and human needs. Or, as Browning would phrase it, there are sometimes questions about caring for others, which unfortunately arise because we share different metaphorical understandings of what is ultimate. We have different theories of obligation, and different understandings of what humans really want, need, or deserve to have. (1983: 122)

2.17.5 EXPLICATION OF A FUNDAMENTAL PRACTICAL THEOLOGY

Browning draws on a variety of intellectual precursors as disparate as Aristotle and Augustine, in the early centuries of intellectual thought, to contemporary thinkers like Gadamer, Habermas, MacIntyre and Niebuhr, and does so using them as conversation partners in proposing his work, which he variously describes as a religiously oriented practical philosophy or a practical philosophy of religion (1996: 3). Browning believes, and his program is driven by this thesis, that all authentic Christian theology is governed by pragmatic interests. (Ogletree 1992: 904) Practical theology, in his view, originates with actions and preconceived ideas formed by concerns and questions shaped by both secular and religious actions, which are themselves full of ideas, practices, and theories. If we are attentive, we will become aware that practical concerns can drive pressing theological questions. The results are movements and actions, which seek to be responses. Browning uses the phrase "theory-laden" practices. Nothing we do is like John Locke's *tabula rasa*. We are not blank slates. Browning admits that long-standing questions about the relationship between theory and practice are wrong-headed, because

neither can be separated. We are so much a part of this conceptual outlook ('embedded' is the word Browning uses) where action and thought coinhere and coalesce from which our questions arise, and that we are not even aware of this situation or position.

Because of this, Browning suggests that we should critically reflect upon these preliminary practices, so they become necessarily more reflective or more thoughtful in nature (1996: 8). As part of this process, there are movements of thought and reflection as different genres of theology, which are drawn upon for inspiration, wisdom, and guidance. The goal towards which this theology ought to aim is authentic and useful living. In seeking to reach this goal, there are four sub-movements in a fundamental practical theology:

- a descriptive movement,
- an historical theological movement,
- a systematic theological movement,
- and finally the last stage of the process, which is a practical and strategic movement issuing in a **'theology'** (1996: 8).

What drives this work, for Browning, and that which his fundamental practical theology seeks to address, is the question: "How can communities of memory and tradition also be communities of practical reason and practical wisdom?" (1991: 2) It seems that Browning wants these communities to be self-reflective about what they think and how they behave so their life may be real, hands-on and concrete. Such a living might elicit what Aristotle called "eudaimonia (εὐδαιμονία)."

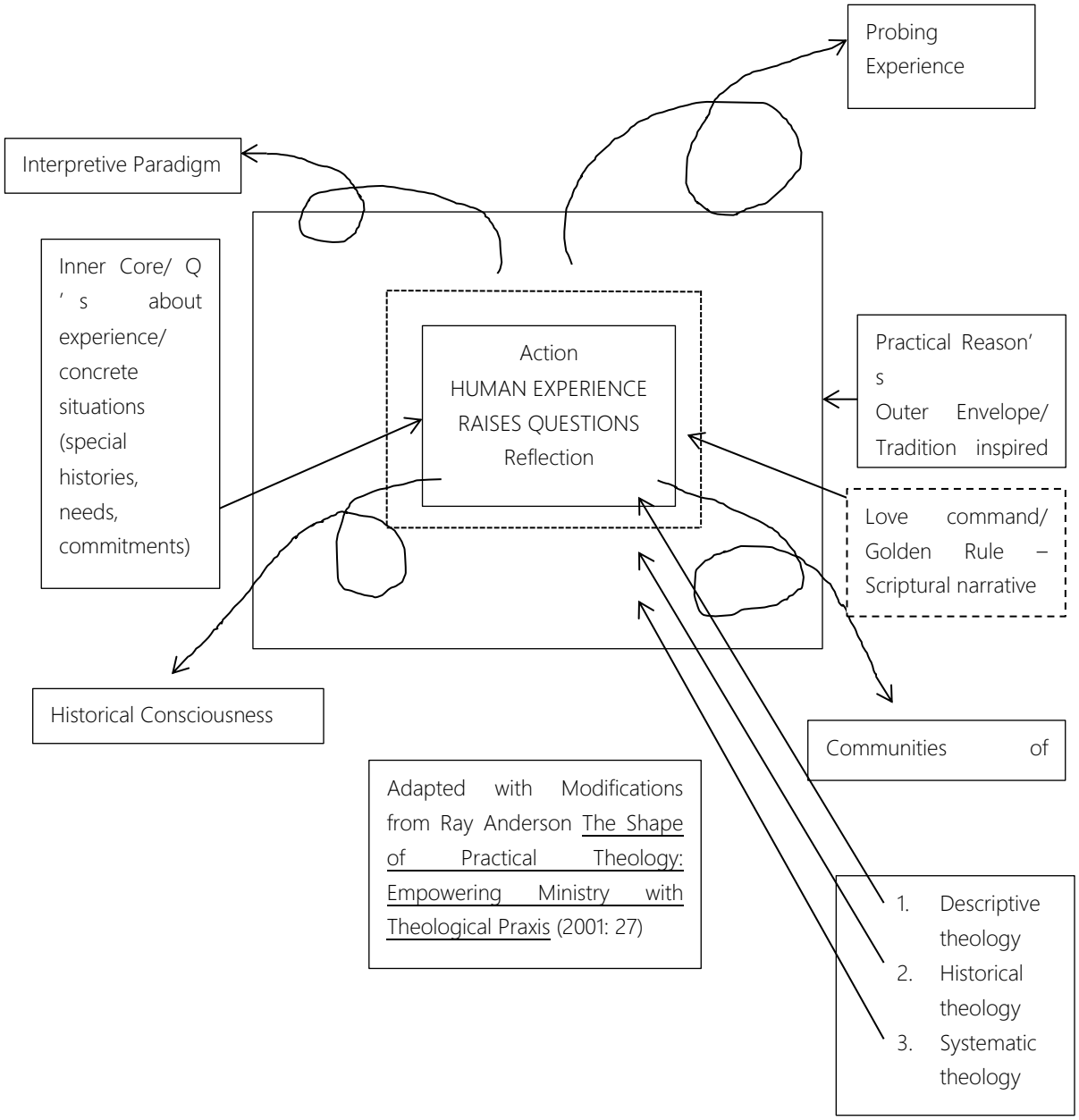
In explicating this style of doing theology Browning gives much credence to the use of 'reason' in forming a fundamental practical theology—asserting that Aristotle has it right when he argues (in the Nichomachean Ethics) for the importance of *'phronesis'* (Greek: φρόνησις). Phronesis as practical reason is distinguished from theoretical reason *and* technical reason, the first being too theoretical and the second being too pragmatic or utilitarian (1996: 10). Browning makes it clear that he is less interested in how individuals appropriate 'practical reason' or *phronesis*. Instead, he is 'interested in how communities, and religious communities at that, exercise practical reason.' (1991: 4) As Browning conceives it, Practical Theology has an overall dynamic movement. One cannot emphasize this enough. This is clearly not a static process. One aspect of this way of proceeding in forming a fundamental practical theology is the movement through an outer envelope (our inherited overarching narratives and practices) from an inner part of the envelope (which functions within a narrative about God's creation, governance, and redemption of the world along with how the person and work of Christ further develop this plan). Deep within this envelope is a core in which are the actions and experiences that make up our living. This inner core of life is where questions arise, simply through our movement through life, inviting us when tensions develop to think and to act.

Our reflection, from within this inner core, is invited when disruption happens in our living. Life changes constantly—someone dies, a church loses members, and poverty asserts itself, friends get sick. Something seems routinely to happen to challenge our equilibrium. Moving outward from the inner core of experience and action we push through the Christian narrative (inner aspect of the outer envelope) which is formative, or

should be. Its purpose is to guide, but also to raise questions about our theory-laden behaviour. With this resource, we examine life. Then we move through the far side of the outer envelope, which is the "fund of inherited narratives that tradition has bequeathed to us." (1996: 10-11) This is not a one-way movement, nor is it a one-time effort, instead there is a circular hermeneutical movement outward and then back with the goal of reconstructing our experience.

When our current experience seems to have reached an impasse in our understanding, because an issue has arisen or a problem has presented itself, or when our present interpretation of an event or events seems to make little sense (Then what?). Practical reason as *phronesis* seeks to reconstruct critically both our understanding of the world, our actions, why we do the things we do, and what we should do now that our field of vision is larger. This is, simply put, a circular hermeneutic process with broad-scale interpretation occurring followed (continually) by re-interpretation (with the emphasis on *process*) (1996: 10-11).

2.17.6 PRACTICAL REASON'S OVERALL DYNAMIC

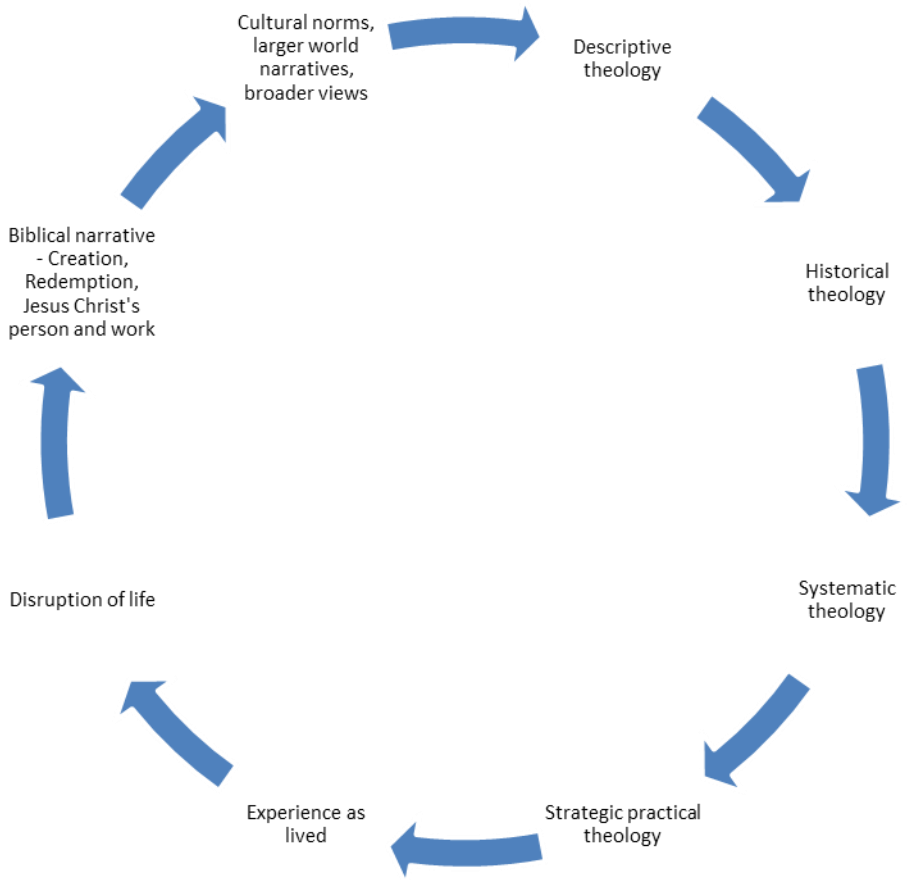


Browning proposes, as we have suggested, that practical theology be reconceived. He envisions it as such, as having four distinct sub-movements.

- First among the sub-movements is descriptive theology.
- Second is historical theology.
- Third is systematic theology.
- Finally, one arrives—following these steps—at a provisional practical theology.

If I understand Browning correctly, an illustration of this process might look like the following: (Illustration next page)

2.17.7 The Hermeneutical Circle



This is not the conclusion of the search, however, but merely an additional step. Arriving at this stage in the process of research and concluding the same research are two different things. As one moves through this provisional study, eventually one will be led to a **multidimensional strategic practical theology**. (1991: 42) This is the **goal**. Now, let us go back to the beginning of the process, which involves a descriptive movement to theology.

The first movement in Browning's process is a 'descriptive theology' in which theory- laden religious and cultural practices are studied, articulated and described, then evaluated. These are called 'theory-laden' because in Browning's understanding no action or practice is 'theory-less.' Theory and practice are not disparate. All of our actions or practices have theories behind them and within them. (1991: 9) The point of this exercise is eliciting a rich, full, thick description of situations. (1991: 94) Part of this process is what Browning terms 'horizon analyses' in which the larger scope of the cultural and religious meanings that surround both our secular and religious practices are examined and highlighted. Browning aims at careful examination through highlighting various strands of the situation by which we are attempting to do an in-depth evaluation. Through this isolation and clarification, the religious and theological horizon is made clear and direct. (1991: 93)

Highlighting this aspect of the study is a dialogical questioning. This examination of the religious and theological frame of reference is itself a dialogue or multi-dimensional hermeneutic enterprise. The human sciences are used, but do not determine human behavior. This use of the social sciences is multi-dimensional and multi-perspectival. Their use is to clarify. They are part of the strands of the situation that are separated and studied. These strands of learning's are descriptive, illustrative, and explanatory in nature. This aids in the attempt at a 'thick' description of the situation. In this way and by this process, both the researcher and the research itself are transformed. This study elicits 'a fusion of the horizons,' which Browning (following Gadamer) desires and sees as essential.

The concern and purpose here is the capturing of the basic questions practical theology raises in all their richness and takes back to the social sciences and the classics. The Practical Theologian here is particularly interested in the influence of religion on the theory-laden practices being studied as well as the full contextual meaning of the concrete questions. These queries help produce the synthesis of meaning between text and context. (1991: 48) Browning asserts, "The task of descriptive theology is to describe a question in all its situated richness." (1991, 94) The point being to aid Practical Theology's appreciation of and critique of current social, cultural, and ecclesiastical practices. (1991: 93) This is the descriptive part of Practical Theology. Browning sees this part of the movement as evocative and not prescriptive (at least not yet). *Phronesis*, practical wisdom, guides from beginning to end the whole process of descriptive theology.

The next movement is historical theology. This aspect of Practical Theology, the second sub-movement, involves historical studies that apply the normative texts that inform the background of the effective history of the situation or individual to the actual practices as they are performed. This application of texts is done as honestly as possible by the researcher. Biblical studies, church history, and systematic theology are all disciplines that may be used by the researcher during this sub-movement of work. Every resource is used in order to highlight some aspect of the situation being studied. Historical theology asks, "What do the normative texts that are already a part of our effective history *really* imply for our praxis when they are confronted as honestly as possible." (1991: 49) These various disciplines are used as lenses through which one can gain greater clarity within the back and forth interpretive, dialogical, movement. (1991:

49) The trick here is to isolate which community privileges which texts as normative. Different churches have different classics; they base their identity on different scriptural and creedal selections. Browning notes, "they have different traditions of textuality." (1991: 49)

The third movement is, as mentioned, systematic theology. Browning states, "systematic theology… [is] the fusion of horizons between the vision implicit in contemporary practices and the vision implied in the practices of normative Christian texts." (1991: 51) Systematic theology is systematic in that it carefully examines the larger, all-encompassing themes of our present activities and the ideas behind and within them. By searching through the Christian tradition, one seeks to arrive at common themes, having sought at the same time to highlight and address broad ethical and existential questions. At issue is the gospel, and how it relates to what we think, and to what we do. In addition, are the concerns that give forth the questions that characterize present situations.

One important question that fuels the research and study of the Practical Theologian—it is what new horizon of meaning arises when present practices and the issues involved with them come into conversation with the central Christian witness? Another important inquiry here obliges systematic theology to introduce a critically, investigative philosophic aspect into theology, and what happens in response, positively, to theology, itself, when it does so?

For Browning, metaphysical questions come last as does the attempt to verify ultimate reality. If any kind of metaphysical clarity or veracity arrives at all, it is gradually. The best results that may be expected are simply good reasons to

acknowledge the metaphysical claims, which at best are not quite as conclusive as definitive and universally convincing arguments. (1991: 52) Indeed, it seems that issues surrounding modernity's questions to praxis and understanding take precedence. Browning regards theological ethics as the prime mover in determining outlook, indeed, he uses the term **'central position.'** (1991: 96) Its purpose of course is guidance in living the Christian life. In its abstract form theological ethics is an attempt to gain the altitude and distance necessary to make generalizations regarding the norms of practice—it is a transitional moment of seeking objectivity within a task that is practical from the start to finish. This is probably a response to his critique of theology's primary task involving making and then bolstering its cognitive claims throughout the majority of the twentieth century. (1991: 53-54)

Strategic practical theology itself is, which is the phrase Browning preferences, both complex and multi-dimensional. It is the final step in a process of questioning, reflection, critique, study, and redefining experience in light of a variety of sources. It consists of a series of questions that seek to shed light on the particular situation in which one finds action necessary.

1. **How do we understand the concrete situation in which we must act?**

What special histories, commitments, and needs of the agents occur in this situation? What interplay and convergence of institutional systems occur? What does analysis of the various competing religio-cultural narratives and histories present? (1991: 55)

2. **What should our praxis consist of in this particular situation?**

What should our praxis in this situation be? What have we learned from the first three sub-movements? What does this mean in the here and now? Can we press the

advancement made from the first three sub movements in an even more intimate way regarding the praxis of our current living's disruption? (1991: 56)

3. **How do we critically defend the norms of our praxis in this situation?**

May our actions be defended as normative in the light of what we have gained heretofore? Our normative actions, critically defended, illustrate the difference between the revised correlational approach and other approaches like narrative, cultural linguistic or simple confessional practical theologies. (1991: 56)

4. **What means, strategies, and rhetorics should we use in this concrete situation?**

This is the communication question par excellence. Where do we find people and how is ministry in all of its various forms to being (wrong word?) the process of transformation? Interpretation of the present situation is now joined with the hermeneutical process begun earlier in descriptive theology and continued in both historical and systematic theology. Early investigative aspects of practical theology have been here joined with critical efforts in order to arrive at 'relative' and 'adequate' justifications for new meanings and practices. (1991: 57)

Browning's book, obviously, is the result of a lifetime of reflection upon the question of what an adequate methodology might look like. He has certainly provided the height of a bar which any serious Practical or Pastoral Theologian must meet in order to stay in the athletic event. Copying his accomplishment, much less seeking to raise the bar, and surpassing it will require attention to detail and reflection upon the questions and proposals Browning himself offers.

It will become apparent that there are fundamental questions the author has about Browning's use of the various disciplines. Not only in how he uses them, but also where

and when he uses them. This should not belie the fact that his achievement is salutary, brilliant, and educative. Regardless of critique, the author has great appreciation for his work.

2.18 A Critique of Browning

One of the author's teachers, Presbyterian college (Clinton, SC) Philosophy and Religion Professor Richard Baker advised us regarding critiques that merely creating a straw man and then demolishing it was not beneficial, nor was it honorable. He also advised regarding critique that it could come from outside the heuristic vision of the individual's work or it could come from inside his or her work. From the outside of an individual's work is to impose our frame of reference upon it. In so doing, we impose our truth, norms, ideals, criteria, and reality upon another's vision and work and then judge it by our standards. Professor Baker was always clear that this was the quick and easy way of reviewing another's hard work.

The other way is to inhabit the individual's work from within and as one does so, to judge its own framework by its consistency, rationality, and credibility. This is the model. Instead, author wants to look at some of the philosophical underpinnings of Browning's work, because this framework will reveal stark differences in not only methodology, but philosophy as well. We shall note large differences in starting points. As we do so, we will keep in mind Professor Baker's additional admonition to come to this thinker with appreciation and humility.

In his Gifford Lectures at the University of St. Andrews in 1928, Philosopher A. E. Taylor called for a science of *whatever* kind, which would be governed by the reality of the **subject.** Authority, then, in determining the reality would not intrude from ecclesiastical areas, biblical areas, fundamentalists, or anything of human construct—but rather reside in the object under study which revealed itself through itself. Taylor notes,

> For something that exists is always individual, and this means, in the first place, that it is not constructed by, but *given* to, our thinking, and in the second, that it is inexhaustible by analysis, and implicit and dimly apprehended "infinite." The actual function of thought is neither to create its own data, not yet to fit data otherwise given in a number of clear-cut apprehensions into an alien pattern, or relational scheme, of "universals," independently given by a second kind of simple apprehension, but to analyse and articulate the present experience, which is our one, always confused, real datum; to transmute apprehension, if I may so express myself, into recognition. (Taylor 1951: 212)

Taylor, one may note is a realist. One of modernity's key features, vis-à-vis Kant, was the distinction between reality as it was in itself and the reality which we had access to through appearances. It was a truism of perhaps the greatest philosopher of the modern period that the only reality that we could lay claim to was the phenomenal, that which appeared to us. Reality as it truly existed was separated from us by an epistemological chasm (previously called the *chorismos* in another section). Our imprisonment in our own minds is, thus, real, unbreakable, and catastrophic. We are locked within ourselves. (Smith 2010: 170)

Realism, then, is a particular process of investigating and knowing that acknowledges the reality of that which is known, against the knower. This is where it is

realistic. It is also, critical, in that it fully acknowledges that our access to this unknown-known reality lies along the dialectical path of appropriate study, dialogue, or conversation between that which we seek to know and ourselves, as knowers. The first shift as far as critical realism is concerned is the **prioritization of ontology over epistemology**.

This flies in the face of much science, philosophy, and theology today. Critical realism is exactly what the noun in the title suggests—that there are objects *beyond* our knowledge. "Reality itself," writes Practical Theologian Andrew Root "exists independently of any epistemological structure." (Root 2014: 192) Hans Georg Gadamer spoke of the hermeneutical spiral which slowly but inexorably leads to a 'fusion of the horizons,' between knower and known. This part of the process may be termed 'critical.' Our statements about the known are always provisional. They are always subject to re-statement. Knowledge then is never independent of the knower. (N. T. Wright 1992: 32)

As British Philosopher Roy Bhaskar (2011) insists, critical realism is primarily about the existence of being, although the possibility of knowing is also included. What realists argue for is that there is an independent reality separate from the observer. We can know this separate reality, truly but provisionally. Our knowledge, as it were, may need and will need adjustment. Revision of that knowledge will and must occur, if our knowledge is to be accurate and truthful. Philosopher Hilary Putnam notes that for the realist, "…the world consists of some fixed totality of mind-independent objects. There is exactly one true and complete description of 'the way the world is'. Truth involves some sort of correspondence relation between words or thought-signs and external things

and sets of things." (1981: 50) Critical Realism has its origins in the early arguments between realism and idealism, but having been continually refined appears in the work of such diverse figures as Albert Einstein, Karl Barth, N. T. Wright, T. F. Torrance, Roy Bhaskar, Ian Barbour, Arthur Peacocke, John Polkinghorne, Alan Torrance, Christopher Smith, Andrew Root, Margaret Archer, Andrew Collier, and Andrew Moore (to name just some). As Roy Bhaskar, perhaps now the most prominent philosopher working with this orientation (until his recent death) puts it, the philosophical program of critical realism seeks to

> "reclaim it (reality) from philosophical ideologies - such as empiricism or idealism - which have tacitly or explicitly defined it in terms of some specific human attribute, such as sense-experience, intuition or axiomatic ratiocination, for some or other restricted - individual or group - interest." (2010: xv)

It is clear, in Don Browning's approach to Practical Theology as a theological liberal, that he sets great store in the ability of human reason, but does he need to be liberated from an over reliance on reason? This is an important question. His program seems to have taken up Enlightenment sensibilities in spades, but as J. B. Metz reminds us, those who take up the Enlightenment program also take up its difficulties. (Metz 1980: 27) At its foundation, Browning's program has become ensnared, in what we have previously highlighted, as the difficulty of using reason alone, indeed, he becomes enmeshed, unfortunately, in a dialogical tension in which critical reason seeks, using critical reason itself, to overcome its own limits using; you guessed it, reason and reason alone. We, on this view, construct our own reality. Is this not Schleiermacher himself, at heart with his

use of the 'feeling' of absolute dependence '*resurrectionem*' simply using a different name: reason? Both Browning and Schleiermacher believe there is a glass ceiling through which one may not trespass. As James Fowler observes this is nothing more than our attempt to get beyond the rationally self-grounded subject of the Enlightenment. (Fowler 1985: 16)

It seems to the author that it is not only our souls, that need healing from sin, but it is also our **minds**. Is not our reason and reasoning capacity affected negatively by sin? We highlighted Emil Brunner's thoughts on this subject. Certainly, reason is important and crucial, but is it untainted by our finiteness and imperfection? What, one may ask, governs our knowledge? We have noted that our reasoning capacity is troubled by sin. It is only from without our system of knowing that help may come. However, we do not have to be handicapped by such as we have indicated previously.

Edinburgh theologian T. F. Torrance writes, "It belongs to the very essence of rational behaviour that we can distinguish ourselves as knowing subjects from the objects of our knowledge and distinguish our knowing from the content of our knowing." (Hebblethwaite and Sutherland 1982: 169) He continues by noting that "if we are unable to do that, something has gone wrong: our minds have somehow been 'alienated' from reality." (1982: 169) Realism has been used by those with theological commitments, but has also been used by those with none. Originating in a reaction to positivism, post-positivism, social constructionism, and postmodernism—critical realism seeks a way through the impasse that developed in the difficulties with each of these philosophical strands of interpreting or trying to make sense of reality.

Critical Realism proceeds with us directing our examination of, and questions to, the object under scrutiny in order that it may disclose its own reality and nature to the student. Preconceived ideas may have to be radically reconfigured. (Torrance 1968: 9) Truly 'objective' thinking opens itself to the nature and reality of the object in order that it may be educated and shaped. Thus, critical realism may be described as follows using the following categories.

- *Ontologically*, the realist holds that there is a reality external to human minds and that it exists as it does independently of the concepts and interpretative grids in terms of which we think about it. It's being what it is does not depend on our conceiving it (as idealists hold), or on our conceptions of it (as Kantians hold), or indeed on our conceiving it at all. Reality is there to be discovered as it objectively is; it is not subjectively invented, constructed, or projected.

- Hence, e*pistemologically*, the realist holds that reality can be (approximately) known as it is and not just as it appears to us to be (as empiricism holds).

- *Semantically*, the realist holds that it is possible to refer successfully to, and so make (approximately) true statements about, reality. That is, in classical terms, the truth of a proposition is a matter of its corresponding to reality independently of our being able to verify or otherwise confirm it.

(Andrew Moore 2003: 1)

This scrutiny may discover something new, something unknown and so the student/ theologian/ scientist must be open to the possibility of new constructs. T. F. Torrance writes that this may involve us in "self-renunciation, repentance, and change of mind."

(1968: 10) Ultimately, critical realism is a scientific perspective that relies on three commitments,

> (1.) the priority of ontology over epistemology,
> (2.) Reality must always be adjudicated continually,
> (3.) the priority of some epistemological perspectives over others.
> (Root 2014: 192ff)

For a "Pastoral" *Theology* (my emphasis), that has as its ground both the Trinity and the Incarnation, it seems to me that for Browning, it is difficult, if not impossible, to speak about God. Perhaps this is because of his philosophical stand *against* realism. I am not sure that after reading and re-reading Browning that his hermeneutic project ultimately is not simply horizontal and ultimately only humanistic, to use a visual metaphor, placing theology or the norms of the faith on the same level *as* opinion. As I read Browning, the author cannot escape the feeling that we have here at its foundation a kind of constructive anti-realism. Is it the case, as Alan Torrance asks in his Regent college lectures (2002) regarding so much of modern theology, that Browning's work ends up simply and finally, if one boils it down, to merely being the **'state of play?'**

Is *truth* arrived at by in Browning's work by anything but *consensus*? Could Browning's work ultimately be more about rhetoric, and who might have the loudest voice or most cogent reasons, and ultimately less about truth or reality? If it is a fundamental practical theology, should it not really be more than hesitant to make metaphysical claims? Is not Practical Theology at its core of reality a concrete, creative meeting between God and man. (Mackay 1959: 14) Ethics, in the light of divine initiative, provides stark differences from an ethics that does not. One must ask in this

case what *kind* of theology it is with which Browning hopes to conclude? What is the epistemic significance for Pastoral Theology if it is simply as Athanasius would ask *mythologia* and not **theologia**?

2.19 The Indicative and Imperative

Another issue, which is of concern in Browning's work, involves ethics. It seems that given Browning's emphasis on theological ethics, he has fallen, however, into emphasizing the imperative, and in overlooking, to use this language, the indicatives of grace. Former Princeton Theological Seminary President John Mackay argues that there are four essential facets of Christian reality in his book Christian Reality and Appearance (a.) the reality of God's self-disclosure, (b.) the transforming encounter, (c.) the community of Christ, (d.) and finally, Christian obedience. (Mackay 1959: 23ff.) Note the movement here in Mackay's four facets. First, there is disclosure, then, second, transforming encounter, then finally, Christian obedience. The indicative of God's grace has preceded the imperative of our obedience.

Herman Ridderbos, in his theology of Paul, in the section on the beginning of the Christian life in the Apostle Paul's thought talks about the cohesive relationship between the indicative and the imperative and how the imperative flows from its grounding in the indicative. The indicative is what has occurred in and through Christ. This is grace. It calls for a response. The imperative is responding in light of this new state of affairs. He writes, "The indicative represents the 'already' as well as the 'not yet.' Grace has come, grace will continue to come,—it is ongoing. The imperative is likewise focused on the

one as well as the other. On the ground of the 'already' it can in a certain sense ask all things, is total in character, and speaks not only of a small beginning, but of perfection in Christ." (Ridderbos 1975: 257) The imperative, however, to keep from being law, must reframe itself in the light of the indicative of Jesus Christ. Indicatives of the gospel always precede the imperatives of demand.

In response to the kind of program in which Browning is engaged, Athanasius would charge his colleague with *irrationality*, interesting for someone like Browning who places so much emphasis on practical reason. However, if one spends time among Athanasius' writings this charge begins to make sense. The fourth century church father Athanasius of Alexandria is known as the great defender of the incarnation of Jesus Christ and of the theological phrase ὁμοούσιος τῷ Πατρί against his colleague Arius and his followers. Regarding Athanasius, Melville Scott, in his book Athanasius on the Atonement writes, "Of all the Fathers of the Early Church the one Father whose opinion counts for more than that of any other is undoubtedly Athanasius." (Scott, 1914: 5) Perhaps this is overstatement, but his point is taken. We disregard Athanasius to our own detriment.

2.20 A Foundation for Pastoral Theology: ὁμοούσιος τῷ Πατρί

This phrase, ὁμοούσιος τῷ Πατρί accepted at Nicaea, asserted the oneness in being between God the Father and God the Son. This was in response to Arius's *Thalia* where he asserts, "God himself then, in his own nature, is ineffable by all men. Equal or

like himself he alone has none, or one in glory.[3]" (Schaff 1903: 1135) Against this, Athanasius argued that, the Son of God came in time, at the right moment, as man, in Jesus Christ. (Newman 1881: 352-354) Athanasius' work, then, may be understood as an unambiguous declaration of the supremacy of the Incarnation. (A. Torrance: 2002) Thomas F. Torrance writes, "…striking is the centrality and the epistemological significance of the ὁμοούσιον…for that tells us that through the Son, and in the Spirit God has communicated to us *himself,* so that how we know God and what we know of him are inseparable. Torrance argues,

> "Through the Word made flesh, we human beings, with our created minds are enabled by the Spirit to know and think of God in such a way that our knowledge and thought of him repose upon his divine reality, or, to express it the other way round, that his divine reality through Jesus Christ and in his Spirit determines the way in which we know and think truly of him." (Torrance 1995: 203)

It would be easy to assume that the argument between Athanasius and Arius was simply metaphysics about the person and nature of Jesus Christ. In so doing, the question about its relevance for today also arises. Initially, it does indeed look like this. However, there were a number of factors at play. Dennis Groh and Robert Gregg (1981) posit Arianism, not primarily as a concern for the relationship between Jesus and God, but rather fundamentally about a philosophy of the Christian life. In this, though they differed in eras and in theology, Arius and Pelagius were agreed. Essentially their argument is that Jesus is a model for us. He clears the way for us in his life and work.

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[3] Αύτός γοῦν ό θεός καθό έστιν αρρητος απασιν ύπαρχει. ίσον ούδέ όμοιον, ούχ όμόδοξον αει μόνος ούτος. (Opitz II.1 De Synodis 15, 1941, p. 243)

Jesus is obedient to God's will and commandments and in so being, offers us a format and blueprint for salvation. We are to emulate him. Gregg and Groh write, "Salvation for Arianism is effected by the Son's identity with the creatures—that which links Christ and creatures to God is conformity of will." (1981: 8) As they attempt to show, this new angle on the old theme of Nicaea and our discipleship is soteriological in nature. Their thesis, even though permitted by RPC Hanson as valid (1988: 826), has met with mixed results. Regardless, they raise an interesting point and their thesis suggests the question of praxis as one aspect of this struggle.

That this concern for the emulation of Christ did not escape Athanasius may be seen in his Life of Antony. Athanasius writes regarding Antony's Christian living that it was **undergirded** by God and God's grace. When Antony is complaining during one episode of difficulty, he questions God's presence and activity in his life, "Where were you before these sufferings and tribulations?" God's response, reminiscent of his response to Job, is "Here I was by your side, Antony, and I have never left you…" (Budge 1907: 15) Because of Antony's ardent struggle to be faithful he realizes that God has been to him, not merely an observer, but the very ground of any comfort and peace. God's speech to him has the effect of removing his troubles and in turn replacing them with peace. (Budge 1907: 15) Athanasius, by way of explanation, of Antony's holiness because of God's assistance, reports Antony saying this,

> Possessing anything besides Christ is unnecessary; indeed, we should not esteem anything of value besides the love of Christ, neither possessions or kinfolk—not even our soul itself. For if God did not spare his Son, but delivered him up on our account of our sins, how much the more is it right for us, having tasted and known Divine grace, to give our souls not on his

> behalf, for such a thing is not required of us, but on behalf of our own lives! (Budge 1907: 19 adapted)

In Christ we not only possess a model for emulation, but we possess the very ground of our faithfulness and life as disciples. Christ is in us as the hope of glory.

2.21 *Perichoretic* Communion, but Distinction

There were also politics at play in this discussion. If there is one thing, which can be learned from R. P. C. Hanson's (1988) magisterial reflection in The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God, it is that the processes that led to what we understand to be orthodoxy were variegated and multifarious. He is at great pains to show there was considerable trial and error

Within this convoluted history is the involvement of Constantine the Emperor and the sense of struggle and adjudication that took place until Nicaea became the norm some time following its ratification in 325. In summation, after 869(!) pages, he writes, "It was only very slowly, as a result of debate and consideration and the re-thinking of earlier ideas that the doctrine which was later to be promulgated as orthodoxy arose." (1988: 870)

On the importance of the ὁμοούσιος τῷ Πατρί for us Thomas F. Torrance writes,

> So, because of the incarnate life of Jesus Christ, who shares the very being of Almighty God, and who assumes our human nature into union with himself, without any diminishing or swallowing up of the human nature that he assumed, true theological activity that is genuine may be undertaken by men and women—because God in his grace becomes the proper object of our thinking. (Torrance 1995: 203)

This is the epistemological significance of the ὁμοούσιον. We share in the Son's knowledge of the Father. Arius, Athanasius' sparring partner, and his followers, suggested two realms, distinct and separate, one called a *kosmos noetos* (the realm of the spiritual and of the mind) and the other a *kosmos aisthetos* (the realm of the senses and of perception). (Gwynn 2012: 66-67) Both realms, Arius argued are disjointed and unconnected, separated by what the Greeks called an unbridgeable gulf, called in Greek the *chorismos*. (Gwatkin 1900: 21) Athanasius completely rejected this view of reality. (T. F. Torrance 1965: 48)

Even though the ὁμοούσιος τῷ Πατρί unites the realms of the sacred and secular, we still struggle with dualism. Alasdair MacIntyre, perhaps one of the foremost philosophers of today, in his first book titled Marxism—An Interpretation wrote the following words regarding the split in our living and the dualisms responsible for that split. He notes,

> The division of human life into the sacred and the secular is one that comes naturally to Western thought. It is a division which at one and the same time bears the marks of its Christian origin and witnesses to the death of a properly religious culture. For when the sacred and secular are divided, then religion becomes one more department of human life, one activity among others. This has in fact happened to bourgeois religion…Only a religion which is a way of living in every sphere either deserves to or can hope to survive. For the task of religion is to help see the secular as the sacred, the world as under God. When the sacred and the secular are separated, then the ritual becomes an end not the hallowing of the world, but in itself. Likewise if our religion is fundamentally irrelevant to our politics, then we are recognizing the political as a realm outside the reign of God. To divide the sacred from the secular is to recognize God's action only within the narrowest limits. A religion which recognizes such a division, as does our own, is one on the point of dying. (McMylor 2005: 3)

The issue as Thomas John Hastings points out is that "Practical Theologians" under pressure to be relevant, successful, or applicable have all too often imposed "distortive and alien noetic categories upon a discipline which is in its core, theological, and not just concerned with practical applications and techniques." (Wright 2004: 255) Hastings goes on to say Practical Theology, if it is to overcome all the "isms" that bedevil us must develop and foment a doctrine of divine agency. (Wright 2004: 255) Hastings is correct for all too often Practical and Pastoral theology is overly concerned with activity, action and agency—human activity, action, and agency. We have indicated the importance of the word praxis, but have also indicated that the word is improperly used without a proper ontology behind it.

Nicholas Lash (2008) makes the astute observation that today's dominant thought-forms are dualistic in character. Our language, he notes, is saturated with dualisms of 'inner' and 'outer', 'mental', and 'physical', 'value' and 'fact', 'spirit' and 'flesh', 'private' and 'public', 'feelings' and 'institutions', and so on. I suspect this has its origins in the old Platonic dualism between the realm of ideas and the realm of this world's sensory phenomena. This was hardened and ossified in the Enlightenment. Colin Gunton writes, "Corresponding to the dualistic division of the world into the sensible and intelligible realms is an epistemological dualism of the contingent and the necessary." (Gunton 1983: 139)

This dualism may also result from our incorrect extrapolation of data from neutral empirical information without a reliable ontological foundation. It also results from an attempt at understanding nature from within nature itself. Loder writes, "In epistemology, the objectivist or reductionist fallacy which ignores the relation of the

knower to the known or reduces the knower to an object of knowledge is one example." (Loder 1992: 7) Dichotomization of reality or the phenomenon of inquiry renders it completely unintelligible. That this is a concern arises from the circumstance that what we believe is inexact, tentative, correctable, and at best, perhaps only probable in status. (Gunton 1983: 140)

Of course, the specter of Lessing haunts us all. His declaration presents seemingly intractable problems for us. Lessing's statement that "the accidental truths of history can never become the proof of necessary truths of reason…" presents us with an ugly ditch, in his words, across which we may never cross. (Lessing 1956) The attempt, unfortunately, or for that matter the lack of an attempt—often leads to drastic problems. Indeed, dualism is one of them. James Edwin Loder notes that, "Dualism is a dichotomization of a phenomenon which leads to distortion or misrepresentation of that phenomenon." (Loder 1992: 7) This leads in turn to "objectivism," "subjectivism," and, what Hastings terms, "volitionalism." (Wright 2004: 255)

Athanasius dealt with dualism successfully in the fourth century, if we would just listen. Thus, this separation, this *chorismos* returning to Arius's view, is necessary because of the unique being and nature of God. God is real in a supreme sort of way, eternal and unchanging and thus may not be associated with our temporal order. (Petterson 1995: 110) Alvyn Petterson notes, "Arians…meanwhile subscribed to a deity whose transcendent majesty precluded his drawing near." (Petterson 1995: 110) Because of this thesis about God's distinction from our world, Arius argued that Jesus was the supreme creation of God, above all others, but was still on this side of the (χωρισμός) *chorismos*, because only God could be God. (Opitz 1941: 242-243) If

anything or anyone, so Arius thought, intruded upon God's unique place in the universe, God would cease to be unique, holy, or other. Arius argued, "Foreign from the Son in essence is the Father, for he is without beginning. Understand that the Monad was, but the Dyad was not, before it was in existence. It follows at once that, though the Son was not, the Father was God.[4]" (Schaff 1903: 1136) Athanasius understood all too well that if this were in fact the case, humanity would be left to its own devices regarding salvation. We could not get across the resultant glass ceiling separating us from reality.

There is no way for us to successfully bridge the chasm that exists between the two realms. (T. F. Torrance 1993: 148) In response to Arius's views, Athanasius argued for the incredible incarnate condescension of the Son of God who bridges the separation between the two realms as **mediator** (Anatolios 2004: 92ff). As such he shares both our humanity and God's divinity—one person, two natures. G. L. Prestige, in his discussion of the word homoousios (ὁμοούσιος τῷ Πατρί), writes,

> Again he [Athanasius] maintains *(ad Afros* 8) that the Son possesses the divine prerogatives of creating, eternity, immutability, and therefore cannot be a creature; for He possesses them, not as a reward of virtue, but as belonging to His ousia; as Nicaea had said, He is not out of another ousia, but out of that of the Father, to which these prerogatives belong of right. (1952: 217)

Note the statement regarding 'as a reward for virtue,' contra the Arian Christ. If Arius is correct and Athanasius is wrong, then any attempt to reach God on our part is doomed to

[4] ξένος τοῦ υἱοῦ κατ' οὐσίαν ὁ πατὴρ, ὁτι αναρχος ὑπαρχει. σύνες ὁτι ἠ μονας ἡν, ἠ δυας δὲ οὐκ ἡν, πρὶν ὑπαρξη. αὐτίκα γοῦν υἱοῦ μὴ ὁντος ὁ πατὴρ θεός ἐστι. λοιπόν ὁ υἱός οὐκ ὥν (ὑπηρξε δέ θελήσει πατρῷα) μονογενὴς θεός έστι καί έκατέρων αλλότριος ούτος. (Opitz II.1 De Synodis 15, 1941, p. 244)

failure. We are thrown back, Athanasius argued, in Arius's thought, *upon ourselves*, *our thoughts*, and *our ideas* regarding who and what God might be like. Unfortunately, too much Practical Theology today is guilty of just this phenomenon. Khaled Anatolios, scholar on the early Church writes, "The goal of human existence, achieved in Christ, is true knowledge (γνῶσις) of God." (Anatolios 2011: 102) Apart from Christ, there is no knowledge of God, or of ourselves (as Calvin would have it). As Petterson puts it, "…the Logos offers us all the most appropriate entrance to the knowledge of God." (Petterson 1995: 69)

In Jesus Christ, we have the true ground and foundation of knowledge of God, for in him we participate in his personal knowledge of the Father. For this state of affairs, in which Arius sought to discover knowledge of God apart from Christ, Athanasius used the word αγνωσις, which literally means—**without knowledge** (A. Torrance 2002). Athanasius called this ignorance a form of **atheism.** He also suggested that it was a kind of *insanity* (Newman 1881: 154). This was thinking *kat epinoian* where our statements have only a this-worldly reference—indeed these are projections of our own understanding, which we might really call opinions, instead of *kat dianoion* which instead offers veridical epistemic access available only in Jesus Christ (insofar as our thinking is indeed grounded in him). (A. Torrance 2002) Athanasius called the first style of proceeding **'mythology,'** (μυθολογία) which he accused Arius of engaging in; humorously he also called this a form of madness (μανία), and the second, which begins *in* Christ, is where we take seriously the Scriptural statement of Jesus himself "All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal

him." (Matt. 11:27 NIV) Athanasius called this way of thinking ***theology.*** This contrasted starkly with *mythology*. T. F. Torrance writes, "In contrast to the *epinoiai* of the Arians, Athanasius insists upon the place of *dianoia* in theological thinking. This is an objective, not an objectifying kind of thought, and is a far more rigorous form of thinking than *epinoia*." (T.F. Torrance 1965: 49)

2.22 Mythology (μυθολογία) Today

One prime example of this thinking as *epinoia* or *mythologia* is to be found in Rudolf Bultmann's Jesus Christ and Mythology where he argues that the world-view of Jesus and the early disciples is bound by time and outlook, and thus mythology. That which the New Testament points towards is "crude." Bultmann made no apologies for how he understood the world of the New Testament. He writes, "Mythology expresses a certain understanding of human existence. It believes that the world and human life have their ground and their limits in a power which is beyond all that we can calculate or control." (1958: 19) And again, "The contrast between the ancient world-view of the Bible and the modern world view is the contrast between two ways of thinking, the mythological and the scientific." (1958: 38) British Theologian John Macquarrie points out that Bultmann's program centered on clarification of what Christians believed. Indeed, his program was a phenomenology of faith. (1973: 2) Bultmann's program required transference of what the Bible said and taught into modern day idiom and ideas. His program was called "demythologization." (1958: 60) When he opened his Bible, the question he posed involved the conundrum of human existence. (Macquarrie 1973: 8) Demythologization is a program of existentialist interpretation.

Another example of this *mythologia*, or what modern day philosophers would call today 'the construction of reality' is that of Richard Rorty's Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature (1979) in which he argues that "truth" is generated by discussion among people and then the adjudication of the various alternatives. There is no objective reality against which to judge our beliefs or actions. Truth is determined by consensus. The mind, to use Rorty's language does not reflect, as a mirror might, the reality of nature. If this is in fact the case, then observable nature, which many have believed is represented (at least somewhat adequately) by the mind or within the mind, is patently false. Rorty writes, "The point of edifying philosophy is to keep the conversation going rather than to find objective truth. Such truth, in the view I am advocating, is the normal result of normal discourse." (Rorty 1979: 377) In addition, "…objective truth is no more and no less than the best idea we currently have about how to explain what is going on." (1979: 385)

Finally, "If we see knowing….as a right, by current standards, to believe, then we are well on our way to seeing conversation as the ultimate context within which knowledge is to be understood." (Rorty 1979: 389) Historian Christian Delacampagne sums up Rorty's philosophic enterprise in this way, "In reducing science and philosophy to the rank of simple cultural practices, he dismissed out of hand their claim to tell the truth,—a claim that seemed to him not only unrealizable but, even on its own terms, unjustifiable and useless." (Delacampagne 1999: 261) A theology which is derived from the ground up, the ground of our experience and emotions, offers the problem of a glass ceiling in that there is a disconnect between what we imagine God to be and who God is in reality. As James Loder points out, "…It is by no means clear what the word "God" refers to when "experience" mediates and, indeed, constitutes the substance of theology

and its relation to human action." (Schweitzer 1999: 361) This might be said regarding all of his theological doctrines. As Athanasius asked—are we speaking of *theologia* or *mythologia*?

Is Browning's program simply a philosophy of the Christian's faith, assuming that it has no ontological reference to the divine? Has Browning simply inherited the agnostic philosophical backdrop of Arius, Schleiermacher, Bultmann, and Rorty? In his social construction of reality, do we not have simply **mythologia** (μυθολογία) to use a term coined by Athanasius? What exactly are we attempting to adjudicate? Once again, a question, is this not *simply* the "state of play?"

2.23 The Stratification of Reality and McLeod Campbell's Theological Epistemology

Now, Browning's practical theological approach indicates his capitulation to what Thomas F. Torrance terms, the 'fatal deistic disjunction between God and the world.' (Torrance 1976: 1) McLeod Campbell also struggled with this agnostic viewpoint, which was gaining popularity in Great Britain in the nineteenth century. Is it not the case that we often drive a wedge between God, the world, and any possibility of interaction in our theological understanding? What is, one might ask, our view of God, in this case? Is our understanding of God that of a detached and unknowable deity? Do we simply do away with God completely? Raising the same kind of concern as Loder, James Fowler examines the majority of Practical Theologies today and suggests they fall short because, "There is no clear affirmation or examination of the priority and objectivity of divine initiative as the ground, tendency, and the backdrop of situations of contemporary

interpretation and response." This is the whole issue of the weakness of Browning, and others, who are convinced that we are bound by ignorance of God, and thus may only make anthropological statements. Might it be, instead, that **divine praxis** *precedes* our praxis? Decisions have to be made. The prevenience and priority of divine praxis is assumed here in this study. To steal an image from a famous theologian, without divine initiative, indeed without the divine at all, our attempt at reaching God is like throwing a sandbag up in the air thinking that we can somehow arrive at God in so doing.

Another issue with which modernity struggles is that Aristotle, in his doctrine of God, in the Physics unfortunately influenced much thought about God. The issue may not just be agnosticism or mythology, but almost just as bad—a wrong-headed theology. Is our theology, pastoral or otherwise, committed ontologically to the incarnate presence and activity of God in Christ by the power of the Spirit? If so, then what does this tell us about our doctrine of God? If not, then do we not have an *impoverished* doctrine/ theology? Could a God whose Son became incarnate be detached and unknowable? If not, then why? Are we not then left with the god of the philosophers? If so, then this begs the question of our view of Christ. It is here that Athanasius' understanding of the *homoousious to patri* (ὁμοούσιος τῷ Πατρί) becomes crucial. This is a game changer. We are then able to read what the writer of Ephesians says, understanding that Christology is fundamental, "For he himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, by setting aside in his flesh the law with its commands and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace, and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility." (1:14) Or,

another thing to think about—what are we to make of the words of the writer of the gospel of Matthew (27:51) that the veil of the Temple was rent in two from top to bottom following his death on the cross. The dividing wall between God and humanity was at an end. This was the Holy of Holies. Only the Great High Priest could enter and then only on one day of the year. No one else dared. This was where the presence of God was felt. If the veil was the dividing line of our access to God, then if it was rent *because* of Christ—is this not revealing on a number of levels? God's presence with us is now certain. If this is the case, then should this not affect our knowledge of God? What about, then, our knowledge in general? Does this change? Instead of a Platonic dualism, where sensible things only have their reality as they relate to the spiritual world of ideas, might we now have a unitary frame of reference that is related to Christ's person and work and as a result derives its origin from that very same person and work? McLeod Campbell would have taken all this for granted. It did not have to be philosophically defined or defended, asserted or proved.

Roy Bhaskar, in speaking about the explanatory power of a new frame of reference writes,

> To explain something is to resolve some agent's perplexity about it: it is to render the unintelligible intelligible - by the elucidation, extension, modification, or replacement of that agent's existing conceptual field. In particular, scientific explanations do not resolve problems by subsuming some particular problem under a more general one, but by locating such (normally already generalized) problems in the context of a new cognitive setting; it is (new) *concepts*, not (universal) *quantifiers* which accomplish explanatory problem-resolution in science. (2011: 90)

This is the difference between the sun rotating around the earth and the earth moving in rotation around the sun. This is James Clerk Maxwell and the unified field theory. There

is no going back, once the transition has occurred. Understanding the reality, in which we live, requires explanation. It requires careful thought. In addition, it requires investigation, testing, and observation. Questions abound about knowing how we know and what we know. Because of modernity, we are constantly in danger of seeking to understand the whole, by examining and referencing *only* the part. Knowing and understanding the part only succeeds in knowing and understanding the part. In addition, we focus only on the part, at the expense of the whole. Rather than seeking to understand each other holistically, we try to understand them *biologically, socially, culturally, psychologically, theologically, ethically, religiously.* One example is the issue of the status of Japanese-Americans and Japanese Canadians during WWII. They were viewed only through their cultural origin. Most ended up in internment camps.

Reductionist ways of knowing hurt, rather than help, this is why Practical Theology is so necessary, because it utilizes information and knowledge across the spectrum. Michael Polanyi notes that, "We can know a successful system only by understanding it as a whole, while being subsidiarily aware of its particulars; and we cannot meaningfully study these particulars except with a bearing on the whole." (1962: 403) One may note Harry Stack Sullivan's therapeutic approach, as an illustration of this, to treating schizophrenics, through setting them up in a particular wing of the hospital, with specific men hand-picked as orderly's, and through treating them as human beings, rather than as mentally ill. Polanyi, states, regarding the whole,

> Accordingly, it is as meaningless to represent life in terms of physics and chemistry as it would be to interpret a grandfather clock or a Shakespeare sonnet in terms of physics and chemistry; and it is likewise meaningless to represent mind in terms of a machine or of a neural model. Lower levels

> do not lack a bearing on higher levels; *they define the conditions of their success and account for their failures, but they cannot account for their success, for they cannot even define it*. (2005: 403)

Once again, we must allow the object under investigation to guide us in revealing itself out of itself. Interpreting something by a foreign frame of reference is simply unconscionable. Method is thus determined by ontology. (McGrath 2002: 223)

Therefore, as Roy Bhaskar reminds us, "This is not an arbitrary order of development. It reflects the condition that, for transcendental realism, it is the nature of objects that determines their cognitive possibilities for us; that in nature it is humanity that is contingent and knowledge, so to speak, accidental. (1998: 27) The object under study guides us as we seek to discern its reality.

In his critique of modern rationality, T. F. Torrance suggests that the difficulties which continue to arise in our theological and philosophical projects regarding the use of reason stem from a "secession of reason from being in which reason assumed the status of law over being and operated by imposing abstract patterns of thought prescriptively upon being." (Torrance 1984: 1) Instead, ontology guides and governs method. Epistemology is the servant of ontology.

British philosopher Roy Bhaskar speaks of two different kinds of objects of knowledge. The first he terms **'intransitive'** objects of knowledge; these are not produced or manufactured by people. They just exist. They are naturally occurring. The second, he terms, **'transitive'** objects of knowledge; these are produced or fashioned by people. They are artificial objects. (Bhaskar 2008: 11) In all true knowing, we become increasingly open to the object under scrutiny, while simultaneously experiencing, as we

do so, 'self-renunciation, repentance, and change of mind.' (T. F. Torrance 1971: 10) Along this same vein, Roy Bhaskar writes,

> And so one has in science a three-phase schema of development in which, in a continuing dialectic, science identifies a phenomenon (or range of phenomena), constructs explanations for it and empirically tests its explanations, leading to the identification of the generative mechanism at work, which now becomes the phenomenon to be explained, and so on. In this continuing process, as deeper levels or strata of reality are successively unfolded, science must construct and test its explanations with the cognitive resources and physical tools at its disposal, which in this process are themselves progressively transformed, modified and refined. (1998: 13)

Each layer of reality is examined and the generative mechanism is sought. Phenomenon are observed, tested, evaluated. Eventually, the cause is discovered, hypothesized, posited. An explanation is then sought. Descriptions are conjectured. Then that layer is examined. New phenomena are discovered. These are tested and re-tested and so on. This continues until it reveals itself and its secrets.

Andrew Collier, a noted interpreter of critical realism, states, "…epistemological stratification is not founded in contingent aspects of human cognitive capacities, but in a real ontological stratification of the object of the sciences." (Archer, M et al 1998: 261) Bhaskar himself calls them emergent explanatory levels. Phenomenologically, there is depth to reality, indeed, there is more to being, to reality, than that which we can observe or see. We cannot see the molecules that make up the object in front of us with the naked eye, but put a microscope in front of us and everything changes. Hungarian Chemist and Philosopher Michael Polanyi, building upon the work of Albert Einstein also notes that in reality there is a hierarchy of "comprehensive entities." (1966: 35) There is more to see

than meets the eye. Reality, as we may perceive it, is stratified. There is an ordered ontology to this stratification. Bhaskar calls the first level the empirical level. T. F. Torrance calls it the tacit level or doxological level, which is where the most profound kind of theological knowledge occurs. This instinctive first-level order of knowledge forms the basis of all further theological belief and remains the criterion for every concept that we might develop beyond this beginning level. Oddly enough, this is the world of our experience and living. Similarly to Polanyi's understanding of tacit knowledge, for T. F. Torrance "as we inhabit this level it becomes built into the structure of our souls and minds, and we know much more than we can ever tell." This is, by way of illustration, where fellowship, Bible-Study, Prayer, Worship, and Christian education take place in the Church. Bhaskar and T. F. Torrance are in good company, because physicist Albert Einstein posited such a variety of levels in reality in his article "Physics and Reality," (1936: 349). He argued, as he did so, that science is "nothing more than a refinement of our everyday living." (1936: 349).

Experience is the first level, the ground level of evangelical experience which is a level with which we are indubitably familiar. Through the various sense experiences come the formation of the concept of bodily objects. From our sense experiences and impressions, we attribute to them a meaning—that of a physical object.

The second level, for T. F. Torrance, is the **scientific level**. This is the plane where we form appropriate concepts that seek to explain the world in which we live according to empirical and theoretical information. The second level, for Roy Bhaskar, is the actual level. For Einstein, this level is where we attribute to the object a particular importance, a specific designation. This is the level of orientation. (1936: 350) This is a

level of higher logical unity, which has its own concepts, models, and objects. (1936: 353) This level has been generated by reality.

Each level, notes Michael Polanyi, is subject to a dual control, first, by the laws that apply to the elements themselves and, secondly, by the comprehensive entity formed by them. (1966: 36) This second level of thought, therefore, involves a movement beyond experience to the intelligible relations that are intrinsic to our experience without themselves being experienced. We thus, as T. F. Torrance posits, pierce into the intelligible networks underlying reality that ground and control the previous level, and as we do so we arrive at validated theological accounts of the structures that underlie our first level evangelical experience. (Myers 2008: 9) Roy Bhaskar notes, "When a stratum of reality has been adequately described, the next step consists in the discovery of the mechanisms responsible for behaviour at that level. The key move in this involves the postulation of hypothetical entities and mechanisms, whose reality can then be ascertained." (2008: 161)

The third level is the stratum of the **real**. These are the existent mechanisms, which guide reality. This level is, thus, the tertiary or meta-scientific level. At this level, we seek to reflect more rigorously on and about the structure of God's self-revelation in order to develop ever-increasingly more refined models/ constructs/ blueprints of God's nature and character. As Ben Myers indicates, "The conceptuality achieved at this meta-theological level constitutes the ultimate grammar and the unitary basis of all theological knowledge." (Myers 2008: 1-2) Now, notes Polanyi, the processes of a higher level cannot be accounted for by the laws leading its essentials constituting and developing the lower level. (1966: 36) However, the parts form a whole.

The unity of nature is like that of a laminate, with one layer bleeding into another, which in turn bleeds into another. Within and among these intransitive objects of knowledge are various levels or strata. There is a depth to this ordering which is ontological. (Archer, M. and Bhaskar, Roy. and Collier, A. and Lawson, T. and Norrie, A. 1998: 258) T. F. Torrance argues, in line with this thought, that there are three levels of stratified scientific thought and knowledge. (1999: 35) Within those three levels, (because of the incarnation of Christ) there is now a unitary frame of reference, a contingent intelligibility, and a contingent freedom. (Wright 2004: 266) Bhaskar insists that each stratum — whether physical, biological, or cultural — is to be seen as 'real', and capable of investigation using means *appropriate* to its distinctive identity. (McGrath 2002: 216) The operations of each higher, upper level are artificially embodied in the boundaries of the lower level that is relied upon to obey the laws of inanimate nature. The control exercised by the organizational principle of the higher level on the particulars forming its lower level is called the principle of marginal control. (Polanyi 1966: 45)

Each lower level imposes restrictions on the one immediately above it, even as natural laws restrict it. No level can gain control over its own boundary conditions and thus cannot bring into existence a higher level, the operations of which would consist in controlling these boundary conditions. (Polanyi 1966: 45) The logical structure of the hierarchy implies that a higher level can come into existence only through a process not manifest in the lower level, a process that qualifies as an emergence. Comprehensive entities consist in a peculiar logical combination of consecutive levels of reality.

What this means is that there is a depth, and reality to existence, that is so much richer and denser than we realize. Ministry may be more about what we do not see than

what we can see. We may not be able to see or experience someone's soul, but that does not mean that it does not exist. I suspect that in ministry we must begin with what has actually occurred, which is the revelation of God in Christ to us, by his Spirit, and then proceed from there. McLeod Campbell begins theological thought on the one hand, with Scripture, and then on the other hand, with the person and work of Christ. He also begins with experience. Clarifying experience with his parishioners was fundamental. He then proceeds according to interpreting out of that reality's own nature, according to its own rules, information, and being. Both Scripture, experience, and Christ, by the Spirit, provide a set of glasses, as Calvin understood it, with which to interpret reality. That this can only occur through the gift of the Spirit, which leads us into truth, McLeod Campbell clearly believed. Prayer as a reality is powerful, changing, clarifying, but it requires its own interpretive lenses in order to make sense. Seeking to discover the reality of something apart from its own being, and under its own conditions leads to a constructivist and idealist understanding of knowledge "which functions within a general framework of thought governed by a radical disjunction between the intelligible and sensible worlds linked in the human understanding through representative images and ideas in the middle…" (Torrance 1984: 3) Important for Pastoral Theology, with all this background discussion of epistemology, is the importance of the invisible—defining and influencing the visible. Now putting this stratification of reality, here, into a different kind of language which is more experiential perhaps. Pastoral Counselor Chris Schlauch writes regarding this,

> When we mediate this gift (the gift of God's presence in Christ) through holy regard, we participate in the Spirit who works through us. What

> comes through us to another may be carried in and through our words, our actions, and our person, not given directly, but indirectly. Persons do not experience God's love and forgiveness simply by being told that God loves them; words are empty unless manifest in deed…words have to be incarnated in us, so that God's love and forgiveness are shown through us. (1995: 84)

Spirit is one level of reality, our words another stratum, our actions yet another, prayer yet a different level and so on. There are layers and levels of reality, some seen and some not.

The Apostle Paul writes to the Corinthians about what is real, exists, and has power. He counsels (1 Cor. 15:3-4), "**3** For I handed on to you as of first importance what I in turn had received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures,**4** and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures…" Paul understands that he is witnessing to a profound reality, Christ's death, and the forgiveness of sins. He is also witnessing to a human being's resurrection from the dead. He shares with them the importance of what he knows, of how it has changed his life, and what it may do for them. This truth, which he mediates, is none other than the Crucified Christ whose death has put away the old and brought about the new. Their sins are forgiven. This is of supreme importance. McLeod Campbell would have understood these varying degrees of ministry; he engaged in them. Preaching the Word occupied a serious expenditure of time, both in preparation and in delivery. Counseling, visiting, encouraging, and educating also accounted for the rest of the week. These are all various strata of Pastoral Theology.

In doing this, and in receiving this, we will be able to "have this mind in you which was in Christ Jesus…" (Phil. 2:5) so that we are lifted up into the divine fellowship of the Triune God of love and grace, and in so doing develop worthy ways of thinking, godly ways of thinking of God—ways that are appropriate to him. This leads back to the importance of repentant ways of thinking, or as Georges Florovsky put it, the "Scriptural mind." The forgiveness of sins is an ontological reality. Something has changed. Knowing this and then living in this truth is a new creation. It is as we submit ourselves to God's Spirit leading us into the truth through the vicarious humanity of him who is the way, truth and life and we find our minds adapted and transformed so that we slowly develop what Paul, the Apostle called, 'the mind of Christ.'

Ernest Bruder, a student of Harry Stack Sullivan's suggests that the pastor has three contributions to make. With the previous insight into reality, which we have discussed, we as ministers, have a distinctive **faith** and **praxis** to share. We must continue to press forward in understanding life. That is, life as it occurs as a participation in the life and love of the Triune God of love and grace. The point is a greater wholeness in living. Finally, as minister's "we have held all this to be 'under God' in such a way that we can recognize our dependencies for what they are—that is, self-fulfilling. (1963: 65) How we view ourselves is crucial. What we have been, what we are, what we may yet become, all need to be affirmed as falling within the providence of God. The minister may point the way in affirming that we are beloved by God, thus perhaps keeping men and women from falling into self-denigration or self-abasement. There is a dimension to living in which the pastor as pastor as witness to God may attest to others. (1963: 65-66) The sources and norms for pastoral work involve Scripture, revelation, experience,

reason, and prayer. The figure of John the Baptist, in Matthias Grunewald's Isenheim Altarpiece, which so influenced Karl Barth points to the Crucified Christ while holding a Bible in his hand. There is something iconic about this for the pastor's work. I suspect that this image means roughly the same thing as Ernest Bruder's comments.

McLeod Campbell, in his own reflection on the sources and norms of pastoral theology sought to ground theological statements in revelation, which had reason as its arbiter, and reason, which had its governor, in revelation. He writes,

> Any manner of subordinating of reason to revelation must be wrong, in which it is forgotten that we honour God in assigning to reason its due place, as truly as we do in assigning to revelation its due place; for to be jealous for reason is to be jealous for God, as truly as to be jealous for revelation is to be jealous for God. If self comes in, and forgets that reason is a gift as well as revelation, and, claiming reason as its own, is puffed up on behalf of that which we have thus identified with ourselves, the temptation that thus arises to exalt reason and depreciate revelation is obvious, and the evil consequences to be anticipated great. But the remedy, the true and the only remedy, is, that we should hear the voice of God in reason as well as in revelation—that God in whose presence no flesh shall glory. (1873: 322-323)

McLeod Campbell's understanding of knowledge is that it is an *a posterori* exercise which is open ended—and which does not seek to rule some things out of court prior to our encountering them. Both forms of knowledge—revelation and reason—needed to be tested by the other alternative aspect. He stated this kind of methodology in writing in response to the publication of an edited volume of papers titled The Essays and Reviews published in 1860. Its publication occasioned much controversy and response on the part of its readers. Generally, it was skeptical of orthodox Christianity putting

much stock in the industrial and scientific progress then occurring. The miraculous need be no longer believed in. Some approved; some, like McLeod Campbell sought to reaffirm the independent character of belief in response to revelation. In McLeod Campbell's case, his response was the publication of Thoughts on Revelation (1862). In it, Campbell called neither for a Christian faith based on unthinking acquiescence to an outside authority, nor for a Christian faith skeptical of God's impartation of knowledge. What McLeod Campbell was arguing for was a response to 'a givenness' of the incarnation of Jesus Christ and all that it purports for our understanding of reality. McLeod Campbell's response was for a robust theology of revelation. McLeod Campbell writes,

> We see all nature, all providence, all revelation, used in subordination to the drawings of the Holy Spirit of God, according to the divine constitution of things in Christ, which our Lord's words recognize: 'All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and He to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him. (Campbell 1862: 45)

Reality is thus different now in the light of Christ. McLeod Campbell, like the early church fathers, bound revelation, reason, and reconciliation together 'in Christ.' One can see this kind of connection in reading McLeod Campbell's corpus and then perusing Donald Fairbairn's book Life in the Trinity: An Introduction to Theology with the Help of the Church Fathers (2009). Even though the language is different, the reality towards which Fairbairn points in his reading of the church fathers is similar in nature to the reality to which McLeod Campbell also pointed. Christ's incarnation reveals a new realm, as it were, based on the Father's love for humanity in Jesus Christ.

In a sermon titled "The Gospel" from Fragments of Truth[5] (1898), McLeod Campbell emphasized, for his congregation, the significance, and importance of the incarnation of Christ for humanity. Christ's incarnation changes everything—history, creation, time, space, humanity. McLeod Campbell begins the sermon by highlighting the "extreme lowliness" of Christ's birth, particularly to the human eye. However, what we see and what truly is—are often two different things. This is a recurrent theme in this sermon. In the eyes of God, as McLeod Campbell points out, "Christ was the beloved Son of God, on whom the Father was looking down well pleased." (1898: 1) This emphasizes the difference between our judgment and God's judgment. We see the babe in an animal's feeding trough, delicately called "a manger." He is seemingly, of little account—just one of many babies born to poor peasants, at that time. We often see others in a particular way. The issue that is laid before us, because of the incarnation, is—are they in fact the people we think we see?

Thus, we see a child of lowly birth, an unwed mother, a man with a wife pregnant by someone other than him. Is this all? Is there here a deeper truth? Seeing differently—what this involves, is, to use the language of Princeton theologian Don Capps, "reframing." (1990) Reframing is to look at something from an entirely different perspective. The incarnation is a prime example—to judge Christ based on appearances and the reproach of people is an altogether different thing than judging Christ based on

[5] Fragments of Truth contains both sermons and lessons (sometimes called 'teachings') from the time that McLeod Campbell was engaged in ministry in Glasgow at the chapel built for him by friends and admirers. The pieces are from, roughly speaking, 1835 or so to his retirement in 1860 or so. These are significant because they show McLeod Campbell's growth as a pastoral theologian. They are also important because they highlight the development of his thought on the atonement. Several of the sermons lay the foundation for and point to his later magnum opus On the Nature of the Atonement (1856).

God's point of view. To observe and then to see differently is hard. It requires 'reframing.'

McLeod Campbell asks, "Have you ever felt your mind arrested by the simple fact, that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the Son of man? That he, who is the Eternal Word, who dwelt from eternity in the bosom of the Father, was made flesh, became Son of man, was born your *brother*?" (1898: 1) This is the substance of the gospel and it is of momentous significance, for McLeod Campbell, because all of history is considered from this one singular, unique unrepeatable event. The incarnation is God's reference point in his dealings with human beings—as it affects human history and destiny. The incarnation, because of its import, changes who we are and how we are viewed by God.

In the incarnation, there is born to us a "Savior." This is an objective fact. We do not have to do anything for Jesus Christ to be our savior. McLeod Campbell writes, "It is, therefore, a great error to imagine you have anything to do to *make* Jesus Christ your Savior." (1898: 5) He notes that this relationship is both a fact and the result of the birth of Christ. He is born a sibling to us. We are related to him. He states, "The tie of birth binds you to Jesus, and this is the reason why it may be said to you, "Fear not!" He continues, "Even in the midst of fear—even before the light of God has been revealed within you—'Fear not; for to you is *born* a Savior.'" Christ, as McLeod Campbell makes clear, is born to help us in the same way a family member may when we are in adversity. To his hearers, the idea that Jesus Christ was by definition their Savior, before they did anything would have been a revelation.

In light of this reality McLeod Campbell argued on the pages of his book that neither Roman Catholicism with its papal and conciliar authority, or second, a naturalism

that put much stock in scientific knowledge is as robust a kind of knowledge as that which God has revealed through his Son.

Our Christian faith, in McLeod Campbell's view, has an obligation to discern the truth—which is nonetheless—self evidencing. As we seek, so will we find—by God's grace. In the same way, that we see with our eyes a light that is lit and shines in the dark, truth from God is obvious and self-revealing. McLeod Campbell asserts, "A true revelation of God must be its own witness." (Campbell 1862: 13, 26) So much so, that unbelief in the face of this truth, which is revealed by God, is sin. God in revealing himself in Christ calls us into a relationship with him, so rejecting that knowledge and that relationship is clearly revealed on the pages of Scripture as recalcitrance, idolatry, and sin (*in curvatus se*). McLeod Campbell would have approved of the following statement,

> God is believed not on the strength of anything else but of his own self-revelation, and as through his Word he commands our knowledge on the ground of his own self-evidencing spiritual reality .. The faith that arises in us through the Word is a kind of hearing in which we respond to the faithfulness of God himself…and in which we are so obediently and irreversibly committed to God, that faith becomes a habit of mind and a way of life, 'We walk by faith and not by sight." Because the divine reality with which we are in contact through faith transcends our experience In space and time the scope of faith is directed not only beyond what is visible to the invisible, but beyond what is temporal to the eternal: thus faith in God merges into hope… (T. F. Torrance 1980: 2)

Revelation as that which reveals God and God's ways to us, including God's purpose, nature, and character, has an authority granted it by its sheer connection with God himself. Such knowledge is a gift of the Holy Spirit. (Campbell 1862: 83) It is a

revealing to us of what is most pertinent. Revelation speaks to our created nature, created by God to be in fellowship and communion with him. As such, it is educative. However, as revelation, it is governed and tested by reason, and has a self-authenticating capacity. In searching for the truth, we do not need to bow to any external authority which contradicts what we know and have understood God to be revealing.

Important in this regard is McLeod Campbell's view of Scripture, which as read and meditated upon by an individual open to response and to being taught, sinks deep roots into our being, which are infinite living fibers touching our hearts and minds. (Campbell 1862: 10) In the Bible, McLeod Campbell believed that God had spoken to humanity and expected his people to recognize and know his voice, "God has revealed himself to us, and he expects that we shall recognize his glory, and say, 'This is our God.'" (Campbell 1862: 13) Indeed, if one looks carefully around, one cannot but be impressed that the constitution of things reveals God as God, and as light. Campbell subscribes to a general, natural revelation which issues in knowledge, but asserts that Scripture and its ability to illumine is far greater and stronger. Scripture is a fuller revelation—revealing the nature and character of God. Scripture also reveals what God wills that we should be. What we are after is not knowledge, simply for knowledge's sake. Our learning is that of a child, who seeks to become better acquainted with 'the Father of our spirits.' Knowledge for McLeod Campbell, then, is both personal and relational. As Michael Jinkins notes, what is on view here is a 'theology of encounter.' (Jinkins 1989: 261)

If God does not reveal himself in Scripture then revelation is a contradiction and faith impossible, but God *does* reveal himself in Scripture and our recognition of this is

an inspired recognition, which is self-authenticating and quickening. (Campbell 1862: 17) McLeod Campbell asks rhetorically, "'How did the prodigal son know that it was his father that met him, while yet he was afar off, and fell on his neck and kissed him?' God in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto men, needs no witness but this glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." (Campbell 1862: 17) God, who is the Father of our spirits seeks to draw us into a closer more intimate relationship with himself, and reveals himself to this end. (Campbell 1862: 29) As such, the kind of knowledge about which McLeod Campbell writes is not propositional (as in Reformed Scholasticism prior to him or to Carl F. H. Henry, perhaps the twentieth century's greatest American evangelical theologian, after him). McLeod Campbell writes,

> We are God's offspring. He has for us a Father's love; the yearnings of the divine Fatherliness ever go forth towards us. Therefore has God revealed Himself to us, not only in measure by all in creation and providence which witnesses for Him, but fully by that Gospel of His Grace in Christ, in the light of which we know the divine Fatherliness which seeks to possess us as children, and divine Sonship, in the fellowship of which we are to render to that Fatherliness the due and conscious response of filial love. (Campbell 1862: 30)

This redefines the people to whom we minister. They are not objects. They are not faceless bodies, which come into and out of our life. Here McLeod Campbell speaks the language of relationship. That this, if I may speak personally, for a moment, has huge implications today. We are no longer White, Black, Asian, Hispanic, Gay, Straight, Transgendered, Handicapped, Muslim, and Christian and so on. Jesus Christ has changed these designations by which we seek to judge, classify, and deal with others.

Both revelation and reconciliation for McLeod Campbell, in Christ, are relationally inspired. For McLeod Campbell, faith is knowledge. This is completely different from the definition of philosophy regarding knowledge, which is 'justified true belief.' (Dancy 1985)

This knowledge is revealed by the Father, through the Son, in the Spirit and seeks a response in return to such revealing as grace—the appropriate response being our participation in God's life and love. God as Father seeks children who will glorify and enjoy him. This is self-evidencing as much as a suitor's proposal is self-evident to the fiancé. McLeod Campbell, then asserts, "We, therefore, have gone quite astray, if, being in the full light of revelation, we are asking for a witness to that light, external to itself; instead of receiving the light with the obedience of faith. Such obedience to light is due, because it is light—simply on that ground." (McLeod Campbell 1862: 18) God has a purpose in revelation—that of teaching children to grow in the knowledge of who he is and what he is about, while maturing themselves just as babies grow into toddlers, who grow into adolescents, who grow into teens, who grow into young adults and so on. McLeod Campbell writes,

> The divine ideal is then seen as the divine purpose and gift in Christ, that which God is bestowing—not demanding; the good to be received—not to be self-produced as a claim for acceptance; the heavenly treasure with which the earthen vessel of our humanity is to be filled—not a treasure to spring out of its emptiness. Understanding that salvation is 'of grace, not of works,' we can hear a gospel in such words as these: 'Let the same mind be in you with was also in Christ Jesus.' (Campbell 1862: 67)

Ultimately, our littleness or incapacity (or for that matter, our sin) does not limit God's ability to reveal himself to us 'in Christ.' (Gunton 2008: 24) This revealing has a purpose—to indicate and commend God's purpose for our lives. Given our methodological use of Swinton and Mowatt and their priority regarding the relationship between revelation and other sources of knowledge, McLeod Campbell's thoughts on knowledge and the Christian life are important and fundamental. They are so because they go the heart of whom we are as people before God and about what we are to be. Our sources for knowledge, in an important way define; indeed do so in a fundamental way, who we see ourselves to be. (Dalferth 2001: 207) They are grist for the mill as we continue to push forward. That God should be the most important source McLeod Campbell would see as obvious. I close this chapter with a beautiful quote from John Webster, one of today's top Reformed thinkers, who writes helpfully for Pastoral Theology,

> "'Revelation' is therefore much more than the subject matter of theology: it is the condition in which it takes place, or – better – the one before whose presence it is ordered to appear. That presence is antecedent. It is not an object of choice, still less is it a reality that we command to appear before us, for it elects us to be the subjects of the knowledge of itself. It is mobile, turning to us in mercy and in so doing both judging and reconciling reason to itself." (Webster 2005: 4)

This has been a great deal of information. We have covered quite a few subjects, raised serious questions, and in so doing sought to realign Practical Theology more closely with the reality of grace as the Triune God of love ministers in and through people to people. In so doing we have tried to reorient the resources of Tradition as one aspect of the

Whitehead's model for ministry. There has been much to consider here. Ministry and Practical Theology are serious endeavors. We have spoken about the relationship between theology and praxis. We have explicated, touched upon, and wrestled with Don Browning's monumental and paradigmatic work. We have talked about the Father-Son relationship in the discussion of the *homoousios-to-patri*. We have discussed our epistemological presuppositions and countered the considered norms of knowledge by highlighting critical realism. We have delved into John McLeod Campbell's work and in exegeting it and in interpreting it, sought to bring it to bear on methodological issues of import. In the next chapters, we will look into three presenting problems – the difficulties of a lack of assurance of God's love, anxiety, and shame. Following the Whiteheads' approach, we discuss them both from a theological perspective and also a social science/ cultural perspective.

CHAPTER THREE

The Persons to Whom we Pastor and Emotions of Self-Assessment Lacking the Assurance of God's Love

3.1 Orienting Pastoral Theology and the Challenge of a 'Lack of Assurance"

The author of the thesis begins this chapter with a confession. In the course of the author's research for almost a decade, following extensive reading, he has determined that there are difficulties with representative books of the disciplines of either dogmatic or systematic theology or practical theology or pastoral theology. In reading theology, what has been discovered is that there is a lack of connection between dogma, doctrine, and life. As a working pastor that has to mount the stairs of the church's pulpit weekly, the author finds that much of his work consists in the necessary work of "translation." That is, much time is spent trying to put theological terms and concepts into language readily accessible to parishioners. One example: the *communicatio idiomatum* is fundamental for Christology, but completely unknown to people in the pew. Is it important for the person in the pew? Can't it just be by-passed? What does Christology have to do with pastoral care anyway? The phrase does not occur in Scripture, so why bother? Why might the *communicatio idiomatum* be important? Thus, important theology seems too ethereal in nature, too removed from daily living, limiting access in this way to ordinary churchgoers to fundamental theological concepts. Karl Barth may have preached with the newspaper in one hand and the Bible in the other, but in the author's experience, there seems to be a space between the gains of theology and the

place where it may rightfully speak to people. Theology, then, is not terribly therapeutic in nature.

On the other hand, in the majority of the works of Practical Theology or Pastoral Theology, which I have accessed and consulted, the connection between it and theology proper is quite tenuous. If it is the case that often (Systematic or Dogmatic) Theology is not practical or pastoral enough, after in-depth research the author is of the view that Practical Theology or Pastoral Theology is not *theological* enough. Much Practical or Pastoral Theology seems psychologically oriented in nature, sociologically derived, or politically imitative—it is woefully strained, stretched, and just plain thin in theological content. Much of it is not theological, the author would argue, except only maybe loosely and then really only in name. One question that continued to arise in my reading is, "How can this be called theological?" There seems to be a real separation and chasm here between the two disciplines.

As a working pastor, the author unfortunately is not comfortable with the help or range of either discipline. The author thus finds himself occupying, to use an image from World War I, a seemingly no-man's land between the two disciplines—neither belonging to the Allies nor belonging with the Axis powers. John McLeod Campbell's ministry began in a similar way—with the experiences of his parishioners crashing into the Reformed theology with which he had been educated in school. He was soon to find out that he belonged in neither camp. With this caveat in mind, our discussion begins with an issue that occupies a prevailing position in many parishioners' minds.

We begin with life and experience raising serious questions. If revelation is true, how may it speak to such an experience as follows? What theological upon reflection,

might be gained from this interaction? What would 'pastoral' look like here? Broadus was a thin, smallish wiry middle-aged man who worked at Ohio Brass, a plastic molding manufacturing plant, in Aiken, South Carolina USA in the spring of 1988. He was quiet, thoughtful, but friendly—if distant. He was a Vietnam War Vet who, because of his size (5'6" 130-140 lbs.), had been utilized as what was then colloquially called, 'a tunnel-rat.' The North Vietnamese, according to him, used to hide in small tunnels bored and dug into the sides of hills from where they would emerge to engage the South Vietnamese soldiers and the American soldiers, mostly moving at night. Broadus was the right size for squeezing into the tunnels with a .45 caliber (M1911) pistol, a knife, and a flashlight. He would make his way slowly into the underground tunnels shining his flashlight ahead into the darkness searching for hiding North Vietnamese. Finding them, he was to kill them. This required nerves of steel. What he faced was simply a black hole as he entered the small, deep tunnels. As he moved forward searching with his flashlight, he never knew when a shot might ring out from inside.

Following the war, Broadus struggled with what is now labeled PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder) although he called it 'battle fatigue' and 'shell-shock.' One night at 3am in the morning, while we were working on third shift (midnight to 8am in the morning) he went out the back of the manufacturing plant to get some fresh air. He did not return. Minutes passed. Our mutual friend Jerry asked me to go check on him. Outside it was dark and foggy. There was a distant fence, behind which were bushes, trees and shrubs. I have to admit it was spooky. When I got outside next to Broadus, he turned to me with a faraway look in his eyes. I said to him, "Broadus—are you ok?" With an eerie far off sound in his voice, he whispered, "Charlie is out there—I can feel

it…" Broadus was clearly agitated and on edge. Charlie was the slang nickname (it stemmed from the letters V. C. for Viet Cong [N.A.T.O. phonetic alphabet—Victor Charlie]) the American soldiers had for the North Vietnamese. I had heard from Jerry that Broadus had suffered occasionally from 'flashbacks.' A flashback, apparently, is triggered involuntarily by some of the same stimuli present in a previous traumatic experience. So, I told Broadus to wait there and "protect" the plant and I quickly went and got Jerry and promptly told him Broadus was not here in Aiken, SC, but rather somewhere in South East Asia. Jerry blanched and walked with me quickly to where Broadus was protecting the plant from Charlie. After some time of talking, convincing, cajoling and encouraging somehow Jerry and I got Broadus into the well-lighted plant. I stood with him at the back of our workstation while Jerry went to phone Broadus' wife using the plant phone at the front of the building (this was long before cell phones). We could not get him to stand down, because he was in survival mode. We worked at the back of the plant and the front two-thirds of the plant were dark—unused at night. We arranged for his wife to come, get him, and then take him home, so he could take his medicine and rest. Getting him through our section of the plant through the machines was not too difficult, it, of course, was brightly lit, but he absolutely refused to enter the dark front of the plant to get to where his wife was waiting to pick him up. He said loudly and angrily, "I'm not going back into that hole, you can't make me!!" "I'm not going to do it anymore. My days are done." We assured him we did not want him to do what he did not want. We calmed him down and Jerry went to get his wife to drive around to the back. We then waited for her outside at the back of the plant. When she arrived, we loaded him into the car and they drove off. Jerry and I breathed a huge sigh

of relief. Broadus did not show up to work for a few days, taking a medical leave of absence.

When he did return, he was terribly embarrassed about what I had seen. My colleagues knew that I was working to save up money to go to seminary and that I had exempted 'baby Greek,' the summer course all incoming juniors (first year students) must take, because I had taken three semesters of Classical Greek in University. When Broadus finally came over to speak to me, we were now on first shift, he was not quite sure what to say. He hummed and hawed. He started to speak, then went quiet. Finally, he said something. I assured him that he had nothing to be embarrassed about, it was because of his service that we could live in an amazing country, not perfect, but remarkable nonetheless. As we talked, he became more comfortable and loosened up. Finally, he broached the question which had plagued him for years, decades really—since he had returned from Vietnam. He knew I was headed for seminary and would be in his words "a preacher." He spoke of children bearing bombs and coming into the platoons of soldiers—and of the bombs exploding. He spoke of children with guns charging the soldiers, firing at them. He spoke of other children, hungry, apparently orphaned— were these like the others with bombs? The children he had seen in Vietnam were still present to him. What would you do in that situation he asked me? There were times when it was kill, or be killed, even if the enemy right in front were not adults, but children. Everyone in Vietnam, Broadus told me, seemingly was the enemy. He could not comprehend having to kill children—in order to survive himself—or get them off his mind; it haunted him terribly.

He thought that God had seen it all, every death at his hands, all the hurt for which he had been responsible, and could never, ever, forgive him his actions. I would learn later that Broadus struggled with what theologians called 'the lack of assurance of God's love.' Broadus had not been back to church since his return from Vietnam, because he could not forgive himself, nor could he imagine that God would want to have anything to do with him following his actions overseas. This experience, likewise, raises for the author serious questions about a whole host of issues. It has been almost thirty years and I am still troubled and pushed as a pastor with this issue. God *is* love, so the writer of 1 John testifies. If this is true, then why do so many people—both within the church and outside feel unloved? Can anything be done to overcome this?

Broadus' feelings of guilt, shame and most particularly *a lack of assurance* challenges Christians, and in particular, pastors. How are we to respond? If someone doubts God's attitude towards him or her, how are we to answer? The God question in pastoral theology cannot and should not be avoided. Who is God? How does God think of me? Does God think of me? Is God interested in the minutiae of my life? Does God love me? How can I be sure if God loves me? This seems, here, the issue of God's regard of us, to be the primary issue although there are others. Broadus also raises the issue of our response, as caregivers, the reality of a response, and importantly—a sensitive and appropriate theologically oriented pastoral care. How do we discern the issues? How do we address the issues here? In what ways can we be of assistance? What is there to say about God?

Paul Ballard and John Pritchard suggest analysis as one of the aspects of Practical Theology. (2000: 66) In analyzing the complaint of a parishioner, deep questions must

be answered. Attitudes must be understood. One of the first questions, which need to be asked, is that of his or her background. What was it like growing up in his or her particular family with regard to faith and Church? Was there a strictness? Was grace understood and lived in? What were the parents like? This is an opportunity to take the individual's temperature. Paul Pruyser suggests seeking some kind of information about whether the individual has any knowledge of or experience with "the holy." (1976: 62) Is there a sense of awe or reverence about anything? Schleiermacher would look for a "feeling of dependence" which arises within us towards something greater than one's self. Rudolf Otto might inquire as to whether there was a sense of the *mysterium tremendum et fascinans.* This may be a positive feeling or it may be a negative. This question is tied in with the second issue that must be discerned, "What is the Divine intention towards one's self?" What is important is the types and kinds of experience the individual has had and how they feel God is or is not involved. How do they view God? What is their understanding of God? Is there some sense of trust? Fear? Rebellion? Anger? Sadness? Pruyser notes that this issue is related, integrally, with the capacity for trust in general. (1976: 65) The author once had a church member whose parent's had been all law and very little grace. Grace was, then, just a word used in church. It had not been experienced. The third aspect of the discussion, so Pruyser notes, is about faith. This may be encapsulated in one's attitude towards life as a whole. (1976: 68) Is there a positive attitude towards life? Or, conversely, negative. One view of God necessarily affects one's attitude towards one's self and one's place in the world. The next aspect of discussion might center on grace or gratefulness. Does this individual feel himself or herself to be the recipient of grace, of God's benevolence? Many parishioners do not

except on rare occasions. God in this view is nothing more than a fickle deity. In the author's experience, many are sensitive to feeling about whether God is indeed kindly disposed towards one. Can God love even me? For some the idea that God might bless, could bless, will bless them and is favorably disposed towards them is a revolution. Many parishioners are concerned about their religious experience or lack of experience. If I have not had a remarkable experience like the Apostle Paul on the road to Damascus does this mean that there is something wrong with me? Am I in or out?

It is here where John McLeod Campbell offers assistance towards answering these questions. He dealt with parishioners who also struggled with God's disposition towards them. Many were not sure whether the God they worshipped was a loving Father or an angry judge waiting to punish. As we shall see in this chapter, in McLeod Campbell's case, the particular issue for his parishioners involved not only questions about God's nature and character, but also specifically the unique emphasis of Presbyterians regarding the doctrine of predestination.

3.2 The Importance of Εὐσέβεια and Μετάνοια in Practical and Pastoral Theology

We have laid, in the previous chapter, the epistemological groundwork for a Pastoral Theology that is both Trinitarian and Incarnational. The foundational truth is that God comes to us in Jesus Christ. We have also noted the redemptive change in reality, in creation and in humanity, because of the person and work of Jesus Christ. This great work of God's changes and alters reality. The emphasis of this kind of Trinitarian pastoral theology, first, is upon the sheer reality of the Trinity, and, second, how this

triune reality influences us as we are lifted up by the Spirit to participate in this divine life. Under-appreciated German Reformed theologian Otto Weber reminds us that,

> God himself opens us toward himself. He who became man for our benefit, who for our benefit descended into the abyss of death, gives himself to be ours and makes us his own. If it is true that God's work in Jesus Christ has happened and is happening, then it is also true that in the Spirit, Jesus Christ makes himself present to us and makes us those who follow him. Calvin was certainly right when he commented in reference to 1 Corinthians 6:11, where our washing, sanctification, and justification take place 'in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God,' that 'the Holy Spirit is the bond by which Christ effectually unites us to himself.' The presence of God in Christ is the presence of the Spirit. Real presence is spiritual presence. . . In the reality of the Spirit, the living and present Lord is 'here.' (Weber 1983: 239)

What Weber is trying to communicate to us, in bringing again to our attention the person and work of Jesus Christ, is that God wills that we not be left to ourselves. In the Spirit, God allows us to become fertile and fecund ground from which his work both objectively and, practically, subjectively, from within us might accomplish much. Weber touches upon our "mystical union with Christ" in which we are connected irrevocably through the Spirit's work with Jesus Christ. We are united to Christ. We have fellowship with him. There is an intimate relationship. The Lord is near to, as such, the broken hearted. AS we will discover McLeod Campbell would have heartily agreed with Weber.

Practical Theology occurs as we interpret that which is under study by its own rationality and categories. John McLeod Campbell suggested as much in his treatise <u>On the Nature of the Atonement</u> when he argued that the atonement must be interpreted in its own light. We are not to read categories, information, and ideas into it. We do not bring our own preconceived notions to something when we seek to discover truth. Instead, we

are to interpret it as it desires to be interpreted. McLeod Campbell, here, argued that the nature of that which is under study determines the method of knowing as we investigate it. He wanted to escape any prejudiced notions, which might cloud the issue. So, in coming to an individual with questions, we must be careful not to impose our own standards, ideals, or theology upon them. Instead, we are to question that object under our observation with inquiries that arise from our investigation of the subject itself. To reflect upon the issues of a lack of assurance, anxiety, and shame is to begin with them. It is to start, on the one hand, with the experiences and emotions of the individual struggling with these sentiments of self-criticism. Then from this issue or issues, critically dialoging and engaging with our theology regarding the God who has come to us *as man* in Jesus Christ and now calls to our attention the truth through the Holy Spirit. It is here where the gospel is all or nothing. Scottish theologian T. F. Torrance argues along similar lines in his book Theology in Reconstruction. He writes,

> In every positive science it is the subject matter that determines form, content that affects method—and so it is in theology. It is the object of our theological statements that determine the logic of their reference, in accordance with its nature and activity. That object is the Truth of God struggling with us in judgment and mercy, in atoning and reconciling activity. To be truthful theological statements must correspond in form and content to that divine Object, and they must be enunciated in a material mode appropriate to that correspondence. This is the utterly distinct nature of theological statements… (1996: 61)

In this statement, Torrance is not the only voice crying in the wilderness. Otto Weber argues along the same lines. He notes that "it will then be said that theology, (or in our case Practical or Pastoral Theology) deals with a generally accessible object or theme or

with a general valid criteria, and therefore, even if it might make use of generally available methods, it cannot arrive at generally valid and binding results." (1981: 44) Discernment of that which is genuine keeps to within its own self-evidence, as that which is given to us. Theological knowledge proceeds from the given and does so in an *a posteriori* fashion. What McLeod Campbell, T. F. Torrance, and Otto Weber are all driving at is that there is an inner **logic** to theology, (or in our case to Practical Theology or Pastoral Theology). There is an inner logic to that particular truth – knowledge of God and knowledge of self – each of which must be penetrated and thought through in the light of its own unique rationality and in dialogue with the other. Both of which are hard, objective realities given to our understanding through study, thought, personal experience, piety, prayer and worship, but which must be constantly revised in and through our relationships with real people.

Another necessary emphasis is upon our recognition and apprehension through *metanoia*, **repentant thinking**, of this Trinitarian reality. It is not just the pastor whose mind needs reconciled, but also those of our parishioners. It is here that Colossians 1:21-22 is important: "And you who were once estranged and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled in his fleshly body through death, so as to present you holy and blameless and irreproachable before him—." Christ's work is not just physical. It is not just applicable to our bodies or souls. Christ's reconciliation of us with God also occurs at the mental level. Just as important is the reality of the Incarnation—that of the existence, in time and space, of Jesus Christ, both God and human here on this earth. This is the "fleshly body" the author of Colossians references. This one unique event transforms reality, not only our reality—but also the creation in which we find ourselves.

Repentant thinking realizes that something profound has occurred and we are, by grace, a part of that transformation. Our apprehension and understanding epistemologically of what God has done objectively in the birth, ministry, teaching, healing, life, suffering, crucifixion, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is crucial. This important and unique, total event, unrepeatable, and contingent, is often not understood fully. But it needs to be.

Equally important is how the various persons of the Triune God of love and grace are active in our lives. Clarity regarding this fundamental reality of their purpose and presence in our life is crucial. They are active. It is, however, not all up to us, for it is the ministry of the Spirit to lead us into the truth. This can be illustrated by the phrase in Second Corinthians where the following statement appears, "We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ." (2 Cor. 10:5 NIV) A pastoral theology that is comprehensive and complete must consider, carefully, this statement. Our thinking must be obedient to Jesus Christ and to none other.

As we have indicated, objective reality exists as it is in Jesus Christ, but in addition to this objective event, our subjective intellectual and emotional grasping of this truth, of him who is the way, the truth, and the life, is not only important, but also **critical**. One without the other is incomplete. The early Church fathers called this apprehension εὐσέβεια, picking up as they did its use in the New Testament by the writers of the Catholic letters. Εὐσέβεια may be translated as 'godliness,' or 'piety.' (Liddell-Scott 1996: 731-732) Through the alignment and consilience of our minds with truth in a variety of ways and perspectives, a conversion, both intellectual and spiritual

occurs. Our minds become increasingly attuned to verity and reality. This 'godliness' or 'piety' is a particular perspective whose gaze is fixed on none other than God in Christ.

Bringing piety to the issue of Pastoral Theology aids immensely. First must be the issue of the pastor's "piety." Second and part of the issue here is the individual's "piety." Or, even the Church's piety as a whole. Calvin noted that piety is “that reverence joined with love of God which the knowledge of his benefits induces.” (1559/ Battles 1960: 1.2.1) The appropriate knowledge of what God in Christ has done and is doing for individuals is the beginning of this repentant approach. To understand this, truly, is revolutionary. Approaching a person with a different perspective on life assists in ministry to them. This different perspective may also invite questions often considered outside normal theological issues involving the classical issues of dogma. Then again, it may not. Language must be flexible. As I understand it, Pastoral Theology and Practical Theology, involves this, but also necessarily involves issues outside the normal theological loci. Questions may arise from an individual's experience. The author's daughter came to him some time ago with deep questions. A friend's family had perished in a house fire. She and her brother alone were saved. This experience begs a whole host of questions.

William Arnold in his book Introduction to Pastoral Care observes that good pastoral care is grounded in good theology. (Arnold 1982, preface) This is an important statement. John McLeod Campbell would have agreed. He was at great pains to clarify his theology in the light of his pastoral care of parishioners. However, A. Campbell seeks to stretch the bounds and parameters of theology in his book. He also seeks to raise the question of what is ‘good’ theology. Though he does this by focusing on anger in

particular, his orientation assists us as we reflect on the pastoral theological issues of a triad of emotions, all related, notably ‘lack of assurance,’ ‘anxiety,’ and ‘shame.’ In so doing, he suggests a leitmotif of this study.

In this study, Nineteenth century Scottish pastor theologian John McLeod Campbell is used as a resource while addressing the three similar and related existential difficulties of a lack of assurance, anxiety, and shame. As we utilize and mine McLeod Campbell’s work, we must remember that the context of Practical Theology and Pastoral Theology occurs first within the realm of knowing God truly and upon knowing God truly of also seeking to 'live to God.' This may only arise in and through the environment of worship and prayer. Worship and prayer occurs through our being lifted up by the power of the Spirit of God, mediated as it is in and by the Incarnate and Ascended Son of God, Jesus Christ. T. F. Torrance notes that,

> Knowledge of God takes place not only within the rational structures, but also within the personal and social structures of human life, where the Spirit is at work as **personalizing Spirit.** As the living presence of God who confronts us with His personal Being, addresses us in His Word, opens us out toward Himself, and calls forth from us the response of faith and love, He rehabilitates the **human subject**, sustaining him in his personal relations with God and with his fellow creatures. (T.F. Torrance 2000: 188)

Let us not miss what Torrance is saying here. We know God not only through the Bible, through preaching and worship, but also through our relationships and fellowship with others. As Harry Stack Sullivan interacted with his patients in the schizophrenic ward there was more than just his ministry to them. Torrance notes that the Holy Spirit, as

personalizing person, as transforming agent was also involved. God call us from one kind of life to another, richer, deeper life. This greater, deeper living is a 'rehabilitated life.'

As we interact with one another all through our lives, do we do so through the lens of simple cause and effect? Do we limit what we understand to be the case simply through what we can see? Or is there a deeper reality involved? Are people only impacted by those with whom they come into contact or is there a divine dimension to their experience of which they might not be aware? As a minister, I cannot just take things at face value.

As Arnold notes, "Our theological assumptions about human nature affect the manner in which we relate to and care for other people in multiple ways, many of them beyond our awareness and understanding." (Arnold 1982, 16) Our frame of mind in attending to people, the frame of reference, which we bring to them, is of huge importance. How we understand those to whom we minister will make a world of difference. How we understand them in the light of God is of fundamental value. This was the perspective from which McLeod Campbell ministered to his parishioners. Standing in that perspective and attempting to see what he saw might be of inestimable value. McLeod Campbell offers us not only the theological acumen to attend to people, but he also offers the strategy to do so. He and his work bear careful reading.

3.3 Can Anger have a Gospel?

Scottish theologian Alastair Campbell, now of the University of Singapore, has written a very suggestive book on pastoral theology titled The Gospel of Anger. This is an interesting title. Is this issue not a bit of a conundrum? The word 'gospel' is usually understood to mean 'good news.' Anger, as an emotion of self-assessment, is often perceived to be aggressive, violent, and socially inappropriate. In this treatise, however, Campbell deals with this non-traditional theological topic 'pastorally.' Anger appears nowhere in theological textbooks. So, what does this mean? Instead of explicating traditional dogmatic theological loci, like justification or sanctification, Christology or creation—Campbell focuses on a passionate and violent emotion that is often troubling for human beings. It is often a pastoral or practical issue. In raising the issue, he does so not just to judge or provoke, to study and examine, but also to comfort. His reflection upon this topic offers us a pathway into considering other non-traditional pastoral theological issues. This is a non-traditional topic, but important nonetheless. It is important, because it is suggestive for our three issues. What we are seeking after here, in this chapter, is The Gospel of a Lack of Assurance.

Insofar as anger is a human emotion, it is common to all of us; insofar as anger seems to be sinful for Christians, it presents an interesting topic of study. What are we to make of anger? What about God's wrath, seen in the Bible, are we to comprehend? What are we to do about Jesus' admonition that angrily blurting out '*raca*' to another is sinful? Could, with these questions in mind, Alastair Campbell wonders, anger be treated pastorally *and* theologically? All of us have been angry at one time or another. As

Christians, however, we have the ideal, based in Scripture, of eschewing the emotion. So how can the expression of anger have any gospel in it?

In examining this subject, Alastair Campbell arrives at the idea, that, at least for human beings, anger is one of a possible plethora of human reactions to outside influences. It is, as such, a responsive emotion to particular stimuli. There is cause an effect, after a fashion. It may also arise from our *interpretation* of those outside influences. Even though the stimuli might be positive in nature—our response, based on our interpretation, might be angry. Our reaction, in addition, may not be immediate (like a knee jerk to a blow), but delayed. We may feel angry in response to destructive feelings or actions. Anger, however, might not always be interpreted negatively. It might even be beneficial, depending on the situation—as Jesus' righteous anger was in cleansing the Temple. For Christians stifling anger may not be, on the one hand, beneficial, while giving free reign to anger, on the other, may end up being destructive.

Examining God's anger, Alastair Campbell delves deeply into the ambiguity that exists in Scripture regarding God's wrath. The Old Testament in particular possesses many passages where God's anger is real, but in being real, is problematic. In particular, when God's wrath flies in the face of our understanding of God's character of 'steadfast love' how should we reconcile this seeming contradiction? What are we to do with those passages in which God is angry? How does this add or detract from our doctrine of God? In dealing with both aspects of anger, divine and human, A. Campbell offers hints and suggestions for the pastoral theologian, finally positing in his book that ambiguity is finally unavoidable in dealing with a topic such as this in which there are no easy answers to be discovered. Struggling, Campbell suggests, with ourselves over an appropriate

response, angry or not, to a certain situation—as well as our struggle in our relationship with God may perhaps lead, as it did for the Patriarch Jacob, to blessing. He writes,

> …our struggles to manage our own anger and to bring something creative out of it are not really at all far removed from our struggles to find and follow a tolerable God, who will really be with us in our darkest moments and whose path is truly a path of peace and not a highway to self-hatred and contempt of others. (A. Campbell 1986: 93)

Our acceptance of those times when we find ourselves getting angry can be creative in our growth as human beings. In addition, owning ourselves is powerful even when angry. Seeking for and searching for a God who assists is crucial. Then, following a God whom we do not completely understand, no matter how hard we try, and who for all our attempts at knowing—remains inscrutable, can similarly—at least for A. Campbell be growth inducing. Regardless, moving forward as human beings requires intense effort and dedication. Discipleship is never easy; at least discipleship that aims to be authentic.

As a human emotion, anger may arise and in so doing be categorized as sinful. Anger may also be necessary and in so being, might not be perceived as sinful. Our anger at the injustice that hurts another may lead to creative ways of overcoming this injustice. Anger may be turned inward or it may be turned outward. We are all too familiar with anger as destructive. For A. Campbell anger may also be positive. Anger, so A. Campbell posits, as the inspiration for something creative is an altogether new concept. This is where A. Campbell suggests that anger may be 'gospel.'

Interestingly, for Alastair Campbell, those involved in the cure of souls, or "pastoral mediation" as he terms it—may need to arrive at the state of giving ourselves permission to move into this uncharted territory and in so doing allow ourselves to be

angry (in an appropriate measure). Oftentimes pastors, or pastoral care givers, may stifle their anger in an unhealthy way. Bottling anger may do more damage than simply acknowledging and owning anger. He suggests, in so doing, particularly in the face of death, that we experience a sort of resurrection. Instead of being robotic and enervated in our dealing with others and in coming to terms with pastoral issues, anger can provide a way for us to be truly human. This is an interesting concept, that of anger as being endemic to our humanity, rather than being a momentary lapse in our humanity. Indeed, "the greatest hope a pastoral helper can bring is the confidence that it is safe to feel again." (1986: 100)

There is no easy pastoral response to anger for Alastair Campbell. Responding appropriately, obviously, is determined by the situation and context in which one finds oneself. Entering into the reality of our anger, or for that matter, God's anger is to risk—and risk greatly. It may be that this risk will also lead to liberation for us and for others. Ministry in response to anger requires reflection and the willingness to be honest about our own feelings. Processing this emotion while feeling it may allow one to minister more accurately.

Almost as important in discussing the emotion of anger, for Alastair Campbell, is the pastor's response to it. Campbell uses the term "mediation" in describing the pastor's work. One aspect of pastoral mediation is our inculcating within the lives of those both suffering with anger and from anger a living hope and faith. This emotion is perhaps the most crucial pastoral issue most clergy will face. (Campbell 1986: 14) For Campbell pastoral mediation may simply mean journeying with someone through their difficulty either because of anger or in response to anger, so that they might feel again. (Campbell

1986: 100) Ministry may also involve more listening than speaking, and in so doing helping the angry to vent their emotions.

In his book on anger, Alastair Campbell offers us a paradigm for reflecting on particular emotions in the light of the gospel. He suggests for us a way to approach the subject of experience pastorally. In so doing, he raises important theological and pastoral questions of an issue or issues outside of the norm of the regular doctrinal categories. He also provides the means for a tentative answer. In this book on anger, he suggests a way to approach the feeling of a lack of confidence or assurance in God's love. If anger can have a gospel—what about the three intricately related emotions of self-assessment—lack of assurance, anxiety, and shame? Is there a gospel for them?

3.4 Emotions of Self-Assessment

Anger, as has been presented, is a powerful emotion. There are other emotions, emotions of self-assessment, as philosopher Gabrielle Taylor puts it. These emotions register how we regard ourselves. In her book Pride, Shame and Guilt: Emotions of Self-Assessment she focuses on these three emotions (pride, shame and guilt) noting that,

> In experiencing any one of these emotions the person concerned believes of herself that she has deviated from some norm and that in doing so she has altered her standing in the world. The self is the 'object' of these emotions and what is believed amounts to an assessment of that self. (Taylor 1987: 1)

She further indicates that emotions such as these are identificatory and explanatory, meaning that our belief about what we are feeling interprets the emotion in a particular

way and then identifies it. So, for example, if we have been taught that anger is a sin—then feeling anger will be considered a negative. They are explanatory in that the person holds reasons for this particular emotion in question. (Taylor 1987: 3-4) We will follow Taylor's classificatory scheme in this study.

Likewise, the three emotive states we will discuss are emotions of self-assessment. The first one is **lacking the assurance** of God's love. Lack of assurance, as we shall see, is ultimately a feeling of unlovedness, and hence, of diminishment, and in the older theological language of salvation or reprobation, *reprobation*. Those who feel a lack of assurance "see" themselves as castaways from God's kingdom. They experience this feeling as an unworthiness of God's attention and care.

Anxiety, as we shall discover, is a vague, diffuse unpalpable sense that disaster is just around the corner, thus it is characterized by irritability and apprehension, perhaps panic and avoidance. This is the cold feeling that washes over someone depending on the circumstance. This is the feeling of pins and prickles on the back of your neck for what seems to be no identifiable reason. Those who suffer from anxiety believe they have nothing of redeemable value to offer the world. This emotion is a worry of being weighed, balanced, and found wanting. In sum, the anxious person tells himself or herself "I am not." Perhaps that diffuse spectral presence of disaster wafting constantly, which is just right around the corner, is the fear that the truth of their existence as they tell themselves that "I am not" will be finally revealed to them and to others.

Those suffering from **shame** simply want to hide, to disappear, and to avoid anything or anyone who might confirm their sense of worthlessness. It is a feeling of not mattering to others at all. It is a comparing of one's self to others and being found

wanting in the balance. It is about the feeling of non-existence in the face of the universe. Shame is a deep crevice which runs through the soul and which threatens to quake even further apart, until there is only the feeling and acceptance of shatteredness.

Ultimately, all three of these emotions of self-assessment betray a feeling about the lack of love, that is, the belief that we are not worthy of being loved and cherished by another, much less God. It is here where the pastor needs to step in to clarify those sentiments, those personal self-assessments, and to remind the person struggling that they are in fact loved, both by God and by other human beings. Rapport here is important. Timing is fundamental. There must be receptivity. This occurs at critical times. For them to see differently, requires change. What is change? How does it come about? Can it be triggered? To this end, of deeper sensitivity, we investigate theologians that have written on this topic.

3.5 Jacob Firet and the "*Agogic Movement*" towards Wholeness, Humanness

In thinking about "pastoral mediation," we have as a sure guide Dutch practical theologian Jacob Firet. He, however, uses the term "pastoral role-fulfillment." Pastoral role-fulfilment may be defined as "the official activity on one who is called to be pastor in face-to-face contact with another, or others, for whom he or she is called to be pastor." (1986: 14) Our work, any work, as far as Firet is concerned, however, begins with God's action. (1986: 15) In his book Dynamics in Pastoring (1986) he suggests that pastoral mediation occurs in three different forms.

(1.) **Preaching,** (κῆρυγμα) is the proclamation of the gospel. Jesus himself said, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news." (Mark 1:15 NRSV) God in Christ by the power of the Spirit has come; the Kingdom of God stands opposed to the presumption, and powers of this world, and it offers healing and hope to all who desire.

(2.) **Teaching**, this is *didache* (διδαχή) or catechesis. God in Christ has come in the power of the Spirit. What does it mean to say with the Apostle Paul, "It is not I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me…" (Gal. 2:20)

(3.) **Pastoral Care**, which is the mode of *paraklesis* (παράκλησις counseling, exhorting, comforting, consoling). God in Christ has come in the power of the Spirit; he wants to tabernacle with me, to live in my house and experience my situation. The Spirit will lead me into the truth as it consoles me, comforts me, helps me, and comes alongside of me as the Ραράκλητος reminding me of all that Christ is and has said. As the Spirit ministers I will enter and experience the blessings of the Kingdom.

Firet makes a distinction between the interpretive moment—as a moment of discernment and understanding—and the "agogic" moment as a moment of change, decision, movement, and growth. When God's truth comes, a new insight or understanding occurs. This is a change in paradigms, the transforming moment (as James Loder terms it), the "aha" or "eureka" experience which issues in decision, change, growth. (Anderson 2004: 26) The pastor assists individuals in interpreting God's action and speech in their life through hermeneutics.

This first step is discernment. The goal of this "pastoral mediation" is "change," or as Firet puts it: *agogi*. Agogi may be understood as assistance in achieving objectivity (unhindered receptivity), that is stepping outside of one's preconceived notions through discernment, so as to understand the matter under examination—this occurs as help in learning to hear, truly, and to answer creatively. (1986: 211-230)

Unfortunately, many parishioners agree in principle with what is discussed, taught, or communicated, yet nothing changes for them. No pattern of behavior changes despite the wisdom or truth of that which they have heard. Firet testifies to the importance God's message intends in effecting change, growth, discipleship and maturation. It is not just about new information. It is more than simply a new concept. This is why the pastor must go beyond the hermeneutic moment and attempt to create the conditions for the agogic moment to occur.

The fundamental activity that leads to change is **nurture**. Firet writes, "We would describe this specifically agogic element as the change in mental functioning of persons (x) in virtue of the active involvement (f) in a relationship which is directed toward producing this change (y)." (1986: 195) Ray Anderson adds, "This 'agogic moment,' or what I prefer to call a 'growth process' is a human and personal encounter, whether ordinary or extraordinary, **that releases a motive power that generates change** (emphasis mine)." (Anderson 2001: 198) Another word may be substituted for "change," and this is "renewal." Conversion, *metanoia*, is the key to understanding change. The phrase we used earlier was "repentant thinking." Through it "a person comes alive, becomes aware of one's self; one's dream, the real truth about oneself, becomes actuality." (1986: 48) Firet writes, "…it is upon this continuing movement, this

new mode of Kingdom existence, this conversion, that pastoral role-fulfillment is focused." (1986: 203) With regard to the three issues on which we are reflecting, the author whole-heartedly agrees. The issue is transformation. It is change.

There are three aspects of this movement of transformation, change, renewal, growth, or *metanoia*. First, there is a motive power that enters the situation in the form of a word or symbolic action—this is understood theologically as the Word and Spirit of God. Second, another person acts as an intermediary, as a pastoral mediator, for the release of this motive power. Finally, an effect is produced, a conversion resulting in change and growth. (Anderson 2001: 198) As the pastor engages in role-fulfillment, mediation, or as I would put it, *our participation in Christ's on-going ministry*—one does so with "objectivity, love, genuineness, and simplicity as important characteristics leading to becoming truly human. (1986: 235)

Ministry is about change. It is about growth, movement from one place to another, indeed it is about enlightenment. Firet aptly sums up one important aspect of Practical Theology, which is the necessity of the transformation of the individual. This is the point of the gospel. Both their thought and their action must be altered. The locus for this change within the Church might require great spontaneity, openness to new experiences, and experimentation. Change, however, as the Liberation Theologians have reminded us is not just existential or perceptive, but also structural, systemic.

Paolo Freire, of Brazil, calls his process of change "humanization." (1993: 25) The goal of his noteworthy educational pedagogy is **"conscientização."** Oppressive reality absorbs the humans ensconced within and acts to suppress the consciousness of humans. (1993: 33) This 'critical consciousness' (conscientização in Brazilian

Portuguese) is in Freire's understanding, "the deepening of the attitude of awareness characteristic of all emergence." (1993: 90) It is from an unjust political, social, and economic order, which provokes dehumanization that Freire seeks conversion through conscientização—in this way, he wants to avert violence by the oppressors *and* the oppressed. His great liberative strategy is freedom for both groups—not just the oppressed, but also their oppressors (who themselves are oppressed). This comes about by changing the structure of their thought. He writes, "The very structure of their thought (the oppressors and the oppressed) has been conditioned by the contradictions of the concrete, existential situation by which they were shaped." (1993: 27) Both groups are caught in a vice from which they cannot escape without assistance. The oppressors have a particular image in mind of what it means to be top dog, leaders, and oppressors. This mental image of course is faulty. The oppressed have another image in their mind, which leads them to fear freedom and autonomy. Of course, this mental image is just as faulty. There is, here, a vicious circle, which must be transcended. The goal for both sets of people is liberation. Freire likens this to painful childbirth—but the individual that emerges on the other side of the liberation is "a new person….this new being; no longer oppressor or oppressed, but human in the process of achieving freedom." (1993: 31) Both Firet and Freire offer us help in seeking to understand change. One comes from a European Barthian perspective, and the other, from a South American Liberation perspective.

John McLeod Campbell's ministry sought to instill in parishioners an alternate religious viewpoint from the reigning popular conception. His desire was for his parishioners to see the world differently. He offered a new perspective. What he required

of them was not just acquiescence to his point of view, but rather a process of conversion, change, growth, gradual maturation and discipleship. This transformation would not then be just intellectual, but also ethical and moral. McLeod Campbell was also interested in praxis. This required leaving the old paradigm behind, and accepting existentially (not just mentally) a new paradigm. Thomas Kuhn (1970) has highlighted this kind of alteration of thought and perspective through his historical work in science and his proposal of paradigm shifts. Kuhn's work has generally been accepted. McLeod Campbell was trying to do something almost as difficult as scientists like Galileo, Kepler and Brahe did in trying to educate people that the earth was not the center of the universe, but rather that it was the sun that was the center. What he sought to do was to weave an alternative vision of the gospel for his people through his time in the pulpit, in their homes, during conversations. He sought to inspire a paradigm shift in them. Stanley Hauerwas, of Duke University in North Carolina, in reflecting on what he is trying to achieve through preaching writes of his own sermons that they are an attempt to make our unintelligible lives intelligible by and through the gospel. In short, he is trying to help people make sense of their lives. He writes, in a collection of his sermons, "I try to do the work of theology in sermons by showing how the unintelligibility of our lives can be made intelligible by the gospel." (Hauerwas 2009: 19) This is the exact same purpose that McLeod Campbell had.

As we saw in the last chapter, the theological framework in which McLeod Campbell's parishioners had was problematic. They had a particular perspective based upon how they read the Bible, what they understood God to be like, religious words like grace, repentance, faith, and so on. Garrett Green suggests that our perspectives are in a

sense, patterns, paradigms, frames of reference. To illustrate this he uses an example by Wittgenstein from his *Philosophical Investigations*. (Green 1989: 50)

To look at this image in one way is to “see” or “perceive” that it is certainly a duck. Our minds interpret the long appendages to the left of what seems to be the head as bills. Looking at it, we see a duck. We expect it to say, "quack." It is a duck. The eye is in the right place. Everything fits so we say it is a duck. If we were asked what it is, we would surely respond "duck." To shift our “seeing” or “perception,” however, is also to realize that this image may *also* show a rabbit. If we look at the appendages again, we might discover that what had initially looked like bills could also be ears. With this idea in mind, this possibility, we may decide that they are not bills any longer, but now are ears. Moreover, if this appendage is no longer ears then the figure is not a duck any longer. Indeed, it is a rabbit. The duck has become a rabbit! If someone asked us, what the figure was we would now change our opinion to "a rabbit."

This simple illustration of how a change in perception occurs, points to the reality of change about which Firet and Freire speak. This transformation in perception and in

perspective is what we seek in parishioners struggling with our three emotions, negative emotions of self-assessment.

Psychologist George Kelly suggested much the same thing in his use of “constructs” in his psychology. A construct to his way of thinking was an initial attempt at construing the world. (Kelly 1963: 9) In his thinking, this initial “construct” or “construal” was adapted and transformed based on further information, experience, material, and insight. (Kelly 1963: 15) It was not static. It was, however, a working model subject to adaptation. We might say of the above "duck" that our supposition was our initial way of "constructing" or "construing" the information, which had been presented to us. As we investigated the image, further, new possibilities, new information came to light and we adapted our initial idea. We changed our construct.

The transition from one way of seeing to another is what McLeod Campbell intended to promote through his pastoral theology. It cannot be forced, applied, or driven into another’s consciousness. This is instead a conversion. It is a change. We have referenced this previously as *metanoia*. This is a transformation at the deepest levels of our humanity. Our perception of the evidence may be changed, as is our construal of reality, thus, our understanding may be altered. It was this shift that McLeod Campbell desired when ministering to his flock. His parishioners were used to seeing their situations in a particular way. To use our earlier example, their religion they saw as a duck. He sought to change their perspective, their model, or their construct. His hope was that they, in a manner of speaking, would see the rabbit.

Scottish theologian Thomas F. Torrance tells the story of a good friend named Edgar who traveled with him to Basel, Switzerland to study piano. He was particularly

keen to study with Rudolf Serkin. Serkin was one of the premier pianists of his generation, known both throughout Europe and in the United States for his virtuosity. When Edgar approached Serkin to take him on as a student, Serkin asked him how old he was. The response was "27." Serkin then asked Edgar to show him his hands. Edgar did. Serkin shook his head no, that he was both too old to learn and his hands were not large or nimble enough to teach. Edgar would not take no for an answer and continued to hang around Serkin's studio. Finally, when Serkin realized what a profound sense he had for music, he sent Edgar to a friend in Salzburg who prescribed exercises for his hands—designed to stretch the ligaments, strengthen the muscles, and elongate the tendons. The work was both grueling and painful. Several times Edgar almost quit. Finally, his hands were appropriately shaped; they had indeed stretched and strengthened. He was sent back to Serkin's studio to study with him. Serkin then took him under his tutelage and Edgar himself became a noted pianist and composer. (T. F. Torrance 1996-1997: 11-12)

It is not just our physical bodily selves that may be transformed it is also our *minds*, which may be, indeed, need to be, must be rehabilitated, reformed, and ultimately repentant in thought, word and deed. We need to think *again*, in a new way. Is this not the message of the New Testament? The theme of the gospel is to "repent and believe." (Mark 1)

One way in which McLeod Campbell sought to do this was through his sermon. Sermons in those days lasted longer than fifteen minutes. I suspect they lasted more like an hour to an hour and a half (perhaps even two). They were more like lectures. As one reads his several volumes of sermons, it becomes apparent that he sought to do this using a variety of stylistic techniques. As New Testament scholar George A. Kennedy puts it

"rhetoric is that quality in discourse by which a speaker or writer seeks to accomplish his purposes." Rhetoric involves the way by which a speaker seeks to influence the listeners. The words that McLeod Campbell used, the subject matter chosen and its particular treatment, the use of illustrations, evidence, and argument are also important. (Kennedy 1984: 3) Hugh Blair, an older contemporary of McLeod Campbell's, whose own lectures on "Rhetoric" Campbell may very likely have used or read in school, speaks of how the conveyance of thoughts, through either speaking or writing, is important. He writes,

> One of the most distinguished privileges that Providence has conferred upon mankind is the power of communicating their thoughts to one another. Destitute of this power, Reason would be solitary, and in some measure an unavailing principle. Speech is the great instrument by which man becomes beneficial to man: **And it is to the intercourse and transmission of thought, by means of speech, that we are chiefly indebted for the improvements of thought itself.** Small are the advances which a single unassisted individual can make towards perfecting any of his powers. What we call human reason, is not the effort or ability of one, so much as it is the result of the reason of many, arising from lights mutually communicated, in consequence of discourse and writing. (Emphasis mine; Blair 1812: 1)

This rhetoric's aim was to change. The goal of the speaker or preacher was to put the listeners in touch with the truth evidenced in the interpretation of the Bible, to point out an alternative vision of reality. This is certainly evident from a careful reading of McLeod Campbell's sermons. They, his parishioners, exist in a particular existential place and he desires to move them, to transport them, through a proper rhetorical illumination, to another place—one more in keeping with the gospel, which he preached.

Briefly, although we will look at this later, McLeod Campbell's parishioners had a dim view of God and of living life. Their view was dour. There was little or no joy. Any opportunity to live out the commandments of God was done with a heavy sense of obligation and responsibility. Grace was just a word in the lexicon and gratitude was almost nonexistent.

What might this shift in paradigms look like from one to the other? What is involved in the transformation? What happens when our constructs change? We have highlighted the gestalt psychologists' image of the duck/rabbit. That one cannot see both images at the same time; underscore the change in perception and outlook. One either sees a duck—but not a rabbit. On the other hand, one sees a rabbit—and not a duck. There is no in-between. One cannot see both. Princeton Educator James Loder in his book The Transforming Moment (1989) highlights the way this transition occurs in this altered paradigm. Beneath the way we interpret the world, he notes, whether as educated or not, scholarly or not—there is another dynamic at work. Beneath our initial construct, there is the possibility of another.

Citing Soren Kierkegaard, Loder notices Kierkegaard's apt phrase "the generative dynamic (*dynamis*) of the human spirit." (1989: 3-4) This is important for Loder as a foundation. From this dynamic generative movement of the human spirit there may arise in our understanding of reality, discrepancy that issues outward. There are from this hidden resource new and sometimes powerfully transformative insights, which alter our horizons and the seeming intelligibility of the world. There is movement from the duck to the rabbit in other words. What Loder is speaking of in this movement is change. Loder notes that initially,

(1.) First, there is a *Conflict-in-context*, which is experienced as a 'restless coherence, a dichotomy of reality, or a situation or situations that may be fragmented.' These difficulties defy our elemental longings for coherence. This may be, however, more unconscious, than conscious. (1989: 37)

(2.) Second, there is an *Interlude for scanning*. The spirit in the psyche cannot rest with a restless coherence, a dichotomy of reality or situations that are fragmented, unclear, and inchoate. Thus, there is a conflict and the Spirit searches for a resolution. (1989: 37)

(3.) An *Insight* felt with intuitive force. This is the *constructive act of the imagination.* This is an insight. It is an intuition about an answer that resolves a dilemma. The incongruity of the Spirit will surprise us and even delight us with a constructive resolution that reconstellates the elements of the incoherence and creates a new, more comprehensive context of meaning. Without distorting the integrity the previously conflicted elements or frame of reference are solved by a new context. The elements of a ruptured situation are *transformed*. Here a new perception is elicited. A new perspective opens up. A changed world-view is bestowed upon the knower. (1989: 38)

Here, no one can know or comprehend the central meaning of a convicting experience from a standpoint outside it. In reality, there is no outside. Here there is no such thing as an 'objective' viewpoint. It is like trying to describe what marriage feels like from outside a marriage. It is impossible. Thus, for Loder, the "validation of a word from God is uniformly established by God's initiative, and not by any generally recognized human procedures." (1989: 22) That is, one may not come up with particular criteria, and then seek to judge what has been received by that standard. The word sets its own benchmarks. This 'revelation' is a unique, participatory, knowing pattern. One may not

know from outside the relation. One may only know from within. Knowing anything is to indwell it and to reconstruct it in one's own terms without losing the essence of what is being indwelt.

There follows:

(4.) A *Release and repatterning* that is the constructive resolution of the problem – this is the release of pent-up energy. Archimedes cried 'Eureka.' This is the 'aha,' in place of the difficulty. This is the true 'hosanna,' at the discovery of a resolution to the dilemma or problem. The previous energy spent in trying to make sense of the difficulty—, which did not in fact work—is now available for testing and repatterning of the old frame-of-reference in light of the new resolution. (1989: 39)

(5.) Finally, there is an *Interpretation and verification*. This is where the Spirit seeks confirmation and verification by interpreting the new insight back into the old incoherence to see whether the conditions for a solution have indeed been met. There is a two-way endorsement here. Backwards, the sought after congruence now works. This action of affinity solves the dilemma previously unanswered. These are explicit connections. Working forward there is also a correspondence. Thus, there is a transformation of "at least some of the elements and an essential gain over the original conditions. (1989: 40)

Transformation for Loder is not merely a synonym for positive change. Rather it occurs, within a given frame of reference or experience, hidden orders of coherence and meaning emerge to alter the axioms of the given frame and thus to reorder its elements accordingly. (1989: 4) Loder picks up an example from T. F. Torrance when he describes the well-known psychological experiment of Theodor Erismann of the University of Innsbruck in which glasses (or goggles) have been altered through specially

devised mirrors to invert the visual image from right side up to upside down.[6] Erismann invited his student to wear a pair of hand-engineered goggles. Initially, Kohler stumbled wildly. Navigation was almost impossible. Simple tasks proved to be almost impossible. Grasping a plate, walking upstairs, eating, and playing games appeared comical. However, slowly Kohler found himself adapting. After about a week and a half he had grown so accustomed to the transformation in his sight that everything seemed to him normal, clear, right side up. So that he could do everything perfectly well, ride a bicycle, walk along a crowded sidewalk, function doing normal tasks. As they continued to study this phenomenon, they realized that almost all people are able to make this kind of adjustment, this drastic change in their perception and sight, an immense alteration in their frame of reference. Kohler noted that after several weeks of wearing this contraption that he was able to drive a motorcycle through Innsbruck perfectly.

Following Richard Bandler and John Grider's suggestive work on changing conceptual viewpoints, Pastoral Theologian Donald Capps has suggested using their concept of 'reframing' for pastoral care (1990). Observing the world in one way, then reframing this stimulus does not actually change the world as they note, but rather its *meaning, its framework* changes. (Bandler and Grider 1982: 7) This hearkens back to the Gestalt phenomenon of the rabbit turning into the duck or vice-versa. This alteration of viewpoint involves a change of our perspective—a 'transformative moment.'

The meaning that any event has depends upon the "frame" in which we perceive it. When we change the frame, we change the meaning. Having two wild horses seems

[6](http://www.awz.uni-uerzburg.de/en/archive/film_photo_and_tone_archives/video_documents/th_erismann_ikohler accessed June 1, 2016)

to be a good thing in a village where even having one horse is considered a luxury until it is seen in the context of a child's broken leg from falling off the horse. The broken leg seems to be a bad thing, as do the two horses, in the frame of reference of peaceful village life; horses are meant for transportation and farming, however, in the context of conscription and war, when all the other children are drafted into the army the child's broken leg suddenly becomes a good thing. One's perspective changes depending on one's viewpoint.

This is called **reframing**: changing the frame in which a person perceives events in order to change the meaning. When the meaning of the frame is altered, the person's responses and behaviors also change. (Bandler, Grider 1982: 1) Reframing may be used successfully in the therapeutic context. When a therapist invites a client to "think about things differently" or "see a new point of view" or to "take other factors into consideration," these are attempts to reframe events in order to get the client to respond differently to them. (1982: 2) One example given is that of a woman with obsessive-compulsive disorder. She required her house to be spotless, clean, untouched. Walking through the house meant walking on a plastic walkway in order not to spoil the pristine condition of the carpet. Any change drove the woman into a fit. The therapist invited the woman to think about how lonely her house was when it was in pristine condition. People who are alone have clean houses. It became a museum. It was indeed unsoiled and pristine. However, it was no longer a house or a home filled with the laughter of her children, her husband's presence, and the family dog's playfulness. These seemingly intrusive and messy people actually contributed to her life, to her happiness, to her joy. How different an empty house! Suddenly, the carpet being walked-on was not such a bad

thing. It was even a good thing. Its messiness testified to an entirely different, better kind of life. One that included people. In this particular kind of reframing the stimulus in the world does not actually change, but its *meaning* changes. (1982: 3) One might say that the duck in this transformative moment became a rabbit.

It is the goal of the pastor, helper, shepherd, Christian neighbor, friend, therapist to invite a different viewpoint. American Interpersonal Psycho-analysist Harry Stack Sullivan would have called this "consensual validation." (Chapman 1976: 121-131) This important work might also be termed **"mediation."** This discussion of A. Campbell's "pastoral mediation" brings to mind William Clebsch and Charles Jaekle's survey of numerous historical documents regarding the practice of ministry, or *cura animara.* They describe and evaluate the different forms ministry has taken through the years. Even though they do not necessarily focus specifically on ministry to angry people—their discovery, however, of a kind of common denominator definition of care is important for our purposes. Having seen through Alasdair Campbell that care of souls may involve attending to issues outside of traditional theological topics, reflection on the act of caring is also important for our purposes.

The ministry of the cure of souls, or pastoral care, consists of **helping acts**. These are done by representative Christian persons, directed towards the *healing, sustaining, guiding, and reconciling* of troubled persons whose predicaments arise within the context of ultimate meanings and concerns. (Clebsch, Jaekle 1975: 4) Healing, as Clebsch and Jaekle describe it, consists of the assistance of a restoration that "achieves also a new level of spiritual insight and welfare." (Clebsch, Jaekle 1975: 8) Sustaining, as Clebsch and Jaekle suggest, is where "compassionate commiseration" is employed. Another

word, which comes to mind, is empathy. (Clebsch, Jaekle 1975: 9) Guiding, as Clebsch and Jaekle propose, is "assisting perplexed persons to make confident choices between alternative courses of thought and action, when such choices are viewed as affecting the present and future state of the soul." (Clebsch, Jaekle 1975: 9) Reconciling, as a pastoral function, seeks to "re-establish broken relationships between man and fellow man and between man and God." (Clebsch, Jaekle 1975: 9) The verbs healing, sustaining, guiding, and reconciling are significant and fit in well with Seward Hiltner's emphasis in care giving. The term and concept that Seward Hiltner uses a majority of the time is that of the pastoral image of 'shepherding.' In Seward's opinion, the attitude of the caregiver towards the one needing attention involves the phrase 'tender and solicitous' care. The goal is the adaptation of the individual to the problems and pressures of life. This adaptation also involves the quality of life. This quality is measured by not only by what we receive, but also by what we give. As we will see, John McLeod Campbell was no stranger to these concepts.

3.6 The Lack of Assurance of God's Love

The pastoral issue that McLeod Campbell sought to address was a Christianity that was expressed by its adherents as joyless, rigorous, depressing, and which provoked in our modern terminology, not only a lack of assurance, but both anxiety and shame. They would not have expressed themselves using the terms anxiety or shame. The language they would have used was 'a lack of assurance.' Their specific malady would have been diagnosed with this theological term. This expression they would have

understood readily. Anxiety and shame would have fostered their feeling of a lack of assurance. Specifically, they would have resonated with its meaning with all the religious overtones. To lack assurance is to question the nature and character of God. It is also to question God's attitude and disposition towards one's self. It is to feel as if one does not matter in the cosmic scheme of things. Not only does one question God, one questions one's self. Do I matter? Why am I here? What place does this world hold for me?

To suffer from a feeling of a lack of assurance of salvation necessarily involves many issues. At fault was his parishioners' **un-Biblical** doctrine of God. Also at fault was a misconstrued doctrine of predestination inherited from Augustine and Calvin and standing front and centre in the Reformed tradition of which they were a part. Intimately related to this was a failure to appreciate fully the totality of the person and work of Jesus Christ. They had been told for years that Jesus only saved some by his life and death. Jesus saved his own. This was the doctrine of limited atonement preached from all the pulpits in the land. This wrong-headed grasp of the gospel in all its multi-faceted beauty did not inculcate that sense of confidence and security, which the New Testament calls *parrehsia* (παρρησία). Immediately, it raises the issue of whether I am in or out. Am I Jesus' own? This poor theology ultimately expressed itself in preaching and teaching which placed burdens on Christians sadly belying Jesus' statement, "Come to me all you who are weary and heavy laden…" (Matt. 11:28) Sociologist Max Weber notes, "In its extreme inhumanity this doctrine must above all have had one consequence for the life of a generation which surrendered to its magnificent consistency. That was a feeling of unprecedented inner loneliness of the single individual." (2005: 61)

In order to understand the issues surrounding, one must go all the way back to Africa in the fourth century. The roots do go back that far. Initially, the issue of our lack of assurance was purposed by and answered by Augustine through his doctrine of election or predestination. As the Bishop of Hippo in North Africa, he had occasion to offer spiritual support to struggling Christians. A contemporary counterpart of Augustine's was the ascetic monk Pelagius. Pelagius, unfortunately clashed with Augustine over just this issue. At the heart of the controversy was the Christian life. Put simply, for Augustine, predestination was about God's grace supporting us, not only when we succeed, but also when we fail. As we are predestined to be God's and God's alone, our failure in living as Christians does not mean that we are cast out. We are maintained in God's good grasp. No loving parent casts off a misbehaving child. For Pelagius, however, God's command to live perfectly in the gospel of Matthew (5:48), "Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect," is not hyperbole. God called us to be holy. Perfect. Without flaw. It is attainable, according to Pelagius, or God would not have issued it to us through Christ. God would not have commanded the impossible. Our lives then as Christians were to be heroic, lived in bold action, with us making a significant difference in the lives of those living around us, and to be characterized by the very purity and serious purposiveness to which God calls us through his Son Jesus when he says: *"follow me!"* (Peter Brown 1967: 352)

This disagreement issued in one of the defining theological arguments of the early church. It arose firstly as a pastoral issue. Augustine pointed out in his letter to Prosper and Hilary that all that we have and all that we are, indeed, all that we can claim is first from God. Everything is from God; of God, by God, and in God, are all things, including

our faith and belief. (Augustine 1992: 219) Faith is God's gift to us, as is our desire and delight in doing good things. We have nothing that we have not already received from God first. This is simply and wholly through the work of God that some men and women see the light of freedom and liberation.

Augustine's attempt here is to keep people from being thrown back upon themselves in trying to live as Christians. He was not always successful in this, precisely because of his theological formulation. Others are, by God's choice in Christ, blinded from beholding the truth that will set them free. This is a mystery, locked in God's choosing. This seeing and seeking is simply through grace, by grace and because of grace. (Augustine 1992: 231) This work of God comes from outside of us. This calling and choosing cannot be rejected, but rather warms and softens hearts. It may be compared to what happens when someone comes into a dark room where we are and flips the switch on the wall turning on the light and illuminating the things that we could not previously see.

In others though, this calling and choosing hardens hearts and minds, wills and souls, and God justly repays what is deserved for our obstinacy. They refuse to see. Why this is so—save for in the decision of God is not known. God gives faith to those God has predestined—in and through Christ, so outwardly they hear the gospel and inwardly believe. God, likewise, in a decision beyond our comprehension withholds faith from those not selected, and so they hear the gospel outwardly—but inwardly they fail either to believe in what they hear or in the God who provides the gospel. (Augustine 1992: 237) Here Augustine falters in the same way that Calvin did so many years later. Why is it that God delivers some and not others? Augustine looks at the outward

behavior and from this, *a posteriori* investigation, determines that some are in and some are out. Thus, only God alone knows why, for God's ways are beyond our comprehension and finding out. As an historian, Peter Brown writes of Augustine's doctrine "It was God alone who determined the destinies of men, and these destinies could be seen as an expression of his Wisdom. …Such wisdom bruised human reason." (Brown 1967: 399) Simply put, it was beyond comprehension.

From Augustine's pastoral point of view, however, what better message to give to someone struggling, feeling his or her feebleness and frailty, than this? For Augustine the issue was pastoral and addressed to those who struggled—God's love has chosen you mysteriously, and inscrutably in Christ, so press on in your life and devotion, knowing assuredly that you cannot falter or fail. You will be successful, if only in God's eyes. Your very desire to serve God is evidence of God's good disposition towards you. If you believe, then take heart knowing that God gives faith to those God has predestined, so outwardly they hear the gospel and inwardly believe. This is the positive side of the doctrine, which Augustine hammered home repeatedly. However, there was also a dark side. Augustine mentioned it, interpreting it as biblical, but did not emphasize it. God, likewise, withholds faith from those not predestined, and so they hear the gospel outwardly—but inwardly they fail either to believe in what they hear or in the God who gives the gospel. (Augustine 1992: 237) They show their own failure. Why is this that God delivers some and not others? Augustine is unclear about this. Only God alone knows, for God's ways are beyond our comprehension and finding out.

Nonetheless, we need to look to God. In an important clarification of predestination, Augustine notes that Jesus Christ is the first person chosen by God. As

our head and Representative God's election comes through him. Augustine writes, "There is another and most illuminating example of predestination and grace, and this is the Saviour himself, 'the Mediator of God and men, the man Jesus Christ.'" (Augustine 1992: 253) Now, for the Bishop of Hippo this deed was the,

> "unique act of God, performed in an ineffable manner, the assumption of a man by the Word of God, so that he might be truly and properly called at once the Son of God and the Son of Man—the Son of man because of the man who was assumed, the Son of God because of the only Begotten Son of God who assumed him." (Augustine 1992: 255)

Just as he is first elected to be the Son of God and Son of Man, for Augustine we are elected secondly in him and through him to be his people. He is our head and the fountain by which we may receive God's grace. It must be remembered that Augustine's treatises were written in response to real pastoral concerns and so do not have a 'completeness' about them that later academic theologians evidence in their work. I have always wondered what the history of Christian doctrine would have looked like if Augustine had proceeded along the lines of Thomas Erskine of Linlathen, Pierre Maury and Karl Barth on the issue of predestination.

Even though 1200 years separate them, Calvin's doctrine of predestination, like Augustine's, was originally designed as assistance for weary and tired souls. Calvin himself was a refugee that emigrated from Paris to Strasburg and then to Geneva—this may have influenced his outlook. European Reformation scholar Marijn de Kroon notes, "Calvin knows of no dogmatic truths intended only for academic use. His dogmatics always seeks to be pastoral." (de Kroon 2001: 128) As German scholar Margit Ernst-

Habib reminds us, we must remember that many people were refugees from persecution in France. French Protestants struggled with Roman Catholics as the Reformation started by Martin Luther began to take hold in the country. (http://www.reformiert-info.de/274-0-56-3.html accessed 4/8/2016) Those who were considered heretics were burned at the stake. For Calvin the doctrine of election and predestination was not divorced from the religious persecution and martyrdom in France of his Protestant compatriots, it was of the utmost pastoral significance. Ernst-Habib writes, "…Das, was für ihn die Prädestinationslehre aussagen soll, ist keine abstrakt-philosophische Diskussion, sondern von größter seelsorgerlicher Relevanz gerade für diese Bedrückten." (http://www.reformiert-info.de/274-0-56-3.html accessed 4/8/1016) It was not an abstract philosophical puzzle, but rather of the utmost—down to earth—pastoral significance. Like Augustine, Calvin was less concerned with the dark side of the doctrine—and focused more on the positive, pastoral purpose of the teaching. Election may be secret; nonetheless, this does not diminish the preaching of the Word, which may be quite wide in scope and intent. (Calvin 1948: 45) Karl Barth notes that predestination was "championed relentlessly by Calvin." (Barth 1995: 78)

For Calvin, the beginning of predestination is the person and work of Christ, whose incarnate, crucified, resurrected, and ascended person and work rightly understood is the mirror of God's purposes for humanity. He is the mirror image of our election. As we look to Christ, who is the elect one chosen by God, to reunite humanity with God's self we may be assured that we are not alone, but rather held lovingly by God. Calvin writes,

> "Christ, then, is the mirror wherein we must, and without self-deception may, contemplate our own election. For since it is into his body the Father has destined those to be engrafted whom he has willed from eternity to be his own, that he may hold as sons all whom he acknowledges to be among his members, we have a sufficiently clear and firm testimony that we have been inscribed in the book of life if we are in communion with Christ." (Calvin 1960: 461)

If, in concern and anxiety, we seek God's purposes for us, for his mercy, kindness and tenderness, we should strive for this nowhere else than in God's Son Jesus Christ, "[Christ] he alone is the fountain of life, the anchor of salvation, and the heir of the Kingdom of Heaven." (Calvin 1960: 461) We are chosen, elected, predestined "in Christ." (Calvin 1960: 461) As we look to Christ, we may think about our own selection by God. To be in "communion" with Christ, is to have the assurance that we are his siblings. We should not turn inward towards our feelings. Feelings are ephemeral, here today and changed tomorrow. Instead, we should only look to the Christ of the Gospels, who holds out the assurance of our salvation. When the author was in seminary at Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, Georgia in his second year, Reformed Theology I and II was offered consecutively in the fall and spring semesters. As in any curriculum covering Reformed Theology, all the doctrines were examined. The chief professor that taught the class was Shirley Guthrie. Guthrie was the author of Christian Doctrine originally published in 1968 by the old Southern Presbyterian Church's education wing. It had served generations of students as the go-to book. A student of Barth's in Basel in the late 1950's it was said with humor that the answer to any question in Shirley's class was "Jesus!" Concerning this question, and many others, Calvin would have agreed.

Predestination or election was not some arcane dogma only to be argued about by specialists. Instead, it was eminently practical. The pastoral point of predestination for Calvin, then, is that it is,

> "eminently adapted to the service of the godly: because it builds us up soundly in the faith, trains us to humility, and lifts us up into an admiration of the unbounded goodness of God towards us; while it elevates us to praise this goodness in our highest strains." (Calvin 1856: 11)

To reflect on election is to have our faith built up. To look to Jesus Christ is to take our sight off ourselves. It is to be like Peter on the Sea of Galilee as Jesus calls out saying, "Walk to me." The moment we take our eyes off him, we sink. By looking to Christ, we become assured of God's good will towards us. Our selection by God is irrevocable and "cannot be moved or altered by any storms of the world, by any assaults of Satan, by any changes, or by any fluctuations or weaknesses of the flesh. (Calvin 1856: 11) Our assurance is thus "rooted in Christ" and "rests on the promises of the gospel. (Calvin 1856: 11) The goal of election is our adoption as children, salvation, and immortality. (Calvin 1960: 461) Though not perfect, Calvin's work is pastoral in intent and in motivation.

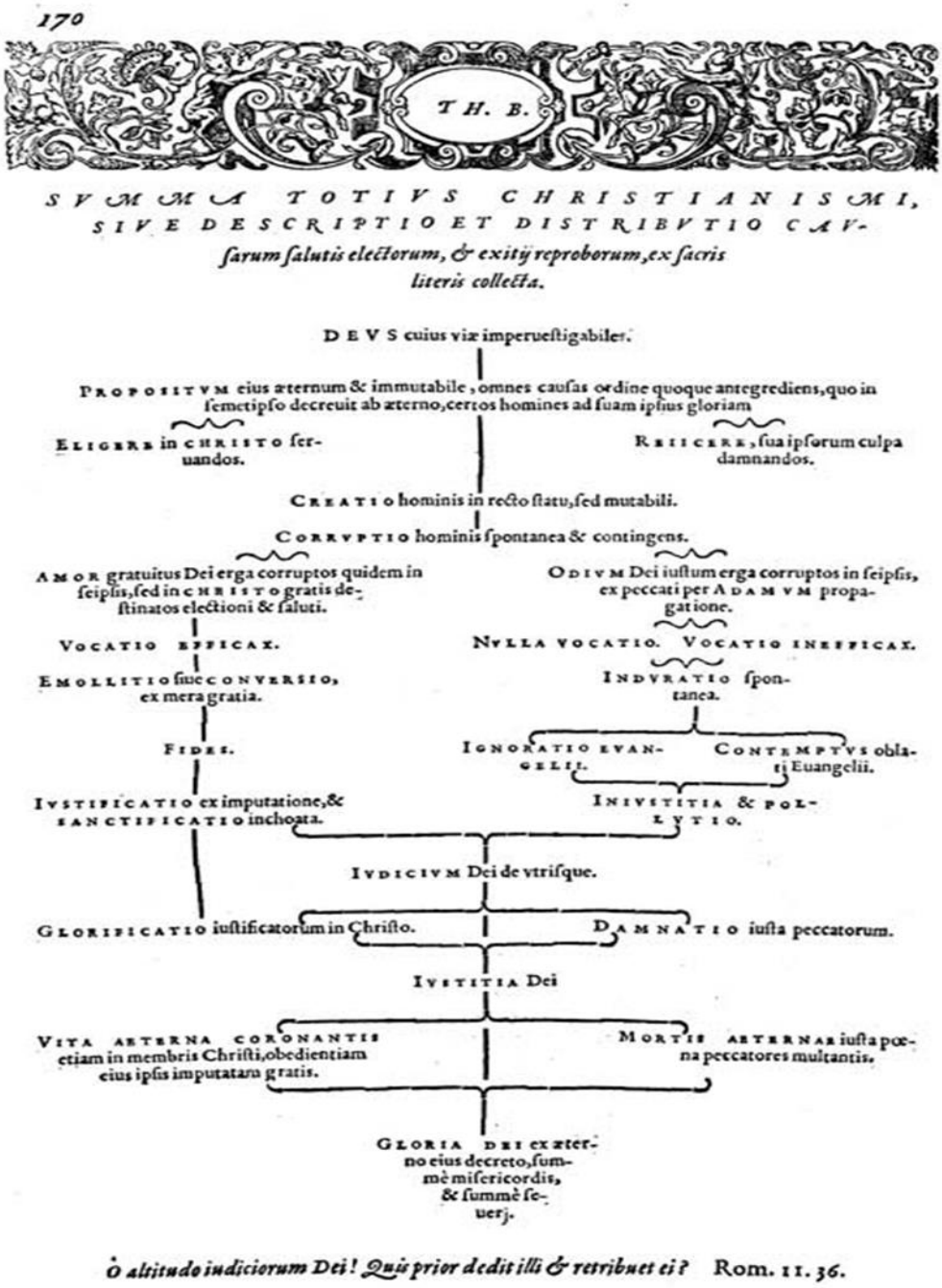
3.7 Are We Sheep or Goats?

McLeod Campbell had been guided in theology by Calvin's wing of the Reformation, which by the time his contemporaries had come on the scene had been

hardened for almost 200 years into a rationalistic model of theology emphasizing both a covenant of works and a covenant of grace driven by double-predestination. (Strehle 1988: 99ff) In this model, only some may lay claim to God's love—with some being elected by God for everlasting life and some being elected by God for everlasting damnation. Theodore Beza, Calvin's successor in Geneva, throughout his writings shared this chart and others similar to it as he explicated God's immutable will for humanity. In Beza's characterization, God divides humanity into two groups (elect and damned) all with the ultimate goal of glorifying himself in punishing the entirety of human sin, while showing mercy and love on the other hand to some select few. (Jinkins 1992: 135ff)

Below is Theodore Beza's most famous graph (More of a thematic diagram) indicating the dual pathway of God's election. On one side is the pathway of life and salvation. On the other is the pathway of death and destruction. Beza's viewpoint tried to nail down Calvin's elastic and flexible doctrine of election, "His doctrine of election, so far as it concerns those predestined to glory, is anchored in God as disclosed in his Word. But reprobation is grounded elsewhere, in an abstract God who can administer grace when and where he wills." (Thimell 1992: 199)

(A Table appears on the next page from one of Beza's works)



Theodore Beza, <u>Summa Totius Christianismi</u>, Geneva, Johannes Crispini, 1570: 171

One illustration of the kind of theology seen above in Beza's diagram occurs in the writings of theologian Henry Scougal, of the seventeenth century. Scougal was well known because of his masterpiece of spirituality The Life of God in the Soul of Man (1677). Scougal, however, in a sermon elsewhere on Luke 13:23 titled, *"That There Are But A Small Number That Be Saved"* commences,

> Those who have so much charity and goodness as to be nearly touched with the interests of mankind, cannot but be more especially concerned about their everlasting condition; and very anxious to know what shall become of poor mortals when this scene is over, and they cease to appear on the stage of the world, being called off to give an account of their deportment on it. And seeing we are assured that there are different, and very opposite estates of departed souls, some being admitted to happiness, and other doomed to misery, beyond anything we can conceive; this may put them upon farther inquiry, how mankind is like to be divided? Whether heaven or hell shall have the greater share? (Scougal 1831: 131)

In this sermon, Scougal was simply following the reigning viewpoint of his day. There are opposite states of departing souls. Some bound for heaven. Some bound, unfortunately, for hell. God had selected from before time some for salvation in heaven and some for damnation in hell. The reason for this divergence between one person and another was unknown and mysterious. Indeed, only God knew why some were saved while others were damned. That some were saved at all, when everyone deserved damnation was seen to reveal God's glory. That some were damned was seen to indicate God's justice. As the Westminster Confession of Faith states,

> Chapter III. By the decree of God, for the manifestation of His glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life; and others foreordained to everlasting death. (R. Campbell 1879: 17-18)

Theodore Beza included different versions of his chart in most, if not all of his writings. The very real dogmatic question McLeod Campbell was concerned about is the issue of where Jesus Christ is located in this model. That for McLeod Campbell this issue was not only dogmatic, but also pastoral is clear. If one surveys it carefully, one will see that Christ only appears after God's decision of election, which is immutable (unchangeable). Christ seems to be an afterthought in this scheme of things. Today, this seems like nonsense. Nevertheless, it was a very real concern to people in McLeod Campbell's parish. William Placher, one of our denomination's top theologians (PCUSA, until his untimely death in 2008), tellingly writes,

> Beza unambiguously favored the "supralapsarian" position—even before the Fall (*super lapsum*) God had determined to abandon some to perdition….Beza insisted on limited atonement—Christ died only for the elect. It is a very tough understanding of predestination, and it focuses *all* attention onto the question of whether you are among the elect. To answer that question Beza taught people to look within themselves. (1996: 152-153)

This inward turn devolved into real difficulties for people. The striving for assurance may be said to have begun with Calvin himself who understood there to be two classes of people in every church. Although all were called "Christians" (children of God) loosely speaking; only a select amount were truly God's people. Calvin writes in his Commentary on Genesis, Vol. 2,

> "…in the innermost sanctuary of God, none others are reckoned the sons of God, than they in whom the promise is ratified by faith. And although this difference flows from the fountain of gratuitous election, whence also faith itself springs; yet, since the counsel of God is in itself hidden from us, we therefore distinguish the true from the spurious children, by the respective marks of faith and of unbelief." (1847: 449)

The issue for people attending church became what are true marks of faith? How much faith is enough? Do I have faith? How may I discern whether I have faith and if so, if I possess enough faith? There is an externally offered grace—a general kind of grace, but then there is a specific salvific grace, which only the elect may receive. However, while all may generally be "counted" as God's children, not all are in fact. Determination of who is in and who is out becomes paramount. Who is to make this determination? Here was the crux of the problem. Calvin writes regarding this,

> "…the covenant of life is not preached equally among all men, and among those to whom it is preached, it does not gain the same acceptance either constantly or in equal degree. In this diversity, the wonderful depth of God's judgment is made known. For there is no doubt, that this variety also serves the decision of God's eternal election. If it is plain that it comes to pass by God's bidding that salvation is freely offered to some while others are barred from access to it, at once great and difficult questions spring up…" (Calvin 1960: 455)

Calvin is right. Questions bedeviled Reformed theology about predestination constantly. Calvin notes that faith is the testimony of our election. This, however, begs the question of faith. If one believes—how much, as we have asked, faith is enough. Jesus reminds, in the gospel of Mark, the convulsive boy's father, "All things can be done for the one

who believes." (Mark 9:24 NRSV) The issue, pointed out by the father is the relationship between belief and unbelief. He says to Jesus, "I believe, help my unbelief." Can one quantify a lack of belief? Can one measure faith and say that it is enough to indicate that one belongs to God's children? This issue bedeviled Reformed Christians from Calvin's time up to John McLeod Campbell's day. In my pastoral practice, the author has discovered that although the roots may descend as far back as Calvin and the Reformation, even those who are not familiar with this theology, are bedeviled by this issue, which remains today.

A careful reading of Calvin's statements on predestination reveals a carefully nuanced position. Calvin really tried to articulate a positive doctrine with pastoral sensitivity. However, he was not successful. This doctrine continued to plague churchgoers. Calvin's successor in Geneva, Theodore Beza was undoubtedly aware of this conundrum. However, he does not betray the same kind of flexibility as Calvin. Beza wanted to tighten the doctrine down. Thus, in a little book of questions and answers (a catechism) prepared for the education of communicants, Beza asks the following question, having previously assured his students that it is only by faith that we may be saved, **"Qu. 1. But whereby may a man knowe whether he have faith or no?** *A. By good workes.* (Beza 1578) Here begins the rub that would eventually form into an ugly blister.

Faith and belief were initially enough (were they?). Then, because they might not have been clear enough, good works were added as assistance to one's deduction. This may lead to the following inference using Aristotelian reasoning: I do good works. If I do good works, I have faith. If I have faith, I am, therefore, elected by God for salvation.

Doing good works testifies, then, to others and me that I am saved. Finally, by the time of the Westminster Divines in the seventeenth century (1647) "inward evidences of graces" becomes necessary in order to discern salvation. Therefore, God elects, calls few, some come to faith and believe, and are thus saved. Those with faith are revealed to be among the favored. Still, one might never know…what is an "inward evidence of grace?" Answering that question was the conundrum. The Confession continues, those

> Chapter XVIII I. "…such as truly believe in the Lord Jesus, and love him in sincerity, endeavoring to walk in all good conscience before him, may in this life be certainly assured that they are in a state of grace, and may rejoice in the hope of the glory of God: which hope shall never make them ashamed.
>
> II. This certainty is not a bare conjectural and probably persuasion, grounded upon a fallible hope; but an infallible assurance of faith, founded upon the divine truth of the promises of salvation, the inward evidence of those graces unto which these promises are made, the testimony of the Spirit of adoption witnessing with our spirits that we are the children of God; which Spirit is the earnest of our inheritance, whereby we are sealed to the day of redemption.
>
> III. This infallible assurance doth not so belong to the essence of faith but that a true believer may wait long and conflict with many difficulties before he be partaker of it: yet, being enabled by the Spirit to know the things which are freely given him of God, he may, without extraordinary revelation, in the right use of ordinary means, attain thereunto. And therefore it is the duty of everyone to give all diligence to make his calling and election sure; that thereby his heart may be enlarged in peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, in love and thankfulness to God, and in strength and cheerfulness in the duties of obedience, the proper fruits of this assurance: so far is it from inclining men to looseness. (Book of Confessions 2014: 168)

To be assured of God's love might never occur in this life. Assurance was not certain. One might, in fact, die in uncertainty. If assurance did arise, it might be only after long and hard introspection, manifesting itself as a "feeling" towards the end of life. Notice

the specific word “might” in the statement above. Also, notice the specific word “feeling.” James I. Packer, a well-known evangelical writer, lauds Puritan thinker Thomas Brooks, as “a man of outstanding intellectual power, as well as spiritual insight." Packer continues, "In him mental habits fostered by sober scholarship were linked with a flaming zeal for God and a minute acquaintance with the human heart.” (Packer 1990, 29) Brooks, below, in a discourse titled, *“Heaven on Earth,”* writes,

> “Now though this full assurance is earnestly desired, and highly prized, and the want of it much lamented, and the enjoyment of it much endeavoured after by all saints, yet it is only obtained by a few. Assurance is a mercy too good for most men's hearts; it is a crown too weighty for most men's heads. Assurance is optimum maximum, the best and greatest mercy; and therefore God will only give it to his best and dearest friends…It is one mercy for God to love the soul, and another mercy for God to assure the soul of his love. God writes many a man's name in the book of life, and yet will not let him know it till his hour of death, as the experience of many precious souls doth clearly evidence. Assurance is a flower of paradise that God sticks but in a few men's bosoms. It is one thing to be an heir of heaven, and another thing for a man to know or see himself an heir of heaven.” (Brooks, Grosart 1866: 335)

Assurance of God’s love might occur in but a few. Assurance is a mercy from God too good for people. Assurance is a weighty crown, too heavy for most. Anxiety, or as McLeod Campbell's parishioners would have called it "a lack of assurance," seems preferable to Brooks. This uncertainty weighed heavy on all, unfortunately. God selects some that become sheep, and are shepherded throughout their lives. God selects some, who are goats and though in appearances are care for, are, in reality never looked after. There are thus two groups of people. Some come to faith, trusting in God’s benevolence towards, them upon God’s call. Some never trust. Some never believe. Those who

confess their faith might never come to "a certain and sure belief" that God is on their side. They might in reality, be mistaken. This morass, this quicksand of uncertainty caused innumerable heartache.

These three quotes together provide an image of the religion, by which McLeod Campbell found himself confronted. His parishioners included some who had no confidence that God loved them. Can you imagine what this would do to the actual experience of worship? One sits in the church sanctuary never sure, never certain if one is included or excluded by God. What might the Christian life look like here with this symptom? The image that comes to mind is of the schoolyard where two captains are picking teams for kickball. All are picked save one. Both captains argue over who has to take the remaining person. It was painful to experience and just as painful to watch. One is on tenterhooks—perpetually.

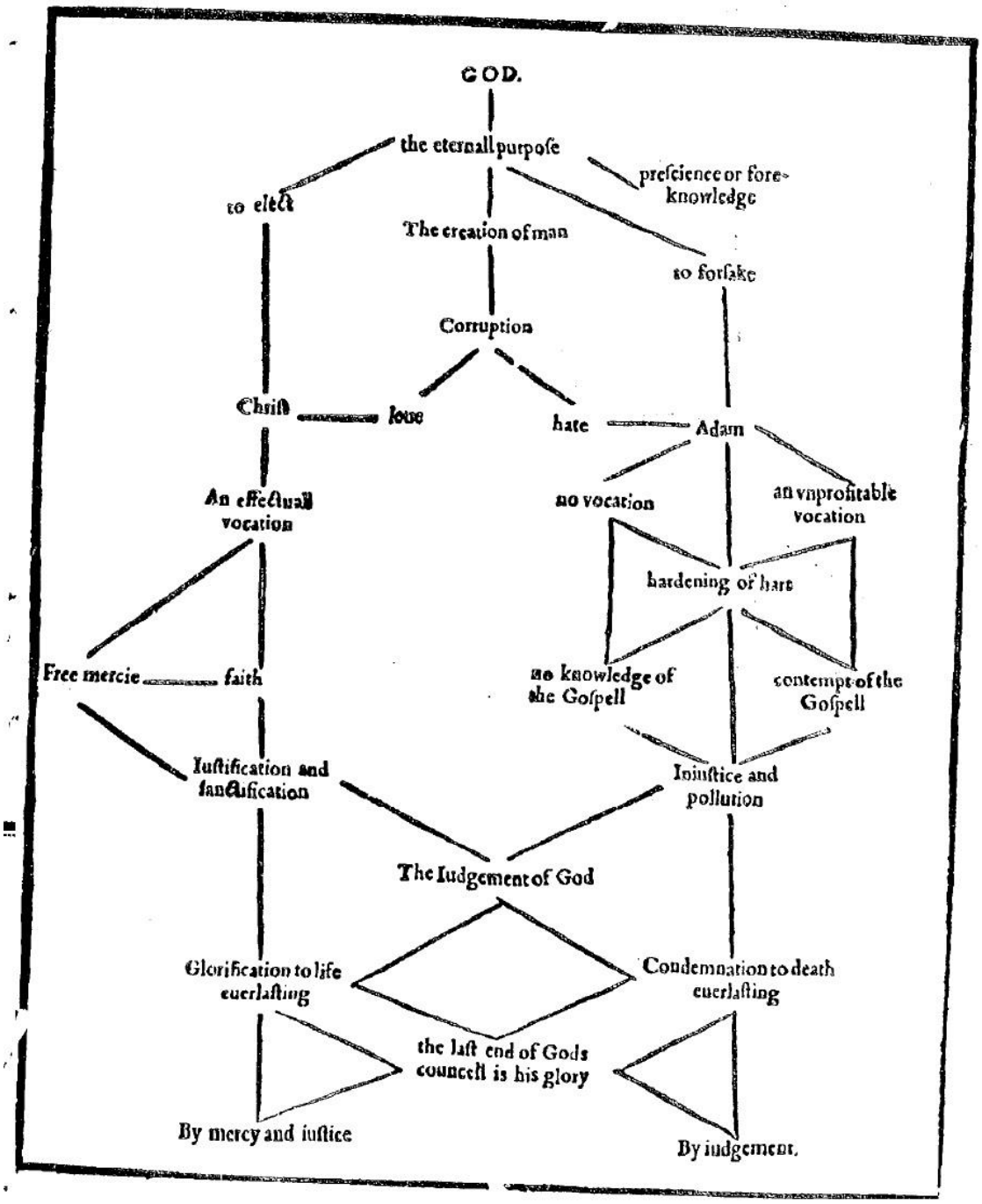
The previous reasoning, the construct suggests in the previous explication, provides an incomplete picture of a God whose decree has chosen some, but not all of humanity for salvation. In response to this doctrine the Christian wonders to which group he or she belongs. Who is God for us? Unfortunately, the answer is not clear. This uncertainty, very likely, issues in a lack of confidence. Thomas Erskine, a dear friend of John McLeod Campbell, highlights this issue and illustrates the hold it had upon people's minds in that day. In a reflective treatise on election, he writes,

> The doctrine of election generally held, is, that God, according to His own inscrutable purpose, has from all eternity chosen in Christ, and predestinated unto salvation, a certain number of individuals out of the fallen race of Adam; and that, in pursuance of this purpose, as these individuals come into the world, He in due season visits them by a peculiar operation of His Spirit, thereby justifying, and sanctifying, and

> saving them; whilst he passes by the rest of the race, unvisited by that peculiar operation of the Spirit, and so abandoned to their sins and their punishment. It is also an essential part of the doctrine, that the peculiar operation of the Spirit, by which God draws the elect unto Himself, is held to be alike irresistible and indispensable in the work of salvation, so that those to whom it is applied, cannot be lost, and those to whom it is not applied cannot be saved; whilst all the outward calls of the gospel, and what are named common operations of the Spirit, which are granted to the reprobate as well as to the elect, are, when unaccompanied by that peculiar operation, ineffectual to salvation, and do only aggravate the condemnation of the reprobate. (Erskine 1837: 3)

One may struggle long and hard and still have no answer to that driving existential and religious issue. Indeed, Thomas Brooks notes that assurance was not for everyone, but only the few. But, if he is correct, which few? How? Where? When? Hence, the problem…

Below is a simplified graph (diagram), in English, of Beza's chart about Christianity and God's plan. It is a simplified version of the diagram shown earlier which is the chief cause and ground of salvation and damnation.



Theodore Beza, <u>A Briefe Declaration of the Chiefe Points of Christian Religion set forth in a table</u>, London, Thomas Man: 1613

One notices that this graph is simpler than the previous one. Note also, however, that the twin paths are still in evidence. The issue for the faithful when faced with this kind of model was of course which path was their path. In facing the graph, the question is whether one is on the left side, that of the elect, or the right side, that of the damned.

The pastoral situation in which McLeod Campbell found himself in Scotland was the outcome of a transition from the theology of the Reformation in Europe seen in Reformed theologians like Zwingli, Bullinger, Calvin, and John Knox to the common theology of pulpit and pew in the early nineteenth century. As Karl Barth notes "In the older Reformed Church there was a theology in which the concept of the covenant played so decisive a role that it came to be known as the Federal theology." (Barth 2004: 55) While Calvin emphasized the covenant in his writings, he did not have two covenants. This was a development beyond his thought.

Moving from Election/ Predestination to a Covenant of Grace and a Covenant of Works

In addition to the dual decree about which we have been speaking, there was also a change in the understanding of covenant. Election/ Predestination were not the only issues about which to be worried. This kind of Reformed theology is called **Federal** theology because the various words for covenant (*pactum, testamentum*) in Latin include *foedus.* This theology, innovative as it was, had not just one covenant, but discerned in Scripture—two covenants. One was a covenant of works (*foedus natural* or *operum*). The other was a covenant of grace (*foedus gratiae*). (J. B. Torrance 1994: 16) In any covenant, as George Mendenhall (Mendenhall 1954: 49-76) reminds us, there are two

parties and mutual conditions and stipulations, and of course, in this particular understanding of the covenant—the two parties are God and humankind.

In this covenant "of works," which had its origin, at the very first in its ratification with Adam, one of the conditions of the covenant was obedience. God commanded Adam to obey. Obedience was the important aspect of the covenant. Robert Rollock, a British writer and the first Principal of the University of Edinburgh some decades following Calvin's work, notes that, "[The covenant] is that by which God promises man something of good under some certain condition, and man, moreover, accepts that condition." (Rollock, Denlinger 2009: 110) God promised happiness and eternal life **if** Adam fulfilled certain requirements. As such, this covenant is conditional, and also conditioned upon Adam fulfilling its obligations. God commands. Adam is to respond appropriately. Adam, unfortunately, did not. As heirs of Adam, we are all under the curse and penal sanction of Adam's failure.

As British Puritan theologian William Perkins puts it, "One (Covenant of Works) promises life eternal to him <u>that does all things contained in the law</u>; the other (Covenant of Grace) to him that turns and believes in Christ." (Perkins 1631: 299) The two differ in that the first propounds the bare justice of God, without mercy. The second reveals both the justice and mercy of God. Alternatively, as Perkins puts it "God's justice gives way to his mercy." (1631: 299) In the covenant "of grace," the parties are God and the elect in Christ. The condition for this covenant is faith. (J. B. Torrance 1994: 24) Illustrative of this is Dutch Covenant theologian Herman Witsius, who writes,

> The covenant of grace, with respect to us, consists of the absolute promises of God in which the mediator, the life to be obtained by him, the

> faith by which we may be made partakers of him, and of the benefits purchased by him, and the perseverance in that faith, in a word the whole of salvation and all the requisites to it, are absolutely promised. (Witsius, 1762: 51)

Unfortunately, Calvin's idea of a covenant and the later Federal theologian's idea of the covenant was different, which played into the difficulty that McLeod Campbell experienced. For example, one member of the Westminster Assembly and noted British Puritan theologian Obadiah Sedgewick defined a covenant as "a compact or mutual agreement betwixt parties in which they binde each other to the performance of what they do (by agreement) in promise to each other." (Sedgewick 1661: 2) James B. Torrance, in his study of McLeod Campbell's theology and the context out of which it came, argues convincingly that the understanding of covenant changed subtly (or perhaps not so subtly) from the time of Calvin to McLeod Campbell's time. By McLeod Campbell's period, the covenant had become little more than a "contract." In addition, he notes that in the theology of the period a legal strain may also be determined. (J. Torrance 1981: 239) Torrance writes,

> …the federal scheme was built upon a deep-seated *confusion between a covenant and a contract,* a failure to recognise that the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is a covenant-God and not a contract-God. A covenant brings its promises, its obligations and its warnings. But the obligations of grace are *not* conditions of grace, and it is false in Christian theology to articulate moral obligations in contractual terms. (1981: 239)

McLeod Campbell traced the problem back to its origin when he realized that how one began with the nature and character of God influenced where one went and how one

eventually ended up in the Christian life. Is God a covenant making God or a contract making God? A covenant was and is more elastic, more flexible, while a contract is not. On a contemporary note, the author has discerned in many parishioners with regard to the covenant of marriage, that their understanding is instead that of a contract. If I am not happy, and if my stipulations or conditions in marriage and for marriage are not met, then the contract my marriage is invalid. These stipulations may never be articulated, but exist as surely as a pre-nuptial agreement so popular these days. Marriage in this view is contractual, *not* covenantal. Contracts are conditional. Covenants are **unconditional**. If we use this metaphor of marriage but use it with regard to our relationship to God, what view of God do we have? Is our relationship with God contractual? Alternatively, is our relationship with God covenantal? Does God have stipulations for us to fulfill in our relationship? Do we? The first view is characterized by the phrase "if—then." The second is characterized by the word "regardless." A contractual understanding of our relationship with God is incorrect; it is also an erroneous view of marriage. Our relationship with God is unconditional. Marriage is likewise unconditional. McLeod Campbell's parishioners began incorrectly, with the wrong presuppositions and ideas, which led them down an erroneous path of uncertainty, of anxiety, and of ignorance.

How does one live a life within this frame of reference? That they are stuck seems obvious to us, but it was not so obvious to either parishioners or preachers of the time. What is pastoral care here? How does this reflect in worship? In living life, which way is the right way forward? Can we ever know?

McLeod Campbell's parishioners when responding to the Westminster Shorter Catechism's first question (Q: "What is the chief end of man?") only did so intellectually.

Many did so only by rote. They saw not the joyous response of a child of God, but a yoke grievous to be born. When I was away when my children were younger, and I would return, there would be hugs, excitement, kisses and happiness. It is hard to visualize this of the parishioners in Row, if God showed up. Sadly McLeod Campbell found that their answer was not informed by their true existential situation characterized by their lived experience. In other words, they interpreted their perceptions of God's activity in Christ, wrongly. Their construct was inadequate. God's grace, in other words, was not real to them. They refused to believe it. Their lips said one thing, while their actions said another. "What is the chief end of man?" the catechism begins, and of course, the answer is, "to glorify and **enjoy** God forever." (Beattie 1896: 41) McLeod Campbell saw in his inquiry into their spiritual condition that among his parishioners there was little "enjoyment" of God going on. God was not someone around whom one could be happy or joyous. Religion was not something in which delight was to be discovered and found. In addition, they thought that by simply doing good things they could somehow glorify God and in the process win approval. Unfortunately, this common theology devolved into a life of justification by works. They did not understand that McLeod Campbell, as their pastor, was not as interested in what they did or did not do, but rather was vitally interested in who they were before God. This *who* question is fundamental for him. The answer hinges on Jesus Christ. Christ shows us not only who God is really and fully, but also who we are.

This issue cuts to the heart of the Calvinism of the Federal theologians against which McLeod Campbell argued in his preaching, teaching, and pastoral care. The question about whether or not one possesses faith becomes all-important, because of the

Reformed wing of the Reformation's emphasis on predestination. Faith becomes the badge signifying that one was among the elect. Early on in the author's ministry, he fell into this kind of trap in counseling teenagers. In response to their real questions about God and his disposition towards people, the answer was always "Do you believe?" Faith was the panacea for problems. The author's paradigm or construct had not yet shifted and so counseling, preaching, and Bible study was done from an incorrect premise.

However, among McLeod Campbell's people in the pews the question remained, "How much faith was enough?" Indeed, William Perkins, a preeminent Puritan theologian, suggested that looking **inward** was the solution to the question. He writes, "He or she need not ascend into heaven to search the secret council of God—but rather descend into his or her own heart to search whether one be sanctified or not." (Perkins 1626: 6) Perkins also notes that the Christian's full assurance of salvation does not come at first,

> but in some continuance of time, when he or she has been well practiced in repentance; and has had diverse experiences of God's love towards him or her in Christ, then after them will appear in his or her heart the fullness of persuasion—which is the ripeness and strength of faith." (Perkins 1626: 6)

At issue for the people to which McLeod Campbell ministered was the length of 'some continuance of time,' and just how much 'repentance' was enough. Both could be construed as damnably burdensome.

That this was not necessarily helpful is Perkins understanding that those who have been damned in eternity may also have 'faith,' even if it is only a 'temporary' faith. This is where the reprobate,

> confusedly believe the promises of God, made in Christ…because he or she believes some shall be saved, but he or she believes not, that he or she particularly shall be saved, because being content with a general faith, does not apply the promises of God to himself or herself, neither does he or she so much as conceive any purpose, desire, or endeavor to apply the same, or any wrestling or striving against security or carelessness or distrust. (Perkins 1626: 358)

The issue, here, which bedeviled Reformed thinkers, was; does human action reveal the mystery of God's election? As Wilhelm Niesel puts it in his The Theology of John Calvin, "The question is simply and solely whether works have any sort of significance for one's personal assurance of salvation?" (Niesel 1980: 171) Niesel states clearly that for Calvin this is not the case. However, as Reformed theology developed, the restlessness and vitality of Calvin's dynamic theology was nailed down in order to be more palatable. So one can see this in a quote from New England's brilliant Puritan theologian Jonathan Edward's famous treatise on the *Religious Affections*,

> The various faculties, principles, and affections of the human nature, are as it were many channels from one fountain: if there be sweet water in the fountain, sweet water will from thence flow out into those various channels; but if the water in the fountain be poisonous, then poisonous streams will also flow out into all those channels. So that the channels and streams will be alike, corresponding one with another; but the great difference will lie in the nature of the water. Or, man's nature may be compared to a tree, with many branches, coming from one root: if the sap in the root be good, there will also be good sap distributed throughout the branches, and the fruit that is brought forth will be good and wholesome; but if the sap in the root and stock be poisonous, so it will be in many branches (as in the other case), and the fruit will be deadly. The tree in both cases may be alike; there may be an exact resemblance in shape; but the difference is found only in eating the fruit. It is thus (in some measure at least) oftentimes between saints and hypocrites. (Edwards 1986: 78)

Revival had broken out in Edward's vicinity, but questions remained as to its veracity. Were the people who indicated they believed, thus illustrating their salvation—really saved? For if, God has shed his grace upon an individual there should be evidence of this in their lives. (von Rohr 1986: 158) Edward's response was to assert the old proverb, "Actions speak louder than words." Thus, as George Tuttle, of the University of Alberta, Edmonton, Canada, writes in his work on McLeod Campbell,

> "Campbell was to discover that Federal Calvinists, having begun with a Covenant of Works based on the requirements of the law under a sovereign God of justice, were unable to shake off a 'works' mentality even in their honest effort to declare the good news of God's love."
> (Tuttle 1986: 22)

This is precisely where McLeod Campbell found himself in the parish of Rhu.

McLeod Campbell believed that he should not be silent about predestination, but rather should speak about it to his parishioners. As Reformation scholar Marijn de Kroon notes, "The issue of predestination is pre-eminently practical. It is not something about which one can indulge in calm and emotionless speculation. It is a practical and pastoral matter about which a pastor *may not* be silent." (de Kroon 2001: 127) The author has indicated that this was important for McLeod Campbell. It is also important for us today.

3.8 McLeod Campbell's Therapeutic Pastoral Theology

My concern with John McLeod Campbell as a Practical and Pastoral Theologian is the relevance of his theology for our contemporary society today—most of which possesses an unclear conception and theology of and about God. This may be seen in the lives of individuals that struggle with whether God can, may or will love them. Must Gods' love be earned? Can God love even me, with all of my baggage? To survey the landscape of modern perceptions of God's nature and character is to become disappointed at how unclear, wrong-headed, or clouded people's understanding and perception of God actually is. McLeod Campbell offers to the patient investigator a convincing response to this myriad of issues.

The young teenager looked at me with the Colorado Mountains in the background. I had led our church's youth group to a retreat in Gunnison, Colorado. She struggled with her relationship with God. Her parents were loving, but distant and reticent with praise. As we talked, she asked me questions about the God she was supposed to believe in and worship. She was not sure about God's nature and character, or perhaps, even God's existence. There was a pause in the day's events and we say on the grass for a moment of rest between what had been scheduled. She was at ease, because the retreat was enjoyable. It was right up the alley for teenagers. And so the questions began…

The first aspect of reframing which McLeod Campbell aimed for was in his parishioner's doctrine of God. That is, when the word God was used by someone in conversation or from the pulpit in worship what image did it bring to mind? How were they to understand God's nature and character? That they had a mistaken view of God

has been discussed. As we have seen, the reigning view was conflicted. For one person in the pews, God might be a loving Father. For another person just a few rows back, God might be a hanging judge. McLeod Campbell sought through his preaching and teaching to revise his parishioner's construct of God. His desire was to reframe their human construct with a better more Biblical and Theological vision defined by revelation and reflection. His aim was to inspire a revolution in how they understood God's nature and character. This change in understanding God's nature and character would then provide the impetus for a different life for parishioners. His different Theology was to lead to different Action on their part. Specifically it was to revolutionize their praise of God in worship.

His proposal was the sum of his reflection upon Scripture, Reformed Theology, Ethics, Philosophy, Natural Science, conversations, experience, and the disciplines of prayer, meditation, the means of grace and his parishioner's needs. It was as if each of these various disciplines was seated in a circle around him throughout the week illuminating for him their particular point of view. McLeod Campbell kept all of these various conversations in mind when sitting down to prepare his sermon for the week's worship services. Following all this assistance, McLeod Campbell sat down at desk with his Bible and wrote that which he wanted to commit to heart for Sunday's message.

In sermon number XX on Psalm 36 in the second volume of his Sermons and Lectures (1832) McLeod Campbell notes that our comfort in anxiety, and in our resulting lack of assurance and dis-comfort, was to be discovered not in ourselves, but rather in the nature and character of God. McLeod Campbell desired to share with his congregation that God was not abusive, or cold-hearted, judgmental, or mercurial. Undoubtedly, the

experience of his own warm relationship with his Father played a part in his reading off Scripture God's nature and character. McLeod Campbell's mother passed away when he was quite young and so his Father had by necessity to become both Mother and Father in raising him. When we fear God's nature, so McLeod Campbell notes, we are to take comfort in the true revealing of God himself—in Christ, in Scripture and in experience. Our resulting comfort and the abatement of our dis-comfort arises from a right apprehension of who God is and what God has done, is doing and will do.

Quoting Scripture, McLeod Campbell, in one-sermon hammers away at the false idols and perceptions of his parishioners and their misplaced understanding of God, quoting the Psalmist, he reiterates, "Thy mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens, and thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds. Thy righteousness is like the great mountains; thy judgments are a great deep." (1832: 13) McLeod Campbell, in this sermon, initially emphasized the singularity and the oneness of God's personality in that God's mercy, righteousness, and faithfulness are tied together with God's judgment and truth. He did not want them to mistake God's actions, by believing he could be one thing one minute and another next. He sought to clarify for them that God is not two-faced with one aspect of God's character at odds with another aspect. One person does not see one God, while another sees another God. God's nature and character is constant. Indeed, God's actions flow from God's nature.

Instead, McLeod Campbell subsumes all of these various characteristics of God—seen in this Psalm—his mercy, affection, justice, holiness; goodness and tenderness and combines them into the simple Scriptural definition that God *is* love. God's character attributes here are, thus, all in perfect agreement. They do not conflict. God thus may be

viewed as loving; not just loving towards a few people, but as loving to all people indiscriminately. God loves unconditionally. We have previously noted that in classical post-Reformation theology God's love was categorized by its specificity, not universality. McLeod Campbell knew that to be indecisive here, was to betray both the God of the gospel, but also the nature and character of God himself. McLeod Campbell can do neither.

Following this clarification, McLeod Campbell asserts that God's character is to be witnessed in his actions. He notes that people have all too frequently separated in their minds between who God is and what God does for them, "they have come to look upon what God does, not as telling what God feels, but just as if it were some blind fate or necessity that was producing events." (1832: 14) For McLeod Campbell there is no separation between the two.

God, for McLeod Campbell, is not passionless thought existing on the edge of the universe thinking only about himself (as in Aristotle). God *is* love. Our lives' experiences and happenings occur because of God's gracious providential care and regard. God intends only our good through them. What happens to us is not mere blind fate or chance. God is not merely a machine wound up and functioning without purpose or reason. One may note that McLeod Campbell has in mind here a kind of theodicy named after Irenaeus (Hick 1966). God is regarding them, all his parishioners, and God's love is working upon them and through them and others, because of God's *love* to *them*. Because of this, God cares, and guides, helps and sustains, as any loving parent would do. Even in bad times, God is at work.

Now this may sound strange to our Enlightenment ears and the skepticism of our era. For McLeod Campbell's people, however, the issue was not whether God acted in history and in particular histories and events, but what God meant by them. Discernment of these happenings was crucial. God acts, for them, in all things. What does God, then mean by these happenings?

If something difficult occurred in someone's life, was this God's judgment? If a death occurred was this God's justice? For many of McLeod Campbell's people the answer would have been "yes." Thus, the successful were blessed, and as blessed, loved. The unsuccessful were judged and uncared for, whether they were poor, childless, or unimportant. The great German sociologist Max Weber was not far off in his estimation of the restlessness of Reformed Christians in seeking God's favor. (2005: 67) To be rich was to have God's blessing. To be successful testified to God's kindness. Weber considers much of Capitalism to be nothing other than the working out of the anxiety and fear of people over their election. If Weber's thesis is correct, then may it be said that the struggle for a lack of assurance is at the heart of work alcoholism? Is this difficulty or neurosis at its heart a struggle over one's doctrine of God? I do not want to press this too far. But, nonetheless, raise the issue.

Therefore, what McLeod Campbell is aiming at is a revolution in their way of seeing God. God is not a taskmaster whipping his children through life, for his own glory, but rather a loving parent who is proud of his children regardless of what stage they are in currently. He is noting that there is a distinct difference between one perspective and another. He argues rhetorically in speech,

> There is the greatest difference between seeing the rising of the sun in the morning, and the provision of your daily support for food and raiment, as coming to you just in the ordinary course of things, and seeing them as coming to you *directly* from God, the expression of a feeling in the heart of God, as distinct and as clear as though God were to stretch forth his hand and place those things in your hands. (1832: 15)

We must see God in a different way argues McLeod Campbell. God does not have to give us life. God does not have to provide the means for our livelihoods. He does not have to provide the animals by which we make our living. God does not have to provide the rain on the fields or the sun in the sky, which shines when the clouds part. He does not have to provide us with food to eat. God does not have to clothe us. These things are not just the natural course of nature. They are the means by which the living God cares for and preserves people. God comforts us through these things. Living, then, may become the occasion for joy and gladness.

Someone who looks at things with a perspective that includes the right framework regarding God's nature and character as love sees the living God who preserves man and beast; and acknowledges in response "how excellent God's lovingkindness is in all the earth." (1832: 15) There is no reason not to believe this or to live like this. In a similar way, we would not question a parent's love following their solicitous care and nurture of us as we matured into adulthood. Their actions in clothing us, feeding us, cheering us on in athletic events, taking us to doctors for our health, providing us with toys (no matter what size) and taking pride in our accomplishments reveals their feelings for us. We are then invited to respond with gratefulness and appreciation.

Unfortunately, people too quickly separate the relationship between God's nature, character and actions. Instead, in opposition to the common view—God is the doer of all

things. Nature is not a mere machine. Surveying the scene before us on any occasion gives forth in us the realization that all occurs through God's purposeful will. That what is before us, for our benefit, is nothing less than God's bounty. To achieve something or to have something and to say that it is the result of what I have done is to belittle God and God's sovereignty and love in providing for us through a variety of means. God *as* love *gives* good things to his children.

This giving love does not stop at providence, but was even issued in Christ's death for every person's forgiveness and salvation. God's love is unconditionally *free* in Jesus Christ. It cannot be earned. It cannot be procured. God's love in Christ cannot be bought, wheedled from, or ransomed by manipulation. God has bestowed his Son and his matchless worth upon everyone. McLeod Campbell notes further along in this sermon,

> You have been in the habit of seeing the freeness of God's love—that God is actually kind to the unthankful, and the unworthy—that God is always feeding and clothing his enemies,—and showing mercy to those that hate him—you have been so taught; and when a person comes and tells you that Christ died for your sins, that you might have the gift of eternal life, you immediately say, "Yes, those who deserve it shall get that gift." You see not that God's gifts are given to the undeserving, to make them deserving. And this is the great evil. If you have been accustomed from your childhood, to see every breath you drew,—every morsel that you ate, every comfort you enjoyed, was a manifestation of forgiving love—was love to a sinner—was love to an enemy who deserved it not; then when one came and told you that Christ died for you, while you were yet a sinner, you would be ready to believe it, because you would have been accustomed to see that this is in accordance with what God has always been doing—that every kindness from him has been to the unthankful and the unworthy, for there was never any deserving in us. (1832: 17)

Here, McLeod Campbell emphasizes that Christ is God's gift for all. Christ was born for all, lived for all, and died for all. McLeod Campbell could not fathom Christ only dying

for the elect, as many Calvinists believed, when one looked at the idea that Christ preached our love of neighbor as part of the summation of Moses' Law. How could Christ have commanded us to "love your neighbor," if God did not love that neighbor because they were not one of the elect? One aspect of belief that the Federal Calvinists articulated is the idea that Christ died only for the elect. Seventeenth century Dutch theologian Johannes Cocceius notes, "…that for whom he sponsored he also obtained; that the merit was for them; … hence it is quite right to teach that Christ did not go bail for all without exception, or even for those who are not saved." (Heppe 1950: 476) Not all are saved, in this view, and so not all are elect, nor does Christ die for them.

The question had been raised in the period following Calvin that if Christ died for all, and only some were saved, Christ's death would be inefficacious for some. How could Christ's death not be effective for all? If Christ is God in the flesh, then his power must be sovereign, total and complete—thus there was a rub between the doctrine of predestination or election and the extent of the atonement. Calvinists, like Puritan John Owen, concluded that Christ, then, died only for the elect. God thus loved, only some, a certain number, a particular people. Christ, therefore, was gifted for the few, and only died for that certain number of people, those particular elect. Therefore, atonement was specific and limited.

This was the doctrine of limited atonement. One may see this line of reason argued forcefully in the Oxford theologian and Puritan, John Owen who wrote <u>The Death of Death in the Death of Christ</u> (1792). This belief was also common in and among McLeod Campbell's parishioners. McLeod Campbell, however, noted—rightly—that if Christ did not die for all, it could not be said that he loved all, but only loved some. This

flies in the face of his words to the effect that we are to love God with all our hearts, minds and souls and our neighbour as our self. This could not be the case in a limited atonement. Christ, in order to fulfill God's command, must love all. Everyone. Thus, God must love all, because Christ loves all. Christ comes that **all** may have life.

Thus, none of us deserves anything from God, who nevertheless gives because it is in his nature and character to give, for God *is* love. God's lovingkindness induces men and women to put their trust in God—those who put their trust in God are those who believe in his lovingkindness. This inspires, in response, a completely different kind of life. Here it is, observes McLeod Campbell, that 'salvation by faith is taught.' For putting our trust in God is as if we took shelter under God's wings. Thus, we are delivered out of evil. When we put our trust and belief in God we become as a strong tower, we have found the true city of refuge. By believing in God, we understand that we are protected, helped, saved.

Next, McLeod Campbell asks, "What is trusting in the Lord?" It is, in McLeod Campbell's view as having knowledge of God's character. That raises one above all dependence on creatures, and brings people to have confidence *in* God. In short, God only gives to us what is ultimately good. To have an enlightened assurance, then, in God's good gifts and in God's lovingkindness is to enjoy an intimate fellowship with God. To trust God is to note a particular kind of character for God. We, thus, walk in close fellowship with him. The provision of God in Christ for us is that we have received everything pertaining to life and godliness. As this occurs we are turned, by God in Christ, from iniquity, which in McLeod Campbell's thought is often unbelief, and a lack

of trust in God. God's Spirit causes Christ to dwell within us, purifying us, and sanctifying us. Salvation *from* evil, sin and death, and fellowship with God is *of* God.

Happiness asserts McLeod Campbell, comes when we trust in God's love, his nature, and character *as* pure love, and enjoy the fellowship and intimacy, which he has *with* Christ and which he offers to us *in* Christ. Happiness is not to be found in accumulated things. Happiness is also not found in our safety from iniquity, death, and destruction. Happiness does not consist in things. Happiness is to be discovered when we truly meditate upon Christ—who is the brightness of God's glory. Christ is the express image of God's person. For McLeod Campbell in this sermon he is the ark that saves from destruction. Here McLeod Campbell uses the imagery from Genesis of Noah's ark as saving from the floodwaters. He compares Christ with the ark that carries us to safety. Christ is the ark that keeps out the billows. He is the ark, which is replenished and filled with every good thing. Christ, for us, is the ark that is the fatness of God's house and the river of God's pleasure.

God rejoices in Christ with whom he is eternally well pleased. Infinite love feeds on infinite love—given by the Father and received by the Son, who in turn gives the Father love, and which the Father receives—all this is embodied *in* Christ. Through Christ, McLeod Campbell notes, we are allowed to participate in God's goodness, in God's inner life, in God's happiness and joy. Fellowship, communion, and intimate commerce with God in Christ occur through the Spirit of God, by whom and through whom we enjoy *koinonia* with God—for all comes through Christ. The fountain of life is with God; the stream flows out in and through Christ, and we are taken up by it, and filled with it, and it flows back to God again. McLeod Campbell asks, "What does

infinite holiness, the infinite truth, feed on but that which is embodied in Christ?" (1832: 22) In Christ, he notes, we find our feast. Here person meets person and with God. Here, in Christ, man tastes the fatness of God's house, and here man drinks of God's pleasures. All is of Christ. In this God rejoices. In this, we rejoice. God is the creator—we are the creatures—He is the upholder, and we are the upheld—He is the enlightener, and we are the enlightened—His is the glory, the blessedness ours. (1832: 23) McLeod Campbell concludes his sermon with a heartfelt appeal for them to understand the truth of God's nature and character as love. He states,

> O my dear hearers, this is God's desire for you. He is the fountain of life—a fountain which, like every other fountain *is always seeking to flow out*. It is the very nature of a fountain to pour forth is waters—and so would God. He would not have been a fountain if his love were ever resting at home—He would not have been a fountain if his love were not continually flowing out—flowing out continually for you to come in—and for you to drink of—and for you to delight in. O! see the longing of God to enter into you, and to dwell in you; for as water seeketh a channel in which to run, so does the love of God seek to find your hearts open channels into which it may flow, which it may fill, and from which it may pour forth. I testify in the name of God, that it is God's honest wish to dwell in your hearts, that you may be holy and righteous—and that it is God's honest wish to fill you with his Spirit, so that you may drink of the rivers of his pleasures. May God teach you to understand his lovingkindness and continued goodness… (1832: 29)

It is clear from a close reading of Campbell's sermons that the first point that pastorally he feels he must clarify is the nature and character of God. This is fundamental to him. God is not prejudiced. God is not partial. God does not love some few and despise others. God is not coy about sharing his feelings for people. God's purpose for us is not a hidden mystery, which must be guessed at continually, but an open secret published

wide and abroad in Christ. The simplest definition of God's greatest character trait is love. Not a conditional love, not a love which is here one minute and gone the next. God desires us to feel and receive that love. To use the classic Reformed image, that of a waterfall like Niagara Falls on the U.S. and Canadian border which is bursting forth with beneficence, good-will, charity, grace and mercy, or in McLeod Campbell's words from the sermon "lovingkindness." We are to bask in that flow of grace and good-will in much the same way as the vegetables need the sun in a summer garden. To the person struggling with the fear that God does not love them or regard them positively, this is welcome news. It is meant to be life altering news.

McLeod Campbell's assertions regarding God are relevant for today, because in a study from 2006, by the Baylor (University) Institute for the Study of Religion titled, "American Piety in the 21st Century: New Insights to the Depth and Complexity of Religion in the US" it was revealed that there is still confusion about God's nature and character among people in the U.S. Presenting survey questions to interviewees, they divide society in the United States into four categories based on the answers.

The four different categories are as follows,

- **Type A: The Authoritarian God**

> Individuals who believe in the Authoritarian God think that God is highly involved in people's daily lives and world's affairs. They believe that God helps them with their decision-making. God is responsible for global events such as economic depressions or upturns, natural disasters and weather changes like tsunamis or earthquakes. God, in this view is wrathful and angry, capable and quite willing of meting out punishment to the unfaithful and the ungodly.

- **Type B: The Benevolent God**

> Those who believe in the Benevolent God are similar to those who believe in the Authoritarian God in that they see God as very active in the daily lives of individuals. However, in this group, God is not angry or wrathful. Instead, God is mainly a force for positive influence in the world. God is less willing to condemn or punish people.

- **Type C: The Critical God**

> Believers in this category feel that God does not interact with the world. However, God still observes the current state of affairs globally in an unfavorable light. God's displeasure may not be known in this life but it will be recognized in the next life, as also will God's justice and punishment.

- **Type D: The Distant God**

> The people in this category believe that God is not active in the world. God is not particularly angry either. These individuals think of God as a cosmic force, which sets the laws of nature in motion. God does not however interact with the world and does not have an opinion one way or another about people's activities or world events.
> (Baylor University, Sociology Dept. 2006: 25)

As may be seen from these four groups, there are unclear and diluted beliefs about God's nature and character in the twenty-first century. One may attach, interestingly enough, philosophic like names for each category of the God believed in. Type A reminds one of Puritan Preacher Jonathan Edward's noted American sermon from the early 1700's titled "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God." Type B reminds one of the Happy Parent Paternally involved where everyone gets a trophy for participating. Type C is the critical, reserved, typical magistrate-like parent for whom one's efforts are never enough. This is the child that runs up to the parent on the soccer field hoping for a kind, loving comment, but receives nothing. If a comment is made it is critical. Type D reminds one of

Aristotle's Unmoved Mover. None of these is accurate according to Scripture or Reformed Theology and each presents the necessity of extreme clarification. Not only clarification, but also correction; this is where the Church may become the locus for the kind of construct change we addressed earlier. This occurs through preaching, teaching and pastoral care. The goal, of course, is not only different thinking, but different acting.

In the author's twenty-eight years of ministry the issue among parishioners of the need for a more accurate doctrine of God has been prevalent, particularly during times of stress. McLeod Campbell's construal of the nature and character of God is still relevant today. The author has found his work useful in practice. In the next sermon of his published addresses, this relevance and usefulness is further clarified.

It is sermon 21 on 2 Peter 1:5-11 where the theme is walking in fellowship with God. McLeod Campbell notes that God's character may be discovered in the Scripture, which reads,

> "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whomsoever believeth on him might not perish, but have everlasting life"—that "God sent not his Son to condemn the world: but that the world through him might be saved"—that God has given to every man in Christ, all things pertaining to life and godliness—that God has made full provision for us to walk with God in newness of life … (1832: 55)

It is in the nature and character of God to acquit humanity of their sin through the shedding of his Son's blood. Our sins are forgiven in this unconditionally meritorious act, indeed they are remitted—put away—no longer imputed to us, indeed that God no longer attributes, assigns or imputes sin to us. It is not that sin ceases to be called for what it is, namely, sin, but that God while angry with sin and hating it thoroughly, and while

condemning it as evil—*in* Christ and *through* Christ and *because* of Christ's life and death, God no longer ascribes or imputes sin to us.

Through Christ's perfect work in life and through his death, we have seamless liberty to come into God's presence, as if we had never sinned at all. Our sins are removed from us, forgiven by God, being imputed to us no more. (1832: 55) Because of this state of affairs, we may come into God's holy presence and heavenly realm with the same freedom as one of the seraphs. As angels and seraphim sing "Holy, Holy, Holy," so too may we. We may, because of this action on God's part come as a little child to his Father's lap. This is liberation. This is full and free access to God. Not one person, not one solitary individual of Adam's family is shut out from this liberty. The reality of the remission of sin by God's Son, God himself in the flesh, is consistent with God's holy character. The exceeding great mountains of our iniquities have been taken away by Christ's shedding of his blood for us on our behalf. It is thus not necessary for us to do anything, not one single thing, or to perform any particular duty of any kind to be accounted as God's children and of being able to come to God as naturally as a child does to their loving Father. This way of access is therefore a *living way*.

The good news is that God not only allows us to come to him while providing us with a living way, but also empowers us to make that journey. This changes the living of our Christian lives. God gives power to come to him. This particular power is the knowledge, is the moving from ignorance to truth, into the light of what God is *as* God. This revolutionizes how we live. To have a way now into the holiest of holies teaches us now to enjoy it, to apprehend it, to appreciate it and accept it as a real thing. We do not need to come into God's presence; we always are in God's presence. This change

influences how we do anything and everything. As we draw near to God and commune with him, in his presence, we are enabled to experience God's feelings by sharing in them. That this revolutionizes playing Golf, or Tennis, or visiting in the Hospital is precisely the point. We may not glorify God simply by being ourselves. We may enjoy God simply by becoming aware of our fellowship with God in everything. In the Oscar winning movie Chariots of Fire (1981), Eric Liddell, played by Ian Charleson, is speaking with his father played by actor John Young. Eric is unsure of whether he is being called to the mission field or to a life of athletics. He is under the misapprehension that God approves of one action more than the other one. His looks him in the eye and says to him, in memorable words, "You can praise God by peeling a spud if you peel it to perfection. Don't compromise. Compromise is a language of the devil. Run in God's name and let the world stand back and in wonder."

This power and right is provided for in Jesus Christ, because the Second Adam is a quickening Spirit—because the Risen Saviour has power and sovereignty over all flesh. By his Spirit dwelling in us, we are given understanding and comprehension of these things. Through the Spirit, we are made to share in God's perfection, holiness, and sympathy. In Christ, God has given us the rare capacity of delighting in God himself. To be given an understanding of God's mind and will, is to then delight consciously in that mind and to be brought to love and rejoice in what God loves and rejoices. (1832: 56-57) The song of the redeemed, preaches McLeod Campbell, does not lose its interest by being sung eternally—the message of pardon and the glad tidings of salvation should be the source of life and joy, holiness—as often as we hear it.

Then once again, McLeod Campbell closes his sermon with a plea,

> I beseech you, by the mercies of God, that you consider what a thing it is that God should be slow to part with you—unwilling to let you go—what is it to think that he should long over you—that his bowels should yearn over you, and that he should again and again, renew the same entreaties. There is nothing else than present love in God, and a present forgiveness. God's mercy expresses a *present* mercy. It is not that God loved you when Christ died; but as he loved you then, so he loves you now; and the very heart of Christ, which came out in the words "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem," lamenting over their rejection of his love, is the very heart of Christ at this moment. Glory has not changed it—glory cannot change it—that glory which he had with the Father before the world was—that glory to which he desires to bring you. If it were possible for the love of Christ to be increased, which is impossible, we would hold that it must be more intense now that he is, in his humanity, enjoying that glory, than it was before. Not that it is so; but I say, the fact that he is now in his glory, and, in his humanity, experiencing the glory which he had with the Father before worlds were, gives us a deeper appreciation of the longing with which he longs over man, that he may submit himself to him, and suffer Him to bless him. God bless you! … (1832: 61-62)

In another sermon based on Matthew 11:20ff, number twenty-two, McLeod Campbell further clarifies for his congregation the key to truly understanding God, "No one knows the Son, but the Father, and no one knows the Father, except the Son—and the one to whom the Son reveals him." As H. R. Macintosh used to note, this is the linchpin of revelation in the New Testament. (T. F. Torrance 2002: 1) The import of this statement is that we share in the Son's knowledge of the Father. That knowing through which the Son knows *of* the Father and *about* the Father, indeed the Son's knowledge of the Father *as* Father *as* person *as* love is shared with us—not just bald information along the same lines as the instructions for putting a child's toy together. Jesus reveals the Father. Jesus reveals not just some of the Father. Jesus reveals *all* of the Father. Thus, it is not a

stretch for us to understand who God is. The point of Christ coming is to reveal God completely and fully to us. Everything is delivered to Christ by the Father including an intimate knowledge, which is shared with us by Christ himself. We know God. We not only know God, we know what kind of a *God* God is.

In a teaching that he would make explicit later in On the Nature of the Atonement Christ did not come to change the Father disposition toward us into being kind and loving, but rather Christ came to reveal that the Father is already kind and loving. McLeod Campbell states, "Carry this along with you, and let no man deceive you, and do not imagine that Christ, the Son, came to change the Father: he came to reveal the Father—he did not come to make God kind, but to show God's kindness—'Herein God commendeth his (that is God's) love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.'" (1832: 76)

In a later lesson from after his ministry at Row, when he was in Glasgow, he clarified in Fragments of Truth (1898) that when we pray, the first words from our lips in the prayer which Jesus taught his disciples is, "Our Father." This one word for McLeod Campbell *is* the gospel. Reformed theology had been influenced for too long by Aristotelian notions of God, rather than Biblical notions. What is implied in this word is the tenderness that a human father cherishes toward his own child or children. Jesus tells us that "Father" is how God reveals himself to people. That love is unconditional. It cannot be bought. McLeod Campbell reminds his hearers in this lesson of the excitement that a human parent feels over the first attempts of a child to say, "Mother," or "Father." There is, he notes, no sound so sweet to the parent. He continues by noting that we feel at home in our parents' house, where in a stranger's home or among strangers we are far

less at ease. To say the word "Father" is to understand that nothing we have is ours, but that all is his—yet we have the run of the place, because he is our Father. In our comfort, we reach out as we learn to walk into the waiting arms of our loving parent. We need do nothing to secure our place, or to receive the Father's affection. We give joy to God *as* Father simply by taking the child's place and uttering his name upon our lips. To have God as our Father is to be at rest, knowing that we need do nothing, indeed, "Have you ever rejoiced in the knowledge that you are not your own, that you have not yourself to provide for, or protect, or guide, seeing you have a Father?" (1898: 20) This is the good news of the gospel—that men and women have a Father and thus are not orphans. This is true nobility, we are precious, indeed, it is simply honor—for we are the apple of the Father's eye and are infinitely cared for. The knowledge of this name, Father, is eternal life.

The relevance for us today, indeed in any day, is the clarification that McLeod Campbell brings to the nature and character of God. The bearing that this has for ministry to those lacking assurance, like Broadus, seems evident. It has strength and is useful because it challenges the reason why people do not feel assured of God's love. It also influences the praxis of prayer and worship. It reflects on the question "to whom do I pray?" Is this a distant, uninvolved deity or a loving Father? It also is germane when conceiving worship on Sunday morning. Our language on Sunday morning is guided by our theology. In our prayers, praises, confessions we describe our theology. Either specific language may reinforce inadequate conceptions of God, of grace, of the Christian life or the words we use may overturn them. Pastors everywhere face the issue of what language to use in worship. The questions we ask of the God whom we worship are

fundamental. It was for McLeod Campbell's parishioners and it is for us. In place of an incorrect view of God yielding a burdensome living, his Trinitarian understanding of God's being challenges the prevailing truncated and wrong-headed views. Such a conceptual change issues in a far different response on the part of worshippers and parishioners.

One aspect of mining the tradition as the Whitehead's suggest in their methodology is to bring out the best of the tradition in so doing. This requires being theologically acute. It requires familiarity with the tradition. It also requires understanding what the issue is which requires excavation from the tradition. For the particularly theological issue of a lack of assurance, the specific aspect of the tradition, which must be explicated and explained, is the doctrine of God particularly as such has already influenced the presenting problem.

One aspect of the healing methodology here for the pastor is to overturn wrong and false conceptions of God. Who is the God who you believe does not love you? We seek not so much to prove that the individual is lovable or worthy of love, so much as we clarify the nature and character of the Triune God of love and grace. This occurs through a pedagogy of relationship, of education, and of clarification both individually, but also corporately. Simply put, this requires a **'re-thinking'** of the Triune God.

CHAPTER FOUR

Practical Theology and the Nature and Cause of Anxiety

Towards a Therapeutic Trinitarian, Incarnational Ministry of Care

4.0 Towards a Greater Understanding

The presenting problem of anxiety is one of the emotions of self-examination and assessment. The author has experience with this emotion both personally and pastorally. The author also struggles with this emotion of self-assessment. Following the Whitehead's tripolar approach of critical correlation between Scripture and the Christian Tradition, cultural information including the social sciences, literature and philosophy, and finally personal experience and the experience of the individuals, a decision will be reached about how best to live the Christian life (praxis) faithfully in light of the issue. Praxis leads to reflection (theological) and then to a different praxis. Perhaps the first question could be something like what should the care of someone struggling with anxiety be?

Anxiety is at once a feeling, an orientation, and an emotion. It is also a theological issue and a psychological issue. Regardless of which of these it is; it haunts many. It has haunted me most of my life. Who among us has not felt a strange, inchoate sense of cold dread washing over us, as if someone had poured a cooler of ice water over our heads, at one time or another? Each of us on occasion has been anxious about something or someone. Whether our anxiety is caused by facing that new school shortly

after moving, seeing the police officer behind you when looking in the mirror, going to the doctor when sick, or hearing news reports about a tornado setting down close by is irrelevant. Anxiety is anxiety regardless of the cause. Whether it is indefinable, but simply present—anxiety, at least in some form, seems to bedevil much of humanity.

We have all felt this cold, sickly feeling, which steals over us unannounced and causes us to be on edge. We become tense, short with others, and hypersensitive about how we will be seen. When anxious, it is hard to try to figure out how to move through it constructively while landing safely on the other side. What is anxiety? We may know what it feels like more or less. We may be able to describe it. However, what is it really? Is it a psychological issue? On the other hand, is it a theological issue? Perhaps it is not distinctly one or the other, but both at the same time. Are there other difficulties represented? What are we to make of this emotion?

Webster's Third New International Dictionary (1976) defines anxiety as the state of being anxious or of experiencing a strong or dominating blend of uncertainty, agitation or dread, and brooding fear about some contingency. There is also uneasiness. A strong concern about some imminent development or a strong desire, mixed with doubt and fear, for some event or issue. An unpleasant feeling of helplessness and isolation sometimes accompanied by a physiological manifestations of fear, consciously accounted for by the anticipation of pain, death, or some unknown catastrophe but without sufficient objective justification…(97) The English word anxiety stems from the Latin verb **angō** which means—"draw close, press tight, squeeze, compress, throttle, and choke." (Lewis 1891: 58) The Latin noun *angor* means—"strangling, choking, suffocating, trouble, anguish and melancholy. (Lewis 1891: 58) In addition, the Latin word (noun) *anxietas*—can be

translated as "anxiety, solicitude" while the adjective closely related to it, *anxius*, may mean—"troubled, solicitous, causing anxiety, troublesome, afflicting, prudent and cautious." There is some debate, but it seems that Thomas More is the first English writer to use the term. More uses his apparently new English word, 'anxietie' twice, to suggest 'a mind that is troubled' in his treatise (The Four Last Things, 1522) titled *De Quatuor Novissimis.*[7] (Tone 2009: 3)

Even though Thomas More may have originated the English word for anxiety, the existential and experiential phenomenon, which the word seeks to define, is not new. For the Bible in the book of Proverbs states, "Anxiety weighs down the human heart, but a good word cheers it up." (NRSV; Proverbs 12:25) Eliphaz, one of Job's acquaintances, announced in his second speech, "All his days the wicked man suffers torment, (the torment of anxiety) throughout the number of the years that are stored up for the tyrant." (Job 15:20 NET Bible) While the book of 1 Peter, traditionally attributed to Jesus' chief disciple, exhorts its readers, "Cast all your anxiety on God, because he cares for you." (NRSV; 1 Peter 5:7) Anxiety was, even back then, something troubling.

One of my favorite passages in the New Testament is the story of Mary and Martha. Much may be learned from its message upon reflection. Jesus and his disciples are traveling, as they were wont to do in the gospels. Jesus and his entourage enter a village on the way to where they are going, and are soon welcomed into the two sisters' home in that parish. Mary sits at Jesus' feet and listens to his conversation and teaching.

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[7] On this see Laurie Johnson, *"Nobler in the Mind": The Emergence of Early Modern Anxiety*, Aumla, 2009 (http://www.academia.edu/330883/_Nobler_in_the_Mind_The_Emergence_of_Early_Modern_Anxiety) accessed Feb. 16, 2015

Martha, on the other hand, is furiously busy doing this and that. Finally, having had enough, Martha complains to Jesus about Mary's lack of busyness.

Jesus, in memorable words, particularly concerning our topic in this section, says, "Martha, Martha, you are worried (μεριμνᾷς) and distracted by much…." The Greek word μεριμνᾷς can be translated as "to be solicitous, worry, anxious, be concerned, give careful thought to, and to feel an interest in." (Liddell-Scott 1996: 1103) Martha was anxious about something; we know not what. Whatever her disquietude was about, it was enough to earn Jesus' insightful comment. Martha was probably not the only person during this time to suffer from this emotion. What might have Jesus meant by the better part? Many more, most likely, suffered from this apprehension. Various people wrestle with it today. The Bible is familiar, as we have seen, with the emotion of anxiety.

One of the early Church fathers John of the Ladder noted, "Fear is danger tasted in advance, a quiver as the heart takes fright before unnamed calamity. Fear is a loss of assurance." (Climacus 1982: 199) Hilary of Poitiers, a fourth century Church father testifies to his own anxiety over death and nonexistence in his treatise on the Trinity. He writes of his dread at being destined for destruction. Indeed, his soul was "both anxious and fearful." (Poitiers, McKenna 1954: 11)

4.1 A Provisional Definition

Here, for us to begin is a provisional definition for anxiety: **an unease or dread over the unknown.** Because of this dread or inchoate fear, we may cease to be able to function adequately. Anxiety calls into question *our* future. Anxiety, then, may arise

because we fear for ourselves, or others—fear for their safety, their security, or their possessions. Anxiety is a generalized concern over what may occur.

While the provisional proposal regarding anxiety is a starting point, we do well to take into consideration the comment by Lutheran Theologian and author Ted Peters in the chapter on anxiety in his book titled Sin: Radical Evil in Soul and Society. He writes,

> Anxiety is a fear of loss. It is a sometimes-overwhelming sense of insecurity. Anxiety arises when we anticipate some sort of diminishment of who we are, when we anticipate the possibility that a part of us or all of us is going to die. Anxiety is the fright we feel at the prospect of losing our existence, at dropping into the abyss of non-being. Anxiety is the mark of death upon the living. (1994: 34)

Peters' comment adds fuel to the fire. Anxiety in this view becomes synonymous with sin. Early Medieval Theologian Hilary of Poitiers would certainly approve Peters' remarks. He experienced anxiety himself. If anxiety is an unease or dread over the unknown, for Peters, in addition, it is a worry over losing something possessed. It is a fear of losing *something*. Something we have or something we are. Peters points out that our existence is indeed finite—as we get older, we become strangely aware of this limit to our time. At the age of 53 I am peculiarly aware that I am no longer young, but I'm also not yet as old as some in my congregation. Middle age occupies an interesting dilemma all its own. It seems as if our number of days is no longer endless or infinite. When we were children, it seemed every day lasted a lifetime and we would never die. Summer breaks were, or at least they seemed to be, for eons. However, as we mature, death becomes more and more a guest in our life. Friends pass and we realize our own frailty. Former teachers age and die more frequently. As we look ahead, at some point,

we grasp that the number of days left is far less than the number we have lived. How did that happen? Our worry over this felt sense of finitude, which is the 'sting of death' is deeply troubling, as Peters puts it, in the living of our lives. (1994: 35) Because of the genuineness of our finitude, anxiety at its foundation seems to be **the worry of non-existence**. What will we do about this? Will we become deer caught in the headlights? Is this an opportunity? This object-less fear, upon which we may never set our sights—on the one hand—becomes the breeding ground for sin, or—on the other hand—as Peters has it, it may become the very real possibility for faith. (1994: 64) Anxiety, then, may be the fecund ferment for movement forward. Peters' comments add to our starting, working definition. His point of view is an important learning, but surely, there is more to anxiety. Having begun with a definition and a brief reflection on the nature of anxiety we will continue to press forward.

4.2 Friedrich Nietzsche and the Perspectival Nature of Knowledge

If the history of philosophy (and theology for that matter) has revolved around notions of truth, of knowledge, faith, and skepticism and of whether there is an objective world beyond our senses, then it may be safely said that Friedrich Nietzsche exploded all the arguments for and against the aforementioned with his own fascinating '*perspective*!' Nietzsche argues forcefully that there is no epistemological position *sub species aeternitatis.* (Cox 1999) That is, there is no knowledge above the fray of living. Instead, our interests, learnings, and background all influence how we view an object and then "interpret" that object. Knowledge is always fluid and as the breadth of knowledge

enlarges, it does so through interested viewpoints and differing 'perspectives.' In this process, there is always revision. Each human being comes with their own perspective in interpretation, which yields their own proposal. One is perhaps not better than another proposal. Negotiation over which proposal is more likely may be described as the state of play. Nietzsche writes in On the Genealogy of Morality (Nietzsche, Del Caro 2014), "*...the more* eyes, different eyes we know how to engage for the same thing, the more perfect will be our *'concept'* of this thing, our 'objectivity.'" (3.12: 308) While not completely agreeing with Nietzsche's stance, because his argument did not consider revelation, his outlook is nonetheless an important one. It will guide our investigation in this chapter. In seeking to understand anxiety, then, we will investigate several 'perspectives.' Such information will assist theological reflection.

4.3 Personal Experience as a First Perspective

One source of information upon which to reflect which the Whitehead's highlight is the perspective granted by experience. Now, this section's topic is of particular interest to the author, because in January 2004 I was diagnosed by my doctor with "Generalized Anxiety Disorder." His verdict was coupled with a secondary one, "Depression" and I was immediately placed on medication. The behavior behind the diagnosis, plus my own penchant for melancholy, increasingly hampered my relationships with my spouse and our children. It also affected my ability to be effective in ministry. I had been plagued for some time by a vague uneasiness, bordering on nervousness on occasion, which never seemed to dissipate. I was anxious all the time. This had begun in childhood, but I did

not have a word for it. I could not name it. Thinking about unrelated things would turn me cold as ice as the anxiety washed over me—tomorrow's schedule, visiting a parishioner, Sunday's upcoming service, youth ministry and so on. Arranging for a church trip or a dinner was distinctly unpleasant. Everything, it seemed, caused me anxiety. Talking with people and developing a rapport with them was a nightmare. Sleeping had always been difficult, but now it became almost impossible. When I did sleep, it seemed to be forever. I seemed to be uneasy all the time, exhausted frequently and forever on edge. Always there was this inchoate sense that disaster was just around the corner.

I began to realize as I matured through my twenties and thirties that the one day in the month that I was 'down' or 'blue' became increasingly more frequent. One day turned into two days, then four, and even more. I could hear a song from a previous decade and my mood would suddenly tank. I could look through an album and sadness would overwhelm; I could watch an old television show and the gloom would engulf me. Finally, it seemed that I was despondent, sad, anxious or angry all at the same time—more often so during the month than not.

The needs of the congregation seemed to suck everything out of me, like a sponge that had been squeezed one too many times. Soon the issue was not whether I was depressed or anxious, I was increasingly depressed and anxious on more days in the month, than not. The way this came out, unfortunately, for my family was anger. It seemed I was angry about something all the time. The issue ultimately became not whether I was depressed, but whether I was *not* depressed. This vague sense of uneasiness finally reached a head (it seemed I was angry and frustrated all the time) and I

sought help. Counselling began, as did medication prescribed for my diagnosis. I have become better at realizing what is going on, when it does, and taking the necessary steps to deal with this condition. I, sometimes, still struggle…this difficulty made reflecting on my call to ministry even harder. How could God call me to something so difficult? Leading worship and preaching was a nightmare. To get up in front of people overwhelmed me. Every Sunday was a literal battle between my discomfort and that which I believed God was calling me to do. It still is.

Generalized Anxiety Disorder according to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-IV) is characterized by worries that are not always identified as 'excessive,' but distressing because of their constancy. This may yield some kind of impairment in social settings, vocational settings, or other important areas where functioning is important. The intensity, duration, or frequency is often out of proportion to the actual origination or effect of the event(s) that may be causing the anxiety. The worry seems to take over my existence, and can interfere with everyday living. The apprehension may be over what others would consider routine everyday events—job responsibilities, appointments, finances, health, misfortune and so on. (APA—DMSV IV 1994: 432) That is, the anxiety disorders all involve fear, anxiety, worry, and avoidant or corrective behaviors. They differ from each other in the primary object of threat. (Craske 2003: 1) With the additional clarification by reflection on experience, we continue to press forward.

4.4 Lack of Assurance and its Modern Offspring: Anxiety

As we have seen, the felt emotion of the lack of assurance of God's love and / or our salvation has been a perennial issue for Reformed thought. Stretching from Augustine to Karl Barth, God's purposes for human beings have been questioned by many, studied over by some, argued over by more than one theologian, and cursed by those who felt excluded. In addition, the specific doctrine of election has played an important part in this discussion. Double predestination has driven many Reformed Christians into uncertainty about God's purposes for them. On which side do we fall? Are we in or are we out? Does God love us or can God only feel revulsion for us? In the time stretching from the European Reformation to the time in which John McLeod Campbell was situated, one of the key issues was, as we have indicated, a "lack of assurance." To be sure, not everyone that was a Reformed Christians struggled with this.

However, many did; two examples were the German Reformer Martin Luther (Bainton 1950: 25-30) and French Reformer John Calvin. (Bouwsma 1988) Both experienced and suffered from a "lack of assurance." Both worked through their fear by focusing not on their emotions, which could and did change, but rather on Jesus Christ. As they spent time studying who he was and what he accomplished on our behalf, their outlook changed. In both men, their milieu, and their particular understanding of Christianity seems to have played a part in the problem.

Today, instead of using the theological term "lack of assurance" which has almost dropped out of sight among theological terminology, because of the influence of psychology in our culture, we would probably use the term "anxiety." While "lack of assurance" involves only the issue of our salvation (and perhaps a secondary issue of the question of God's nature, character and regard), "anxiety" covers a wider, more inclusive

breadth of issues. It may, to be sure also include a “lack of assurance.” However, more than likely, its breadth and depth is wider and deeper—because people may be anxious about a number of things, not only whether or not God loves them and if they are "saved." Regardless of how closely aligned both a ‘lack of assurance’ and ‘anxiety’ are or are not; the author believes they are related. As we shall see, John McLeod Campbell offers a resource for the pastor in his or her work with those struggling with this difficulty.

4.5 A Beginning Theological Perspective: Hans Urs Von Balthasar

We have provisionally defined anxiety then reflected on the personal experience of anxiety. We then aligned it, somewhat, with a lack of assurance. Walking around anxiety and surveying it, as one would study a statue in a museum, offers us a variety of perspectives into this debilitating attitude. We have begun by noting that anxiety is the distress of the unknown. It is also, from another angle, perhaps, the worry of death. In trying to come to terms with the variety of ideas about anxiety there are many places and thinkers with which we could begin. Twentieth century Swiss Roman Catholic theologian Hans Urs von Balthasar’s work on anxiety, however, from a theological standpoint is our first choice. This is the first resource from the Christian Tradition (per the Whiteheads) which we will excavate. We will survey, following von Balthasar, several authors whose perspectives offer additional assistance. Von Balthasar sets the standard high for a serious theological engagement with anxiety. He writes,

> "…the anxiety of modern man [occurs] in a mechanized world where colossal machinery inexorably swallows up the frail human body and mind only to refashion it into a cog in the machinery—machinery that thus becomes as meaningless as it is all-consuming-the anxiety of man in a civilization that has destroyed all humane sense of proportion and that can no longer keep its own demons at bay. This anxiety underlies almost all modern neuroses…" (von Balthasar 2000: 35-36)

At the heart of von Balthasar's reading is the problem presented by a closed organized system of cause and effect where God is simply not needed. One pertinent issue here is the freedom of humanity to act meaningfully. If the system is closed then nothing can alter it. If it is organized by cause and effect, then contingence is a myth and a fairy tale. In this milieu, Soren Kierkegaard—so von Balthasar has it, convincingly articulated both the dilemma (anxiety) faced by those of his time and in addition, the dilemma's solution. Kierkegaard did this from a distinctively Christian standpoint—although on von Balthasar's reading could not ultimately extricate himself from the psychological framework, in which much of his book is written. Kierkegaard's treatise on anxiety ends up, on von Balthasar's reading, being a mixed bag—and not altogether a good one—between part philosophical treatise and part psychological treatise. For Kierkegaard, as von Balthasar writes, summarizing his central thesis, "…anxiety remains for him a matter of the finite mind horrified by its own limitlessness…" (von Balthasar 2000: 32) A criticism, which von Balthasar raises against Kierkegaard, is that for a Christian theological essay it does not mention either God or Christ. Defending Kierkegaard, for just a moment, in what he is describing, from another angle, is primarily the 'experience' of anxiety.

For a book designed by Kierkegaard to be both Christian and theological, this lapse, for von Balthasar, is a glaring and telling omission. The author, though sensitive to Kierkegaard's starting point, agrees with him. Even though von Balthasar has drunk deeply from Kierkegaard's well, he desires to move the argument forward by building his own well. Von Balthasar desires to move beyond the boundaries of Kierkegaard's definition of a limitless freedom that lies before one who must decide what to do next. He desires in this work to propound a 'serious theology of anxiety.' Like his Basel colleague Karl Barth, von Balthasar does not begin with the social sciences in arriving at a definition of this phenomenon, but instead begins with Scripture. He writes, "…the correct view and explanation of reality, therefore, is based neither on the human mind nor on the soul…the true standard and guarantee is, rather, the Word of God, which speaks about mind and soul and their anxiety." (von Balthasar 2000: 34)

Anxiety, so Scripture notes, is a given for humanity. (von Balthasar 2000: 40) It is not something, however, of which to be ashamed. (von Balthasar 2000: 40) von Balthasar points to the greater reality of Scripture for an understanding of humanity, and it is from Scripture's guidance that we must truly understand this emotion. Our true benchmark and security amidst all competing suggestions and provocations is God's Word. God's Word speaks clearly about the soul, the mind, and humanity's anxiety. Only in turning away from the cacophony and noise of this modern age, each of which shouts out its own theory about anxiety, can we arrive at truth. Scripture begins by indicating that humanity is anxious. However, beyond the neutral quality of anxiety—in the Old Testament—there are two divergent paths—one which the wicked person takes

and one which the respectful person takes. (von Balthasar 2000: 67) The anxiety of the wicked is,

> "…opposed to reality, appears meaningless and devoid of being and nevertheless derives from this its substance and a manner of meaning and of being peculiar to itself alone. It is a cosmos of anxiety that is constructed entirely from anxiety, in which everything is a function of anxiety-even breathing the empty air and every phenomenon occupying space and time." (von Balthasar 2000: 51)

This anxiety is almost overwhelming for human beings. On von Balthasar's reading, this anxiety stands against that which is real and instead offers itself as a counter-reality. Anxiety, in this view, threatens to, and does, overwhelm the individual. While, by contrast, the anxiety of the faithful, the good, which is nonetheless as real, is markedly different,

> "…this region of freedom from anxiety is established by a God who is himself surrounded by fear and trembling, whether we consider his essence, his outreach to man in the mystery of election, or finally the divine destiny into which he guides his chosen one." (von Balthasar 2000: 55)

This anxiety, though of a different class than that of the wicked, is nonetheless still real but encouraged by God's majesty and glory. God's call comes, nevertheless, and his command to the faithful is to believe and to have faith—yet,

> "…the command to be fearless stands before him, to be sure, but as he reaches for it, waves of anxiety engulf him, and his relationship to God

> consists in the struggle to catch hold of the plank in time." (von Balthasar 2000: 60)

It seems here that von Balthasar has the Apostle Peter in mind. In the gospels, Christ commands him to walk on the waves in order to come to him. Of course, Peter made it one-step, perhaps even a step and a half, before his nerves betrayed him. Then he fell into the water.

In the New Testament, anxiety as a phenomenon inherent in both classes of people, bad and good, becomes intensified. In the incarnation of the Word made flesh, the ground of our reality is irretrievably altered because God in Christ as the Incarnate One has amazingly taken anxiety upon himself. (von Balthasar 2000: 73) Christ bears in his body and upon his person "the anxiety of the world so as to give to the world instead that which is his: his joy, his peace." (von Balthasar 2000: 88)

In a substitutionary and vicarious exchange, which reaches its culmination upon the cross, Jesus Christ could not become "man in any other way than by coming to know human fear and by taking it upon himself." (von Balthasar 2000: 73) Human anxiety reaches its culmination, or as von Balthasar has it, its nadir (Balthasar uses the term abyss) with Jesus' abandonment on the cross by God his Father. Through Christ's vicarious anguish seen in his suffering and passion, "Christ himself redeemed, subdued, and gave meaning to all human anxiety and fear." (von Balthasar 2000: 81) Christ's anxiety in that moment of stark alone-ness transforms this aeon into an entirely *new* aeon. Our anxiety, then, participates in Jesus' anxiety—"it is now possible for human anxiety *in toto* to participate in the fruitful anguish of the cross." (von Balthasar 2000: 79) In so doing, human anxiety itself "has been completely and definitively conquered by the

Cross." (von Balthasar 2000: 81) In the totality of his existence, Christ has carried us. Von Balthasar posits a new state of things and a new existence given Christ's birth, life, death and resurrection whereby he dissolves the separation (*chorismos*) between the sacred and secular, heaven and earth, the divine and the human—so every reason we might have for any kind of fear has been thus "invalidated." Therefore,

> "…anxiety too has been banished and overcome once and for all. And this is so not merely in a juridical sense and by rights, but, for those who belong to Christ, ontologically and essentially. Insofar as he possesses the life of faith, the Christian *can* no longer fear." (von Balthasar 2000: 82)

On von Balthasar's view there is nothing left to *fear*. That indescribable nothing from which we cannot free ourselves, has been banished by the person and work of Christ. We may still be anxious, but our anxiety truly has no referent—it is merely a phantom, a figment, a shadow of that which was, but which is no longer.

4.6 The Universality of Anxiety

The pervasiveness of anxiety sufferers has been documented by Jonathan S. Comer and Mark Olfson, who in their chapter "Evolving Concepts of Anxiety—The Epidemiology of Anxiety Disorders" point out that,

> Anxiety disorders are the most prevalent class of mental disorders and collectively they impose a substantial public health burden on society. This burden is reflected among persons with anxiety disorders in elevated

> rates of general medical disorders high healthcare utilization and costs, loss of worker productivity, increased risk of suicide attempts and suicidal ideation, and poor health-related quality of life. (Simpson, Neria, Lewis-Fernández, Schneier 2010: 6)

Our anxiety over different events and circumstances is wide-ranging today. Joanna Bourke notes that there is a distinct difference between fear and anxiety. Fear as she puts it, refers to an "immediate, objective threat." While anxiety, by its very nature, refers instead, to a "more subjective, anticipated generalized threat." (Bourke 2005: 189) Anxiety, she writes, "is described as a more general state, while fear is more specific and immediate." (Bourke 2005: 189) When we are in a state of fear, the object is right in front of us. We will either fight or flee. Regardless, adrenaline rushes through our body. When we are anxious, we are not consciously aware of what it is specifically about which we are in such dread. Although, as a cultural historian, Bourke does not want to create artificial boundaries between both notions because to do so could be splitting hairs—she does note that there is a *distinct* difference.

Anxiety can lead to behavior that is angry, controlling, easily ignited, and leads to avoidance of uncomfortable situations. Thus, Harriet Lerner notes,

> When anxiety is chronically high it leads to more serious outcomes such as greed, bigotry, scapegoating, violence, and other forms of cruelty. In these anxious times, on both the personal and political fronts, ideas are embraced and decisions are made not on the basis of clear thinking that considers both history and the future, but rather on the basis of hearts filled with fear. We owe it to ourselves and others to learn how to recognize behaviors that reflect and escalate anxiety—and to manage our own anxiety so it doesn't get played out in hurtful ways. (Lerner 2004: 6)

When one is anxious and is not sure why, it can create quite a stress. Feeling this stress, often, leads to a desire to avoid the precipitating cause. As Renata Salacl suggests, anxiety by its very nature occurs in response to someone or something that is vague and ethereal, appearing dispersed as if in a foggy void, and indeed almost seems to give the impression that it is focused towards almost nothingness itself. (Salecl 2004: 16) When asked by someone why we are anxious, more than likely we will not have an answer.

4.7 A Particular Cultural Phenomenon? – American Anxiety

Existential Philosopher and Psychologist Rollo May, in his published doctoral dissertation of more than half a century ago, titled *The Meaning of Anxiety* notes that anxiety as a feeling or an emotion is not focused, but rather is diffuse in nature. (May 1950: 190) He sees World War II as the demarcation point between what he terms covert anxiety and overt anxiety. (May 1950: 3-4) Both before and following WW II, according to May, what appeared was 'psychological autonomy' or, in other words, the idea of 'homelessness.' This, of course, caused (and was caused by) a sense of loneliness among people of all lifestyles. This anomie (the breakdown of bonds between the individual and society) was experienced as an inability to be loved or to love, but at the same time an increased pressure of conforming to society's norms (or society's perceived norms). One evaluation that May renders is the sense of change. This was particularly the case during the Depression in the 1930's, which fueled people's sense of uncertainty regarding work, societal norms, and leisure activities. That economic concerns drove much of the anxiety is a given. May suggests that it was, in fact, a vicious circle similar

in idea to the question regarding the priority of the chicken or the egg. I suspect not much really has changed since then concerning the cause of anxiety.

What this means is that anxiety itself, no matter what the presenting factor, is experienced as a vague feeling of uneasiness, perhaps even fear—but where fear is focused and may be pinpointed in its cause—anxiety, unfortunately, exists without a clear focus or cause. May points out that anxiety by its very nature is vague and objectless, yet it is a feeling of uncertainty and helplessness before some kind of ill-defined danger. (May 1950: 191) He calls anxiety "a subjective, objectless experience." What seems to be threatened is the very person's existence itself—our very core or essence itself. The cue for anxiety, then, is the indistinct threat of the dissolution of something within, some value, or characteristic, which the individual holds as fundamental or essential to their existence as an individual person. (May 1950: 191) We all possess learned behaviors that we use as security against perceived threats from the outside world, but for those suffering from anxiety it is our learned behavior itself that seems also to be under attack. Unfortunately, anxiety cannot be avoided, nor can it be dealt with in the same way as one might deal with fear.

One might even say that this has caused a good bit of anxiety among Christians who have turned initially to religion to provide them with certainty. Salecl also indicates that we are particularly prone in today's consumerist society to the anxiety of inadequacy. That is, we (here in the U.S.) will feel the sting of the need to keep up with the Jones's. We are anxious about not keeping pace with our neighbors. Specifically, Salecl points out that the message of the media is—that no matter what we do or how we do it—we will do it wrong.

When the advertisements appear on television, there is a problem-solution scenario (usually) based on their particular product. Weigh too much—take this pill or try this diet. Driving your car, but worrying about paying too much insurance—use ours—it's cheaper. Concerned your house will smell, use our air-freshener. Trying to get ahead, come to our college. What is the effect of this constant barrage? It can't be good. This causes perennial anxiety, ongoing unhappiness and thus feeds the need for assistance from whatever magazine, guru, or product seems most insightful. (Salecl 2004: 49-50) Having briefly excavated some information of anxiety from the social science, we return now in a dialectical fashion to theology.

4.8 One Foundation of the Modern Theological Concept of Anxiety: Soren Kierkegaard

In his treatise on anxiety, the great Danish philosopher-theologian Soren Kierkegaard may be said to separate the men, from the boys. He is arguably one of the most important sages (if not the most important) for any discussion of anxiety. Kierkegaard's book is a masterpiece. Gordon Marino (1998: 308) points out that "if a single text needed to be chosen as the source book of existential psychology and psychoanalysis, it would most certainly be "*The Concept of Anxiety.*" His influence and importance stretches into the twentieth century. Perhaps the most often quoted image for anxiety that Kierkegaard uses is "dizziness." For those of us afraid of heights, looking down from a great elevation causes severe apprehension. The blow to our gut is visceral and hard. It seems a panic swells within us, causing us to be overwhelmed much as a surfer who falls off their board is swept under by the waves and initially doesn't know

which way is up. Kierkegaard writes, "He whose eye happens to look down into the yawning abyss becomes dizzy." (Kierkegaard, Thomte 1980: 61)

The key thought here for Kierkegaard is "overwhelming unsteadiness." What is the dizziness of which Kierkegaard speaks? Does everyone experience it? What causes it? Kierkegaard, to supply a short answer here notes that it is the vertigo caused by freedom. Kierkegaard argued vehemently against the Reformed doctrine of predestination, notes Gregor Malantschuk who states,

> According to Kierkegaard, "the concept: predestination" "must be regarded as a thoroughgoing abortion." On the basis of the doctrine of predestination, God cannot be regarded as a concrete, living, and active reality who can again and again intervene in the course of the world and in the activities of the individual human being, but can be regarded only as a power totally bound to his own fixed plan. Then everything occurs according to an inexorable necessity, and ethical responsibility in human existence is thereby nullified. (2003: 11-12)

Here we see Kierkegaard reacting strongly to the idea that our behavior is determined. Our behavior is not determined or prearranged for Kierkegaard. Neither is the goal toward which we strive—presupposed. We are free. We must be free, but our freedom to choose the future and our own destinies, whatever they might be, causes anxiety in us—simply because we "can" choose. Kierkegaard writes, "The good is freedom. The difference between good and evil is only for freedom and in freedom, and this difference is never *in abstracto* but only *in concreto*." (1980: 110) What Kierkegaard is pointing to the vast expanse that is freedom itself. It is as if we are in the American West, which is covered in miles and miles of open grassy plains. This freedom, the openness of the

expanse, offers untold possibilities. It is also too much for some people. There are no boundaries before them. There is only grass, hills and the sky. The issue facing the person here is how will we respond, what will we do? I realized as the parent of three children, that they were happier with boundaries. There is something overwhelming about intense freedom. Kierkegaard, however, does not mean freedom in general, but rather "this" freedom—the freedom of the one individual. It is the ability of the individual to do this particular thing, instead of that specific thing. We need to be clear, however, that for Kierkegaard the object of anxiety is indeterminate, hazy and unclear. We may be free, but that freedom, which has the capacity, and power, to choose inspires within us nxiety over outcome and future. (Marino 1998: 319) Kierkegaard confessed in his Journal that,

> All existence makes me anxious, from the smallest fly to the mysteries of the Incarnation; the whole thing is inexplicable to me, I myself most of all; to me all existence is infected, I myself most of all. My distress is enormous, boundless; no one knows it except God in heaven, and he will not console me; no one can console me except God in heaven, and he will not take compassion on me…Deep within every human being there still lives the anxiety over the possibility of being alone in the world, forgotten by God, overlooked among the millions and millions in this enormous household. A person keeps this anxiety at a distance by looking at the many round about who are related to him as kind and friends, but the anxiety is still there, nevertheless, and he hardly dares to think of how he would feel is this were all taken away.
>
> (Kierkegaard, Thomte 1980: 170-171)

Anxiety was a constant state of affairs for Kierkegaard. For him the possibility of being disregarded by God was almost too much. For this kind of existence, Kierkegaard blamed his father who inculcated within his son the same kind of existential dread he himself experienced—particularly regarding Christianity. His father impressed upon

Kierkegaard a kind of "predestinarian fatalism" against which Kierkegaard fought constantly in his writings. (Watts 2003: 18) We have had opportunity to rehearse that fatal election in a previous chapter. Kierkegaard continually argued that we are free—but one of the side effects of this freedom is "anxiety." (Marino 1998: 319) This chaotic and dynamic anxiety is paradoxically formulated by Kierkegaard as an "antipathetic sympathy" and conversely, as "a sympathetic antipathy." (Kierkegaard, Thomte 1980: 42) What Kierkegaard means by these two opposing phrases is the joy we feel (on the one hand) in doing something that we desperately desire (like asking a beautiful girl out on a date). On the other hand, there is the dread and the question, "What if she rejects us?" We are afraid in general and anxious in particular of ultimately being alone in the world. Even further, we are nervous about being unrecognized by others. If we traveled through our anxiety, we would find that our greatest and deepest concern is of essentially being invisible to God, to others, and to ourselves.

Conceivably, this work by Kierkegaard is the result of much interiority, of meditation and thought over the relation between God's purposes and humanity's ability to make their own future. I suspect it is at once a psychological and a theological reflection by Kierkegaard on his father's own constant fears and anxieties about God's wrath and anger towards him. Michael Pedersen's viewpoint of life constantly contained the very real angst that God would exact revenge upon him for an isolated incident that had occurred many years before. In a fit of anger, Pedersen had apparently looked heavenward and cursed at God. This act cast a pall over the rest of his life and unfortunately Soren's also. As Patrick Gardiner observes,

> More potent, at any rate in its subsequent effects, was the atmosphere of gloom and religious guilt that emanated from a parent who believed that both he and his family lay under a mysterious curse and who, notwithstanding his worldly success, lived in constant expectation of divine retribution. (Gardiner 1988: 3)

Soren's upbringing, then, had its foundation in this morose, fearful, anxious Christianity. (Watts 2003: 22) We have termed this a "lack of assurance" following common theological terminology. This was—for the Kierkegaard family (father and son) a 'yoke grievous to be borne.' Thus, we attempt to deflect our anxiety, which threatens to overwhelm. (Marino 1998: 321) In Michael Pedersen's case it manifested itself in an attempt at a heroic Christianity filled with compulsive acts of religion—meditation, Bible-reading, prayer, regular attendance at church and a frenetic outlook which sought serious devotion at the expense of joy, peace, love, and all of the other fruits of the Spirit. This is a bastardization of Christianity—unfortunately all too common. Thus, unease may be negative, and for most people it is experienced as such—often interfering with life's happiness and joy. It also may be—on a positive note, the initiation of our spiritual education. (Marino 1998: 309) An example of this is the case of well-known spiritual writer Theresa of Avila (1515-1582).

In turning to Kierkegaard's treatise on anxiety itself, one is immediately overwhelmed—its language and thought on every line provokes apprehension, encourages dizziness and frustration. This may have been a literary technique designed, on Kierkegaard's part, to impress upon the reader—the very anxiety that Kierkegaard himself was seeking to unpack and explicate. The reader is tempted to give up, to put the book aside, and move onto easier literature. Kierkegaard's work is both thick and dense.

However, Kierkegaard's conceptualization of anxiety has been and continues to be the fundament for philosophers and theologians in their own attempts at defining and discussing this particular emotion (as we noted earlier that Hans Urs von Balthasar has pointed out).

Kierkegaard begins his proposal by looking to the Biblical narrative of Adam and Eve. In examining the Genesis account, however, he takes issue with the idea that Adam is both the name of an individual (identifying one particular person from whom all others descend) and yet stands in the place of all others as representative. Thus, Kierkegaard's interpretation is not orthodox, but constructive. In popular understanding this "representative" nature is exactly how Adam is viewed—but on Kierkegaard's view this representative status accorded to him, inevitably places Adam outside of history. Instead, the view that Kierkegaard argues for is that "at every moment, the individual is both himself and the race." (Kierkegaard, Thomte 1980: 28) Thus, we are all Adam—after a fashion. You are Adam. I am Adam particularly. We are Adam collectively.

Kierkegaard does not want us to assume because we use the name "Adam" that by so doing we mean a specific individual. We *are* "Adam," which Kierkegaard understands in the Biblical sense as meaning "humanity" as a whole. Neither, does Kierkegaard want to imprison us in some kind of inherited sin from Adam, our progenitor, which we may not avoid, and, which limits our freedom. Kierkegaard is desperately trying to avoid fatalism here. Therefore, we need only to look at ourselves carefully (as in a mirror) to gain the requisite information about ourselves and about humanity at large.

Undoubtedly, Kierkegaard would agree with the Oracle at Delphi, "γνῶθι σεαυτόν." (Know yourself!) By this, Kierkegaard understood that we ourselves, individually, possess enough information within ourselves, if we only examine our thoughts, feelings, and actions carefully to come to a reasoned conclusion regarding "universals." A category and model for Kierkegaard's work is the specific individual, indeed it is the touchstone of his thought, that is 'the existing individual' is a category all its own. (Gardiner 1988: 103) We are human beings and so what we discover about ourselves, more than likely will be true of others. He is, in this belief, actually guided by the Latin phrase, "*unum noris omnes*." A plausible translation of this phrase is "if you know one, you know all." (Kierkegaard, Thomte 1980: 79)

This is important because it is not just through Adam that sin comes into the world, but sin continuously comes into the world *because* we sin and *as* we sin we are Adam and Adam is us. Humanity/ Adam originally lived in a state of innocence. (Watts 2003: 157) This was a peaceful, unaware, innocent existence. Humanity was unconscious of individual freedom. Our spirits existed in an ethereal, dreamy realm.

Nevertheless, something is wrong. Anxiety exists, nonetheless. It is an aimless, objectless anxiety that is *about* nothing. Yet, because it exists in Adam's/ Humanity's consciousness *as* something—as yet undiscovered or unrevealed—it is *problematic*. We, as Adam/ human beings, introduce sin into the world. We did, we have, and we will. (Kierkegaard, Thomte 1980: 33) Adam **sins** and in so doing, loses his innocence through guilt. We also do so in the same way. Kierkegaard writes, "Every man loses innocence essentially in the same way that Adam lost it." (1980: 36) Indeed, innocence is only lost "by the qualitative leap of the individual." (1980: 37) We exist in the here are now. But

what will our existence look like in the next moment? This question raises the spectre of anxiety for us. The unknown looms before us, the fear and dread of this 'nothing which is at the same time something,' infects us with anxiousness. The possibility *and* potentiality is the rub. This is true for us; it is true for all Adam/ human beings.

Now, innocence ignorantly begets anxiety—"innocence *is* at the same time anxiety." (1980: 41) We do not know that we have a choice, but upon hearing God's command not to do something (eat the fruit of a specific tree) we realize that we *can* do this. Our spirits, which unite the body and soul, project their own existence and actuality, and in so doing, see the nothing outside of itself. What does the next moment hold? Will I obey or will I disobey? Can I? Should I? What if I do or don't? The questions multiply seemingly exponentially. Anxiety, for Kierkegaard, is freedom's certainty as the possibility of possibility! Anxiety, however, is categorized by a queer inchoate yearning for that which one dreads. Indeed, the prospects of our freedom are experienced as appealing and desirable—while at the same time undesirable and petrifying. This is the open field of grass, hills and blue sky, which lies before one. These conflicting emotions are felt all at once. (Watts 2003: 159) Anxiety is thus a seeming "foreign power that lays hold of us." (1980: 43) It is, as we said, a "sympathetic antipathy" and at the same time, an "antipathetic sympathy."

The prohibition in the Garden induces in Adam/ humanity an anxiety—because of this command not to do something, Adam begins to conceive of the real possibility of freedom; this is the "anxious possibility of being able." (1980: 44) God's command has raised the issue of whether we will choose to obey or whether and if we will choose not to obey. We should not—but we can! We are able, but are not supposed to be. God

commands us not to—but in that command exists precisely the opportunity for disobedience.

Adam does choose the wrong. Unfortunately, for us, the effect of this choice is the fall, which itself is "a qualitative leap." The reason for this fall is the fact that anxiety itself is entangled freedom—where freedom itself is not free, but rather entangled like a mass of cording and caught up in itself. (1980: 49) Discerning which are the beginning and the middle and the end of freedom is rather like seeing a mass of electric cord with no discernable start or finish. We want to tear ourselves free from this entanglement, but cannot. We do not—all at the same time—want to tear ourselves free, but we should. (Watts 2003: 159) Anxiety all at once makes us powerful and simultaneously powerless. We sin, unfortunately, therefore, out of anxiety. Anxiety, thus, leads to sin.

Sin itself is then a consequence of anxiety. This situation for us, no matter which generation of humanity we are, because of the presence of hereditary sin, stirs within us the possibility of sin. We are, for Kierkegaard, free to sin or not to sin. Yet, even if we individually, choose the good, the Creation itself bears the marks of our sin. So too is anxiety which cannot be separated from sin. We exist. We also might not exist. Such a dynamic leads precisely to the problem encountered. Thus, sin entered in through anxiety and carried anxiety along with it. (Kierkegaard, Thomte 1980: 53)

We, unfortunately, can only understand how sin entered the world through self-reflection, because to try to draw conclusions from someone else's life would be to misunderstand their part in sin's entrance. (1980: 51) Each individual is at once a singular person different from all others, but at the same time, this singular person is

humanity as a whole. Sin for one may not be sin for another. Anxiety for one may not be anxiety for another.

Kierkegaard describes anxiety as either 'objective' or 'subjective.' Subjective anxiety arises in individuals and is the result of their *particular* sin. Subjective anxiety connotes the anxiety that exists in a person's innocent state. It corresponds to the subjective anxiety in Adam/ humanity as a whole, but is quantitatively different. Objective anxiety, however, is the reflection of sinfulness of the generation in the *whole* world. (1980: 56) That is, there is sin that exists within the **creation**, objectively speaking. (1980: 57) Its entrance into the world shaped its significance. Thus, the Creation groans in anticipation of release. Creation, as Kierkegaard has it, has been placed in an entirely different light because of Adam's (our) sin. (1980: 58)

Moving from inhuman creation, that is, creation in general, to men and women in particular, we discover something unique and interesting about ourselves. Humanity is a synthesis of psyche (soul) and body that is constituted and sustained by spirit. (1980: 80) About this, Oxford Philosopher Patrick Gardiner writes,

> To be a person is to exist in the mode, not of being, but of becoming, and what a person becomes is his own responsibility, the product of his will, even if (as is frequently the case) this is something he does not want to confront and seeks to conceal from himself. Moreover, every individual can be held to be aware—whether actually or potentially—of a tension between his current conception of his condition and the presence of alternatives that are in some sense available to him; as it is put at one point, there is not a living being who 'does not secretly harbour an unrest, an inner strife, a disharmony, ... an anxiety about some possibility in existence or an anxiety about himself. (1988: 22)

Man and woman are not just a synthesis of soul and body, but also of the temporal and the eternal. (1980: 85) When the spirit wants to posit the synthesis between soul and body and looks down freely into its own possibility that this can and may occur, it lays hold of finiteness—because the inner dizziness has almost overwhelmed. This vertigo causes freedom to succumb. In that moment everything has changed and when freedom arises again it sees its own guilt. In the space between this first moment prior to finiteness and the second moment of finiteness lies the leap of faith.

The anxiety that is experienced is the selfish infinity of possibility, which does not tempt like a choice that one may make, but rather entangles and disquiets with its sweet anxiousness. (1980: 61) Thus, the individual that is anxious about sin—sins! (1980: 73) Kierkegaard writes, "…the individual, in anxiety not about becoming guilty, but about being regarded as guilty, becomes guilty." (1980: 75) Freedom's possibility reveals itself in anxiety. (1980: 74) Anxiety was and is ambiguous, perhaps because the *object* of anxiety is nothing! (77) The existential tussle with ourselves over what is right, our training, and the discipline needed to live the kind of life to which Kierkegaard aspired—required for him living "with" anxiety (even while struggling to overcome it). (Marino 1998: 309) Our existence, then, is the dialectic of opposites, including freedom *and* anxiety. John Caputo puts it this way,

> A human being is a spirit, and a spirit is a self, where a self is neither a merely material nor a purely immaterial being, neither a brute animal nor an angel. A self is a 'synthesis' of two different realms - of time and eternity, body and soul, finite and infinite, outward and inward, the actual and the ideal, the possible and the impossible. (2003: 103)

Perhaps it is because of this energetic dialectic, that we become what we ought not to be. Kierkegaard writes, "The moment sin is posited, temporality is sinfulness…had Adam not sinned, he would have in the same moment have passed over into eternity." (1980: 92-93) Anxiety is that "final psychological state from which sin breaks forth in the qualitative leap." (1980: 93) To seek the object of sin and anxiety is to arrive at the conclusion that it is simply "nothing." (1980: 97) Fate, then, is an external relation to (our) spirit…and is itself the intangible nothingness of anxiety. (1980: 97) Kierkegaard writes,

> "In the possibility of anxiety, freedom collapses, overcome by fate, and as a result, freedom's actuality rises up with the explanation that it became guilty. Anxiety at its most extreme point, where it seems the individual has become guilty, is not as yet guilt. So sin comes neither as a necessity nor as an accident, and therefore providence corresponds to the concept of sin. (Kierkegaard, Thomte 1980: 98)

Anxiety is defined by Kierkegaard as freedom's disclosure to itself in possibility. I can choose, but to do so might invoke difficulties in my existence. The qualitative leap is clearly actuality, and so it would seem that possibility is annulled along with anxiety. (1980: 111)

Sin, as Kierkegaard posits, "…presupposes itself, just as freedom presupposes itself, and sin cannot be explained by anything antecedent to it, any more than can freedom." (1980: 112) Freedom arises out of nothing and is in itself infinite. (1980: 112) Our life histories move from one condition to another. Our existence in this condition and not that condition includes anxiety. Anxiety is only overcome through the freedom to choose. Each different place and condition is posited by a leap. Sin enters

into the world—and continues to do so unless halted. Nevertheless, in proceeding—a new leap is required. To leap is to move from one state to another, but the state just prior to the leap is almost the same as the state when one leaps. Possibility is present in every condition and state, but along with *possibility* comes **anxiety**, which is also extant. This, unfortunately is the situation following sin's presence. This is, none other than, life. The way out of this dynamic state of anxiety, possibility, freedom and sin is none other than **faith**. (Copleston 1993: 349)

Ultimately, for Kierkegaard, if life is like a person seeking to traverse a tight-rope above an abyss, perhaps the Niagara Falls, the way forward, in spite of this dynamic interplay between forces which threaten to overwhelm and which on occasion *do overwhelm*—is **belief.** Faith is what keeps driving us forward. Our existence *through* this is the conviction of faith—which allows us to put one foot in front of the other, in spite of…

4.9 A Modern Existential Concept of Anxiety

For this author Kierkegaard's work has been informative, if heavy going. It has been informative. Perhaps one of the closest interpreters of Kierkegaard and his elucidation of anxiety is the Twentieth-century German-American theologian Paul Tillich. Paul Tillich offers us his own perspective on anxiety. We continue to press forward in seeking understanding. In his post-World War II book The Courage to Be, one will discover a similar existential emphasis with many of the same themes as in Kierkegaard's thought. However, Tillich takes up Kierkegaard's work on anxiety and

makes it uniquely his own transforming the core of it into his own existential philosophy. Tillich's work is a sustained reflection on the possibility of our courage in the face of numerous instigators of anxiety.

This work on anxiety by Tillich should come as no surprise given the particular time in which he wrote it. The horror of World War II was still palpably close enough to feel, with its devastating impact on Europe. The Marshall Plan was in full swing. The Germany that Tillich and his family had left in 1933 was gone, buried beneath tons of bombed out rubble. The spectre of death and the reality of destruction remained hovering in the background for years, following the German surrender. The 1950's with its boom and growth in the U.S. and Canada were just beginning. Hanging over everyone—still devastated from Europe's conflagration, regardless of creed or country, was the new spectre of nuclear war. Tillich observed the responses in those around him; that they were, as it was, suspended in an inner void, a vacuum, laden with an angst…which must be addressed. (Taylor 1987: 119) The roaring 1950's in the U.S. with its boom and growth, optimism and fun had not yet come into prominence. What would the future hold?

The perspective from which he writes The Courage to Be is "existentialism." Tillich himself notes that in taking up an existentialist attitude or frame of reference one seeks to be immersed in and to recognize one's intimate involvement in a situation, context, or milieu. This is in contrast with merely a "theoretical" or "detached" outlook (made normative by the positivists). (1952: 64) As one participates in life with the whole of one's being one gains the necessary connection with reality. This includes interacting with and changing temporal reality, spatial reality, historical reality,

psychological reality, sociological reality, and biological reality—in a finite, but free, way. (1952: 64) Tillich, himself, knew—of that which he spoke, that is "the anxiety of being." He knew the anxiety, writes one contemporary, which many feel "about the being that is there before us, within us, around us, the being that is available to us with its abundance of possibilities, its many complex facets, there to be lived, and, even more anxiety-producing, for us to live and to realize." (Ulanov 1985: 120)

In his reflection on the two concepts of courage and anxiety, Tillich clarifies his perspective and notes that he cannot attempt to present a psychotherapeutic theory of neurotic anxiety. (1952: 64) In so doing, he comes at his subject from a different aspect, indeed a "holistic" attitude. The weakness of any perspective of anxiety and courage is its limitedness, specifically because it is perspectival. Only in the light of an ontological understanding of human nature can the body of material provided by psychology and sociology, indeed any of a number of discipline's outlooks, be organized into a consistent and comprehensive theory of anxiety. (1952: 65)

For Tillich the problem is anxiety. The solution then is courage, namely the courage to be. This is not the kind of courage seen all too frequently in a Hollywood "Western." Particularly, courage, though, as it relates to anxiety. These 'fraternal' twin emotions—of anxiety and courage, for Tillich, exist as dialectical, interdependent, mirror-images, for if the dilemma of humanity is anxiety, then its counterpart is courage, which is its panacea and solution. Anxiety, for Tillich, in amidst this post WW II recovery with its new threat of nuclear war is **the** fundamental difficulty that besets modern men and women. The death toll of just a few years previous reminded humanity

of its fragility. Indeed, anxiety is *the* modern dilemma (existentially speaking). Tillich writes about how anxiety arises,

> Estranged from the ultimate power of being, man is determined by his finitude. He is given over to his natural fate. He came from nothing, and he returns to nothing. He is under the domination of death and is driven by the anxiety of having to die. (1957: 66)

The Jewish Holocaust by the time Tillich wrote was common knowledge. Add to that death from the war itself, plus tangential casualties because of hunger and deprivation and this yields estimates of up to 80 million people. Human life never seemed so cheap. Our limited lifetime is, including the fragility of humanity regarding death, for Tillich, the ontological basis of human anxiety. (Roberts 1961: 120) When one is young time seems eternal, but as one ages one's life seems increasingly short. Anxiety arises from our awareness of our *possible* non-existence. Humans, in response, may be overwhelmed by anxiety. In a sermon, from his days at Union Theological Seminary in New York, Tillich describes some of the symptoms of this anxiety and the problem it can and may create for us,

> But the serious problem is, as always, the problem of our own existence…Is it strong enough to overcome our neurotic trends, the rebellion of unconscious strivings, the split in our conscious being, the disease which disintegrates our minds and destroy our bodies at the same time? Have we overcome in moments of grace the torturing anxiety in the depth of our hearts, the restlessness which never ceases moving and whipping us, the unordered desires and the hidden repressions which return as poisonous hate, the hostility against ourselves and others, against life itself, the hidden will to death? (1955: 44)

The living of our life is a problem for us. Related too—is its end. Death is the spectre that haunts us all. The way clear of this, as Tillich points out is the grace of Jesus Christ, which provides us with the one resource needed to live, to live truly—authentically. Living by and in this grace, from him, we are made whole, the destructive spirits leave, our psychic compulsions are dissolved and the tyrannical mechanisms in our soul are replaced by freedom. With this gift we may have courage; courage, which is the emotion, will and strength to act and to live fully and freely. With God's help, the despair (which arises from anxiety) which is perhaps the most dangerous of all our dilemmas, this sickness unto death, is healed and we are saved from self-destruction. (1955: 45)

The courage to exist authentically and to be one's true self, insofar as this is possible, is never isolated from the courage to be as a part (of a greater whole). There is the courage to be one's self as an individual. There is also the courage to exist as the part of a larger group. Overcoming isolation and facing the danger of losing one's world in the self-affirmation of oneself as an individual are a way toward something, which transcends both self and world. (1952: 123-124) The person who is unsuccessful, however, in dealing with anxiety succeeds, after a fashion, in avoiding the extreme feelings of despair by escaping in "neurosis."

He or she affirms self, but only on a limited scale. Tillich notes,

> Selfhood, individuality, dynamics, and freedom all include manifoldness, definiteness, differentiation, and limitation. To be something is not to be something else. (1959: 190)

Neurosis, as Tillich explains it, is a way of avoiding 'non-being' by avoiding 'being.' It seems to be a halfway point, mediating affirmation of one's self in a limited fashion. This is a restricting of the full self. The self that *is* affirmed, furthermore, is not the full self, but rather a reduced, smaller self. It thus is limiting. Reducing one thus to an abridged existence. Tillich writes,

> He who is not capable of a powerful self-affirmation in spite of the anxiety of nonbeing is forced into a weak, reduced self-affirmation. He affirms something, which is less than his essential or potential being. He surrenders a part of his potentialities in order to save what is left. (1952: 66)

Hovering over us is the knowledge that human beings are "naturally" mortal. This is a truth described by the Bible. As the Old Testament philosopher, Ecclesiastes puts it, "There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens: a time to be born and a time to die." (New International Version, 3:1) This human mortality gives rise to our comprehension that we are finite. This sense of limitedness leads to anxiety. Our separation from the eternal leaves us facing the reality of death. Anxiety is present in everything finite.

> Anxiety refers to the object-less fear of non-existence, either as death, meaninglessness, or condemnation. For Tillich, anxiety is a natural state of being for a human creature capable of conceiving of its own existence. The concept of being leads to the inevitable human question of the radical possibility of nonbeing, and the various ways in which non-being is present in existence. (O'Neil 2008: 59)

It affects our lives, either consciously or unconsciously. Just as our heart beats continuously and we live our lives paying little attention to its activity, so too does anxiety exist within us just below the surface. Each person betrays their character differently, as perhaps does their anxiety. (Tillich 1957: 67) Being aware of our finitude *is* anxiety. Anxiety is the awareness of our limitedness, that is, our finitude. We are not eternal. We are temporally-bound. Anxiety, thus, is an ontological quality that is always present. Tillich writes, "Anxiety is ontological; fear, psychological." (1959: 191) Anxiety arises because of our awareness of our time-bound existence. We know we have a beginning. We also know we will have an end. There was a time when we were not. There will be a time when we will be not. Two quotes to elucidate,

> The first assertion about the nature of anxiety is this: anxiety is the state in which a being is aware of its possible nonbeing. The same statement, in a shorter form, would read: anxiety is the existential awareness of nonbeing. (Tillich 1952: 35)
>
> In every life death is always present; it works in body and soul from the moment of conception to the moment of dissolution. It is present at the beginning of our lives just as much as at their end. At the moment of our birth we begin to die, and we continue to do so daily, throughout our lives. Growth is death, because it undermines the conditions of life even while it is increasing life. But not to grow is immediate death. All of us stand between the fascination of life and the anxiety of death, and sometimes between the anxiety of life and the fascination of death. Death and life are the greatest, the all-embracing powers, which try to separate us from the love of God. (Tillich 1955: 57)

This sense of finitude, of the marked boundaries of our existence, touches us deeply. It is the sense of 'I am bound by a certain number of years,' but also (possibly) includes the

sense that ‘I will live within them’ which takes a courageous affirmation of our existence *as* existence despite its limitations, and resolution to act and to live.

Making the most of each day is courageous. Courage, Tillich clarifies for us, does not remove anxiety. Since anxiety is existential, it cannot be removed. However, it may be overcome through our living with it and in it. Courage takes the anxiety of nonbeing into itself. Courage is self-affirmation in spite of, namely in spite of nonbeing. The individual who acts determinedly, courageously, boldly takes in an act of self-affirmation the anxiety of nonbeing, non-existence, death into self. Courage does not need the safety of an unquestionable conviction. It includes the risk without which no creative life is possible. (Tillich 1957: 101) Regarding this kind of courage, Tillich had this to say,

> Courage as a human act, as a matter of valuation, is an ethical concept. Courage as the universal and essential self-affirmation of one's being is an ontological concept. The courage to be is the ethical act in which man affirms his own being in spite of those elements of his existence which conflict with his essential self-affirmation. (1952: 3)

To state through living that I matter and that I will not be cowed into a mere passive existence is courageous. To live in pursuit of one’s gifts and talents is to choose to overcome our limitations. It is to *be* courageous. This is living in its deepest, greatest, most radically ethical sense. Living before God, with God, by God, because of God, through God and in God’s strength one may learn to exhaust each day in the pursuit of genuinely existing.

> One has what has been called the love of one's destiny, and what, today, we might call the courage to take upon ourselves our own anxiety. Then one has the astonishing experience of feeling reunited with one's self, not in pride and false self-satisfaction, but in a deep self-acceptance. One accepts one's self as something which is eternally important, eternally loved, eternally accepted. The disgust at one's self, the hatred of one's self has disappeared. There is a center, a direction, a meaning for life. All healing—bodily and mental—creates this reunion of one's self with one's self. (Tillich 1955: 22)

We may also, as a corollary of the fact of our finitude, accept this reality (of our limitedness and finiteness) as an impetus (by grace) for creativity. Courage, then, in response, is our faithful-hopeful-belief in our existence, in the absolute face of abject dissolution—the *that-ness* of our non-being. We are courageous, in so far, as we accept our limitations (of time), while affirming our existence now, here, today. To live in the moment and to find meaning in that living is the *sine qua non* of courage. Now, courage may be understood in different ways. He writes,

> Courage as a human act, as a matter of valuation, is an ethical concept. Courage as the universal and essential self-affirmation of one's being is an ontological concept. The courage to be is the ethical act in which man affirms his own being in spite of those elements of his existence which conflict with his essential self-affirmation. (1952: 2)

Our anxiety may be, and can be, balanced by courage. Indeed, as David E. Roberts posits in discussing this theme in Tillich, "man is the most courageous of all creatures precisely because he has to come to terms with full-blown anxiety." (Roberts 1961: 122) Courage, then, is both ontological and ethical, in nature. Courage is "in spite of" that which would negate us. In our act of taking anxiety, *our* anxiety of *non-existence*, into ourselves, yet

remaining courageous—we state our right to exist, to live, and to be. By asserting ourselves as particular 'individuals' or as a part of a general 'humanity'…we are heroic. Courage and anxiety are interdependent, yet polar opposites. This is always risky—because we live *with* and *in* the threat of non-existence (what Tillich calls "non-being). How do we interpret this truth? We may experience this promise and threat as having a divine origin, as Tillich discusses in one of his sermons.

> We are hostile towards that to which we belong and by which we feel judged, even if the judgment is not expressed in words. As long as we feel rejected by Him (God), we cannot love God. He appears to us as an oppressive power, as He who gives laws according to His pleasure, who judges according to His commandments, who condemns according to His wrath…Our hostility towards life is manifested in cynicism and disgust, in bitterness and continuous accusations against life. We feel rejected by life, not so much because of its objective darkness and threats and horrors, but because of our estrangement from its power and meaning. (1955: 10, 11)

Interpreting our lives as lived under some kind of negative dissolution and hopelessness, perhaps even under judgment from that which above and beyond us—leads us from anxiety to despair and from despair to futility. In this case, we do not possess the resources for courage. Thus, we are lost. In this 'living' amidst the boundaries of our lives (from birth to death) we can and may devolve into a mere thing within the whole of things, or even worse, lose ourselves in a relatedness with others that becomes merely empty and facile. Courage is the willingness to move ahead, to live forward, even though there is no guarantee. In response to this 'act' and 'state of living' is the condition of anxiety and finiteness over which this act(ion) exists—and fights courageously against. For Tillich, anxiety is about the real existential awareness that our existence may end at

any moment. Courage, however, is the affirmation that we will live nonetheless. Anxiety is about limitedness, it is about finitude. Courage is the affirmation that we are capable of making a decision, "set in the context of destiny." (Roberts 1961: 125) Regardless, as we possess it as a gift from beyond, courage is the act of affirmation, the affirmation of ourselves, in spite of what seems contrary. Tillich writes,

> Courage needs the power of being, a power transcending the non-being which is experienced in the anxiety of fate and death, which is present in the anxiety of emptiness and meaninglessness, which is effective in the anxiety of guilt and condemnation. (1952: 155)

This power of being assists us in overcoming our estrangement from one's self. Will we take advantage of it and the resources it provides? Courage is important; indeed, it is fundamental, because being, which is limited by non-being, is finitude. Non-being appears as the *almost*, Tillich calls it the 'not yet,' and the end to, the 'no more' of being. As finite beings, we face our dissolution on a daily basis. Everything, except being-itself, is confronted with a definite end, writes Tillich in his Systematic Theology. (1959: 189) Being-itself is eternal; it has no beginning and no end. If it did, if would not be being-itself. Tillich used unconventional religious language, as is well known. "Being-itself" is a phrase that he used for the word "God." Tillich writes in another sermon,

> The name of this infinite and inexhaustible depth and ground of all being is *God*. That depth is what the word *God* means. And if that word has not much meaning for you, translate it, and speak of the depths of your life, of the source of your being, of your ultimate concern, of what you take seriously without any reservation. Perhaps, in order to do so, you must forget everything traditional that you have learned about God, perhaps even that word itself. For if you know that God means depth, you know much about Him. (1955: 44)

Courage arises from the personal encounter of the particular person with God. Mysticism is one way in which human beings experience a loss of self to something higher and greater and in so doing are courageous. In mysticism, Tillich asserts, the individual person endeavors to participate in the ground of being which approaches identification—that is, the self is absorbed into the being with which the mystic seeks union (1952: 157). From our viewpoint, this appears to be self-renunciation, almost self-negation. However, with a change of perspective, it may be viewed as the most radical form of courage, and at the same time the most perfect affirmation of self. (1952: 158) It is a rare person that seeks to give up self completely, so that he or she may join with the divine. Is this not the ultimate expression of courage?

However, not everyone is a mystic! Perhaps a better model is that of Luther, the great German Reformer who was keen to describe the possibility of a personal relationship between God and particular people, through faith. Confidence as courage reached its peak during Luther's work in the Reformation. The intimacy described by Luther about this relationship is almost on every line of every work. Tillich writes, "Luther's courage of confidence is personal confidence, derived from a person-to-person encounter with God." (1952: 162) The Reformation renewed the call for mediation through Christ. People were able in a new way to have a "direct, total, and personal approach to God." (1952: 162) This leads to the possibility of the courage to be one's self, truly, but even more so—it is the courage to be a part, and even beyond that, for one's courage must be transferred from self to God. Our confidence, courage, and faith

are based on God and God alone. Our impetus towards the finite is transformed towards an impetus towards the infinite.

Tillich also speaks about what we have already covered in a previous chapter—namely, the lack of assurance; although he uses slightly different language. The main form of anxiety during this period is the dread of guilt and of condemnation, because of sin before a righteous and holy God. The certainty of divine forgiveness leads to the experience of the courage of confidence. (Tillich 1952: 164) The Lutheran motto of "the one who is unjust *is* just (in Christ)" because of divine forgiveness is the counterpart to the more modern expression of "acceptance of the one who is unaccepted." Regardless of the phrasing, the victory experienced over the anxiety of guilt and condemnation (lack of assurance) is sharply expressed. (1952: 164)

This confident courage emphasizes hope, trust, and love of God. It rejects any other foundation upon which to stand. Nothing else leads to the courage of confidence. Our courage, then, is not inured or weakened, by anything finite, but instead is conditioned rather by that, which is unconditional and which we experience in our relationship with God. (1952: 167) This relationship is experienced as,

> Grace, [which] *happens* to us in those moments when reunion spans separation, recognition conquers estrangement, and reconciliation accepts that which is rejected. Grace *is* our capacity to open to the healing power of faith: We are grasped by that which is concerns us ultimately. Grace is given us mysteriously, in an encounter of persons; without it, Tillich sees no hope of anyone becoming a person at all. (Ulanov 1985: 125)

Tillich clarifies the relationship between fear and anxiety, because they are not separate—but are distinguishable. Each is imminent within the other. The bite of fear is anxiety, while anxiety struggles ardently in the direction of fear. Tillich writes, "Fear is being afraid of something, a pain, the rejection by a person or a group, the loss of something or somebody, the moment of dying." (1952: 37) Anxiety, conversely, worries about the implications of this negative occurrence or occurrences. When anxiety does not have a specific object, when it is a raw-naked anxiety it is always the anxiety of ultimate nonbeing. Anxiety is the excruciating sensation of not being able to deal with the threat of a particular situation. Anxiety, for Tillich, as a feeling or state arises in three forms,

1.) An anxiety of fate and death; (physical dissolution)
2.) An anxiety of meaninglessness and emptiness; (spiritual dissolution)
3.) An Anxiety of guilt and condemnation; (moral and ethical dissolution)

What does tomorrow hold? Indeed, what does the next moment hold? Will my existence have meaning? Will my life count for something? Alternatively, will it fall short of my hopes and dreams and also the hopes and dreams of those I hold most dear? These three various forms of anxiety are all of a piece and have existed individually (and together) during different historical periods, depending on (and despite) the milieu. (1952: 57) Indeed, if one era may be called an 'age of anxiety' it is that period which preceded the Reformation and continued through the Reformation itself. (1952: 58)

Now, the nature of anxiety may be understood in the following way—anxiety is the state in which we are aware of our possible end(ing) (non-being). Put succinctly, the substance of our anxiety is our existential awareness that we will one day die. Tillich writes,

> "Existential" in this sentence means that it is not the abstract knowledge of nonbeing which produces anxiety but the awareness that nonbeing is a part of one's own being. It is not the realization of universal transitoriness, not even the experience of the death of others, but the impression of these events on the always latent awareness of our own having to die that produces anxiety. (1952: 35)

We, perhaps, fear this dissolution most—that is the utter annihilation of our existence. This is at the heart of anxiety, any anxiety, itself. Tillich calls this the fear of **'non-being.'** This stands against existence, even though it has no right to exist. "The anxiety of fate and death," writes Tillich "is most basic, most universal, and inescapable. All attempts to argue it away are futile." (1952: 42) Overcoming this first kind of anxiety is crucial and key.

Refusing to retreat from this threat, men and women look for ways in which to live, create, work, play, and love and so on. In doing this they affirm the meaning of their lives. As they do so, they "participate" in being. They do not hold, but rather are held by the ultimate ground of their existence. Tillich writes,

> Everyone who lives creatively in meanings affirms himself as a participant in these meanings. He affirms himself as receiving and transforming reality creatively. He loves himself as participating in the spiritual life and as loving its contents. He loves them because they are his own fulfillment and because they are actualized through him. The scientist loves both the truth he discovers and himself insofar as he discovers it. He is held by the content of his discovery. (1952: 46)

This is "spiritual self-affirmation" and a part of meaningful existence. Nagging human beings while they seek to be a part of meaningful existence is "doubt" and "fanaticism." To err on either terrain is to seek for a certainty, which does not in fact exist. To miss this creativity, is to succumb to the "anxiety of meaninglessness" with its concomitant emptiness and loss of spiritual centre. Human beings are naturally creative, fecund, spiritual beings. Tillich writes,

> What does it mean to be concerned about something? It means that we are involved in it, that a part of ourselves is in it, that we participate with our hearts. And it means even more than that. It points to the way in which we are involved, namely, *anxiously*. The wisdom of our language often identifies concern with anxiety. Wherever we are involved we feel anxiety. There are many things which interest us, which provoke our compassion or horror. But they are not our real concern; they do not produce this driving, torturing anxiety which is present when we are genuinely and seriously concerned. (Tillich 1955: 153-154)

However, this is a tight-rope. Move too far to one side and there will be difficulties, move too far to the other and there will also be concerns. To attempt to live within ourselves, to "reach aseity," is sinful. (Roberts 1961: 127) We live with the desire and the need to affirm our existence, in spite of—whatever. But to overcome that which challenges and threatens us, requires outside assistance. To lose our balance in life may lead to despair—and ultimately to sin. While attempting at doing this successfully, we live with that which threatens us. Tillich writes,

> The human mind is not only, as Calvin has said, a permanent factory of idols, it is also a permanent factory of fears—the first in order to escape God, the second in order to escape anxiety; and there is a relation between

> the two. For facing the God who is really God, means facing also the absolute threat of nonbeing. The "naked absolute" (to use a phrase of Luther's) produces "naked anxiety"; for it is the extinction of every finite self-affirmation, and not a possible object of fear and courage. But ultimately the attempts to transform anxiety into fear are vain. The basic anxiety, the anxiety of a finite being about the threat of nonbeing, cannot be eliminated. It belongs to existence itself. (1952: 39)

Our anxiety is evoked by what we do not comprehend; therefore, ignorance produces anxiety, which in turn produces more anxiety. While God may be eternal, we are transitory creatures, which the Bible says are 'as grass in longevity, frail as the flower' (1 Peter 1:24). Our contingency threatens to overwhelm us and to leave us powerless to do anything, say anything, and be anything. In the face of such a short existence, it seems as if we are here one day and gone the next—in the total historical scheme of things. In the brief existence of ours, what do we desire the most? How will we make the best use of our span of days? Is this brief span of time long enough for us to have a real purpose and to see this purpose fulfilled on the world's stage?

> The anxiety of meaninglessness is anxiety about the loss of an ultimate concern, of a meaning which gives meaning to all meanings. This anxiety is aroused by the loss of a spiritual center, of an answer, however symbolic and indirect, to the question of the meaning of existence. (Tillich 1952: 47)

Does what seem to have been the case yesterday, make sense for today? To lose our sense of self, to become unable to respond to the estrangement which threatens us produces a self-hatred, which may include the will to end our existence, and a feeling of

entrapment—which may lead to severe attempts to escape our existence through sickness, mental illness, alcoholism, mishaps. Tillich writes,

> "Our hostility towards life is manifested in cynicism and disgust, in bitterness and continuous accusations against life. We feel rejected by life, not so much because of its objective darkness and threats and horrors, but because of our estrangement from its power and meaning." (Tillich 1955: 11)

However, this is the extreme, for Tillich living a 'meaningful' life is a key. We shape, as we do so, our existence through the categories of substance, time, space, and causality. (Randall 1961: 157) Tillich writes,

> Man's being includes his relation to meanings. He is human only by understanding and shaping reality, both his world and himself, according to meanings and values. (1952: 50)

Insofar as we exist, we are required to give an answer for our presence. What have we done with our lives? Are we contributing to others? Is our existence of benefit or detriment? Our anxiety drives us to question ourselves, which in turns leads to more anxiety as we seek to answer the question. This is the third kind of anxiety, which Tillich mentions. We are at turn judge, advocate, and plaintiff. Tillich writes,

> "A profound ambiguity between good and evil permeates everything he does, because it permeates his personal being as such. Nonbeing is mixed with being in his moral self-affirmation as it is in his spiritual and ontic self-affirmation." (1952: 52)

If our anxiety is not overcome, then it may lead to despair. Despair is the sense of emptiness and meaninglessness which overwhelms when we cannot seem to move forward successfully in life.

> Everybody is in this predicament, whether he calls that which rejects him "God," or "nature," or "destiny," or "social conditions." Everybody carries a hostility towards the existence in which he has been thrown, toward the hidden powers which determine his life and that of the universe, toward that which makes him guilty and that threatens him with destruction because he has become guilty. We all feel rejected and hostile toward what has rejected us. We all try to appease it and in failing, we become more hostile. This happens often unnoticed by ourselves. But there are two symptoms which we can hardly avoid noticing: the hostility against ourselves and against others. One speaks so often of pride and arrogance and self-certainty and complacency in people. But this is, in most cases, the superficial level of their being. Below this, in a deeper level, there is self-rejection, disgust, and even hatred of one's self. Be reconciled to God; that means at the same time, be reconciled to ourselves. But we are not; we try to appease ourselves. We try to make ourselves more acceptable to our own judgment and, when we fail, we grow more hostile toward ourselves. (1952: 53)

Life, for Tillich, this existence in which we find ourselves is hostile towards us on innumerable levels. We, in turn, sensing this hostility are antagonistic to this existence. To be without purpose, hope or possibility is to despair. To be without hope, is also to despair. This antagonism overwhelms. We are caught inextricably in that which will not release us—the inchoate, indefinite, ill-defined feeling of rejection which is never articulated, but real and experienced in us and by us in ways beyond our immediate comprehension. This hostility, from which we cannot escape, threatens to overwhelm. One aspect of anxiety is the reality of our being caught in a trap from which there is no

escape. The other aspect is that of the open, space, infinite in possibility and problem, which is overwhelming through its sheer lack of boundary. This anxiety is the problem for which we need a solution.

> The one type is the anxiety of annihilating narrowness, of the impossibility of escape and the horror of being trapped. The other is the anxiety of annihilating openness, of infinite, formless space into which one falls without a place to fall upon. (1952: 62)

On the one hand, not to move forward causes anxiety and may coalesce into despair. On the other hand, to perceive the possibility of moving forward exists, is to have anxieties raised, particularly if the normal or expected frameworks of meaning and order, power or belief change. (1952: 62) Change itself may cause anxiety. Newness may be a possibility, but that possibility may also bring visions of the unknown—which in turn may cause anxiety. Tillich notes, however, that

> [But] faith means being grasped by a power that is greater than we are, a power that shakes us and turns us, and transforms us and heals us. Surrender to this power is faith…[so that it becomes] possible for us to look at ourselves honestly and with clarity, to realize the strange mechanisms under which we are suffering and to dissolve them, reconciling the genuine forces of our soul with each other and making us free for thought and action. (Tillich 1955: 38, 40)

4.10 The Father of the Psychological Understanding of Anxiety: Sigmund Freud

We have covered a theological excavation of anxiety. This, however, is but one perspective, which needs to be supplemented. We move now to the social sciences. The cause and etiology of anxiety was revolutionized in the late nineteenth century when Austrian physician Sigmund Freud launched a new paradigm in seeking to lay bare the inner workings of the mind. He may be, because of this, justly termed the founder of "psychoanalysis." Just as Isaac Newton's work in physics was a watershed in intellectual achievement, so too was Freud's theory. Albert Einstein, building on the work of James Clerk Maxwell, similarly revolutionized physics in 1905, with his theories of space, time and relativity. Both Newton and Einstein's work was so paradigmatic revolutionizing how humans viewed the universe and our world within it, that one can safely say that there was no going back to the older, displaced theories. This same statement may be made of Sigmund Freud and his work in psychology. Freud created not only a new paradigm, but also a new language as he sought to open for examination the inner workings of the human mind.

In Freud, we find anxiety occupying an important place in the economy of the mind's workings. (Hall 1964: 61) Freud's views continue to persuade and influence even today. In seeking to exegete Freud's view of anxiety, one must be aware that there is an earlier view and a later view. One may note the significant change between his work titled *Inhibitions, Symptoms and Anxiety* from 1925 (published though in 1926) in Volume 20 in the Strachey English edition of Freud's Works to the article almost three-quarters of a decade later titled *Anxiety and Instinctual Life* from 1932 (published in 1933) in Volume 22 of the complete works of Freud, by Strachey. There are hints of Freud's later views early on in his works. Before the turn of the century, when his work

was in its infancy Freud was of the opinion that sex and anxiety were related. In his discussion involving the case history Frau Emmy von N. Freud posited that sexual abstinence was the cause of her anxiety and that this was all too often the case with women. (Freud 1893: 87) [Strachey, Vol. 2 "Frau Emmy von N, Case Histories from Studies on Hysteria"] Anxiety arose, Freud suggested, because of undischarged sexual excitement. If sexual excitement was "inhibited, arrested, or deflected" in its progress towards satisfaction, anxiety arose. (Freud 1894: 109) In this earlier thought, Freud believed that,

> The anxiety neurosis, too, has a sexual origin as far as I can see, but it does not attach itself to ideas taken from sexual life; properly speaking, it has no psychical mechanism. Its specific cause is the accumulation of sexual tension, produced by abstinence or by unconsummated sexual excitation (using the term as a general formula for the effects of, of relative impotence in the husband, of excitation without satisfaction in engaged couples, of enforced abstinence, etc.). (Freud 1895: 80) [Volume 3 Strachey Ed.]

Sexual feelings are one expression of the libido's instinctual impulses. Disturbances of the libido's expression turn, because of the agency of the interruption, into anxiety. (1894: 109) Thus, the libido impulsively seeks release because of some kind, any kind, of stimuli. Failing this release, the energy accumulated within the libido builds up. This build-up is, then, because of imprisonment, so to say, transformed from one state to another. Freud writes in explanation, "anxiety arises directly out of libido; in other words, the ego is reduced to a state of helplessness in the face of an excessive tension—due to need." (1894: 141)

The image that comes to mind here is that of a teakettle filled with water placed upon the heating element of a stove. When the water boils, the kettle rightly whistles to signal the waster has reached a suitable temperature for the tea to steep. If the kettle is not removed, the water will eventually evaporate through the steam and then air. Freud's point is that if there is no discharge of the tension—then the pressure will convert from one state to another. This state is anxiety. Freud writes,

> The psyche is overtaken by the effect of anxiety if it feels that it is incapable of dealing by an appropriate reaction with a task (danger) approaching from outside. In neuroses it is overtaken by anxiety if it notices that it is incapable of allaying a (sexual) excitation that has arisen from within. Thus, it behaves as though it were projecting this excitation to the outside. The affect (normal anxiety) and the corresponding neuroses stand in firm relation to each other; the former is the reaction to an exogenous excitation and the latter to an analogous endogenous one. (1895: 79)

One interpreter of Freud, Peter Gay, sums up this phase of Freud's thought. He notes that anxiety, as far as Freud is concerned, emerges from the libido. Not only is there an increase in tension and pressure, a buildup (as we have said), there is also an alteration of energy—much in the same way that vinegar undergoes a transformation into wine. (Gay 1989: 773)

As Freud continued to work, he realized how incomplete this view was and sought to adapt it and then ultimately replace it in publications he continued to write through the years. He was aware that there was a whole host of issues, which had not been properly addressed. Was anxiety always related to sex? Only sex? Or was there more to anxiety than this one unrequited stimulus? Was there repression involved?

Surely, then how? What relationship did the stimulus of danger have to anxiety? Freud continued to press for answers, because the questions kept arising.

During the next several years Freud continued to build on his views which originated from a condition described by George Beard in 1868. Freud notes in 1894, "I shall tell you then that we distinguish three pure forms of true neuroses: neurasthenia, anxiety neuroses, and hypochondria." (1894: 338) At the time, neurasthenia was a common diagnosis, which broadly included anxiety symptoms, among other symptoms (e.g., easy fatigability). These symptoms are now included in the characteristics of chronic fatigue syndrome—the World Health Organization's *International Classification of Diseases (ICD)* unhelpfully includes a category of neurasthenia (F48) among the neurotic, stress-related, and somatoform disorders. These also include anxiety disorders. (http://www.who.int/classifications/icd/en/) Freud subsequently modified his theory, suggesting that anxiety was more closely related to fear, occurring in response to perceived dangers, dangers either external (or internal). This led Freud to focus instead on the ego, where Freud suggested anxiety was actually seated as one of the functions of the ego, both to anticipate and negotiate danger situations. (1926: 92, 97)

Freud continued to hammer away at his views on the anvil of personal experience and ardent reflection. As he notes, "Anxiety is not so simple a matter." (1926: 131) In 1926, Freud moved towards looking for a cause to anxiety. He also struggled with understanding the meaning of anxiety for humanity. (Blass 2013: 123) In his essay *Inhibitions, Symptoms and Anxiety*, Freud concluded that anxiety functioned as a signal highlighting a dangerous situation was present or imminent. (1926: 137, 149) He writes, "Anxiety [Angst] has an unmistakable relation to expectation: it is anxiety about

something. It has a quality of definiteness and lack of object." (1926: 165) Anxiety as an affective-state is felt only by the Ego, although processes producing anxiety may occur in the Id and then transfer. (1926: 139) Formerly, Freud believed that "anxiety was a general reaction of the Ego, under the conditions of unpleasure." (1926: 160) Indeed, anxiety was libido repressed and unable to find release. In this paper, Freud struggles with whether anxiety and libido are as closely connected as he previously supposed.

Freud noted that a symptom or symptoms illustrate and perhaps form the presence of a particular pathological process. (1926: 86, 144) Something—an image, an event, an idea, a problem, something forbidden (desires or wishes)—stimulates the individual. Symptoms form in order to avoid the unpleasure of anxiety. (1926: 144) He or she interprets this as dangerous. Anxiety, thus, is a reaction to situations of danger. (1926: 127, 162) One response may be involuntary and automatic occurring on economic grounds. The second response is where the ego produces the anxiety-affect as it has need. (1926: 161) Freud suggests this is like an inoculation, a lesser occurrence of the illness in place of the full-blown sickness. This is part of the person's avoidance of the danger, whether external or internal. Freud continued to circle around castration apprehension as paramount and deeply embedded in anxiety. (1926: 125) This anxiety is of course buried deep in the unconscious. The unconscious, for Freud, is the primary system in the mental life of the individual. (Rieff 1954: 67) One may compare the unconscious to that of an iceberg almost completely submerged underwater. One only knows the unconscious through its effects, and momentary behaviors. Freud surmised from this that there are psychical processes within, but also stated that this was merely an assumption on his part.

There are three aspects, according to Freud, to the mental life of the individual—the Id, the Ego, and the Super-ego. The Ego is the mediator between these three mental realities. In so being, the Ego does what it can to bring the claims and demands made by all three into concord with one another. These assertions are always conflicting and often seem irreconcilable.

The Inhibition (or a symptom) is related to anxiety, which Freud classes under hysteria. Inhibitions may function with the goal of self-punishment. Symptoms reveal a problem. They also put an end to the danger-situation. Freud writes, "The presence of a symptom may entail a certain impairment of capacity…" (1926: 98) They are a consequence of the process of repression. There is a relationship between inhibition and anxiety. Performing certain activities highlights the possibility of either success or failure, which the mind, in order to avoid conflict, will not and cannot allow. Repressing the conflictual idea keeps it from becoming conscious. (1926: 90) The Id's instinct desires release. The Ego, through repression, (which is the equivalent of flight/ avoidance) stuffs the desire into the unconscious, where it persists. This builds up in the Ego, forming anxiety. That which arises in the conscious is "usually only a distorted substitute which is either of a vague, dream-like and indeterminate nature or so travestied as to be unrecognizable." (1926: 116)

Anxiety arises from a memory; it is not newly created in repression. We have to remember the dynamic nature of these processes (1926: 112) Repression occurs through an "undesirable instinctual impulse" aroused through some external perception. It also occurs internally, without seeming provocation. (1926: 93) Symptoms occur from the repressed unconscious and appear as go-betweens in front of the ego. The repressed

unconscious is foreign territory to the ego. We have to do here with internal foreign territory. However, reality is also foreign territory, just externally so. As an organized portion of the Id, the Ego seeks to both process and mediate difficulties. It aims at restoration and reconciliation. The Ego may also receive a kind of narcissistic pleasure through the symptoms that cause anxiety (and more specifically neuroses and paranoia). Symptoms arise because they are easier to deal with than the actual danger, which is the real cause for the anxiety. Freud writes, "Symptoms are created so as to avoid a danger-situation whose presence has been signaled by the generation of anxiety." (1926: 128)

Anxiety is an unpleasant feeling whose presence in our lives is hard to explain or articulate, but is there nonetheless. Freud notes that anxiety is a feeling of "unpleasure." (1926: 131) It is accompanied by a pretty fairly "definite physical sensation." (1926: 131) Summing up Freud notes that "anxiety is a special state of unpleasure with acts of discharge along particular paths." (1926: 132) Each different experience of danger indicates a particular defensive behavior of the Ego. (1926: 145) Anxieties vary according to the different stages of the individual's developmental growth. The various determinants of anxiety may have ebbed away, but their neurotic or symptomatic behavior may remain. Maturation may affect the level of anxiety, as certain triggers lose their significance.

Even though in this 1926 paper Freud writes, "Anxiety never arises from repressed libido." (1926: 108) He seems to want his cake and to eat it also. For Freud maintains in some situations that anxiety does indeed arise from a choked libido. (Blass 2013: 122) We have seen that, as Freud suggests, anxiety arises from an "affective signal" of (perceived or interpreted) danger, either implicit or explicit. Ultimately, the

cause of anxiety is the "danger of castration or of something traceable back to castration." (1926: 128) Against those (Otto Rank) who would argue that anxiety may be traced all the way back to birth and the separation of the fetus from his or her mother, Freud argues that birth is not experienced by us as a separation from our mother. (1926: 134) As infants, we are not aware of her existence.

Insofar as children are concerned, anxiety is determined by the loss of a significant object (or also the perception that the object is lost), perhaps a toy or even the disappearance of the parent. Later, understanding teaches the child that the object can be present physically, but angry with him or her. This is no better than if the object was absent. The loss of love from the object becomes a new and much more enduring danger and determinant of anxiety (1926: 169) Longing for the parent (Freud emphasizes the mother) arises because of the satisfaction derived from receiving something through the parent, food, physical contact, attention, and so on. Anxiety is the reaction to the possibility of loss. (1926: 170)

Freud's final thinking on the matter of anxiety may be seen in his 1932 lecture (XXXII) *Anxiety and the Instinctual Life*. Human instinct may be divided into two types, (1.) self-preservation (2.) preservation of the species. Ego instincts deal with the former, that of self-preservation. While sexual instincts deal with the latter type, that of the urge to reproduce. The Ego, Freud hypothesized, was the restricting power dealing with holding in check—type #1, that of preservation, assertion and magnification of the individual. The libido is the restricted and repressed instinct. Instinct is a drive, force, impulse (*Trieb* in German) originating within the individual which elicits a state of excitation.

Anxiety is an affective state, which may be compared to an individually acquired hysterical attack. It is a painful emotional experience for those who experience it. There is a distinction in the affective state of anxiety between "realistic" anxiety and "neurotic anxiety." (1932: 80) Realistic anxiety is a response to danger. Neurotic anxiety is the repetition of an old traumatic experience. This repetition offers the possibility of fight or flight. The traumatic experience is tied to libido. One may thus work through this previous difficulty, or by not addressing the issue the affective-state may become paralyzing. Neurotic anxiety is a freely floating, general apprehensiveness, on the one hand; while on the other hand, it becomes firmly attached to particular ideas in what Freud termed 'phobias.' In a phobia, a particular fear has been blown all out of proportion. Anxiety may also be found in hysteria and other forms of severe neurosis. Regardless of what kind of anxiety it is the nervous excitation it causes is stressful.

Freud believed that the commonest cause of anxiety is unconsummated excitation. Libidinal excitation is aroused, but remains unsatisfied. In hysteria, repression is responsible for anxiety. An idea is dangerous or sparks excitation, perhaps it is even distorted to the point of confusion or unrecognizability. So, this idea is repressed, but issues in a transformed energy—anxiety. Freud calls this a "quota of libido." (1932: 82)

Anxiety, Freud argues, is an affective state—reproducing an old event which threatened danger. Anxiety serves the purpose of our self-preservation. Because the Ego is the sole seat of anxiety, it alone can produce and feel this unpleasurable feeling. The three main species of anxiety, realistic, neurotic and moral correspond to the different relationships the Ego has with the external world, the Id and then, to the Super-Ego. (1932: 84) These three different types of anxiety do not really differ qualitatively from

one another—in effect, but each is distinctly unpleasant. Where they do differ is in their cause. (Hall 1954: 61)

Realistic anxiety is the effect of a perception of danger in the outside world. It is an affective reaction. On this he did not waver. He writes, "Real danger is a danger that is known, and realistic anxiety is anxiety about a known danger of this sort." (1926: 165) This danger could be anything in the environment, which threatens to harm the individual. Anxiety is, then, a safety mechanism for the individual so that health and well-being may be maintained. Situations which overwhelm are traumatic. Traumatic experiences may reduce the individual to an inability to cope. When confronted with danger, anxiety issues us the possibility to either flee or fight. Realistic anxiety provides us with the means to recognize danger and to avoid it. We regulate our behavior constantly. (Hall 1954: 62-64)

Neurotic anxiety is aroused by the internal perception of imminent danger. This is characterized by a kind of free-floating apprehensiveness. He writes, "Neurotic anxiety is anxiety about an unknown danger…a danger that has still to be discovered." (1926: 165) This anxiety is a protective action. This type of anxiety is a kind of helplessness because of a trauma and is reproduced later as a symptom of the difficulty. The symptom or symptoms signify a desire to help. The real issue here is that the Id is exerting hazardous pressure on the Ego threatening to overwhelm it. A phobia is one form of a neurotic anxiety where the intensity of the fear is all out of proportion to the actual danger of that which the person seeks to avoid. This kind of fear is irrational. (Hall 1954: 64) It is instinctive. It is by seeking and finding, on the part of the healer (Freud uses the term analyst), discovery, if you will by bringing this anxiety into

consciousness so that it may be dealt with as realistic anxiety. Neurotic anxiety is characterized by an over-reaction on the part of the sufferer. Psychologically speaking neurotic anxiety occurs because of a defect in the mental apparatus.

Moral anxiety arises when the conscious is torn between two lovers as the old song goes. The conscious, assumes in adulthood, the place of the earlier parental figures and the norms osmotically imbibed from them. These norms assume the status of irrevocable laws internalized in the moral center of the mind, which Freud termed the Super-ego. This is a complicated process. This Super-ego assumes the place of moral governor and judges, coerces, challenges and threatens the individual with punishment (although internal punishment) in much the same way as the parents did earlier. The phrase for the way this occurs is identification. Important figures for us provide models for our living. Our Super-ego's grade our reproduction of the values and ideals we have absorbed from them. The super-ego is the archetype for us of every moral constraint; it is also the advocate of our striving towards perfection. The Super-ego is the repository, psychologically speaking; of as much as we have been able to assimilate of what is described as the ethical side of human life. It may be suggested that Freud overemphasized the past at the expense of the present.

Not only is the meaning of the symptoms invariably hidden in the unconscious; but the very existence of the symptom is conditioned by its relation to this unconscious. Every time we hit upon a symptom, we may conclude that the patient cherishes definite unconscious experiences, which withhold the meaning of the symptoms. Vice versa, in order that the symptoms may come into being, it is also essential that this meaning be unconscious. Symptoms are not built up out of conscious experiences; as soon as the

unconscious processes in question become conscious, the symptom disappears. The symptom develops as a substitution for something else that has remained suppressed. Certain psychological experiences should normally have become so far elaborated that consciousness would have attained knowledge of them. This did not take place, however, but out of these interrupted and disturbed processes, imprisoned in the unconscious, the symptom arose. That is to say, something in the nature of an interchange had been effected. (1925: 241-242)

An 'instinct' is provisionally to be understood by the psychical representative of an endosomatic, continuously flowing source of stimulation, as contrasted with a 'stimulus', which is set up by single excitations coming from without. The concept of instincts is thus one of those lying on the frontier between the mental and the physical. The simplest and likeliest assumption as to the nature of instincts would seem to be that in itself an instinct is without quality, and, so far as mental life is concerned, is only to be regarded as a measure of the demand made upon the mind for work. (Bocock 2002: 22)

4.11 Harry Stack Sullivan and Anxiety

Rather than the imagery that Kierkegaard uses, American psychiatrist Harry Stack Sullivan believed that anxiety was one of the central concepts we could use in seeking to understand our relationships with others. Sullivan believed that the concept of anxiety covered the whole gamut of emotional turmoil. It is, in his view, an indistinct feeling of disquietude. (Sullivan 1953: 42)

Anxiety not only affects our relationships with those around us in a decidedly negative way, but also with God. Sullivan's distinct contribution to psychology is the field of interpersonal relations. Jeffrey Means in Trauma and Evil: Healing the Wounded Soul (2000) argues, in interpreting Sullivan's view, that human beings are related interpersonally. Because we are related in an interpersonal way, connection is important. A disruption in communication is damaging. Anxiety, when it enters the picture, disrupts that field of communication. Our confidence in human relationships wane.

Human beings, from infancy on, seek homeostasis and equilibrium. Anxiety upsets that balance and thus is an experience of disequilibrium. Anxiety, for Sullivan, has subsumed under its aegis the associated feelings of guilt, shame, anxiousness, and loathing, dread, feelings of personal worthlessness, and includes less definable feelings painful feelings. (Chapman 1978: 79) Anxiety as a feeling may be experienced by the individual as a slight sense of dread or directionless fear all the way to what is completely incapacitating for the individual who becomes unable to function. Anticipated unfavorable appraisal by another may and does provoke anxiety in us. (Sullivan 1953: 113) Thus, anxiety can erode a person's sense of worth, self-esteem, and competence. This insight will be important in dealing with the next related issue of shame. Thus, when self-evaluating, a person may experience doubt about their value. (Chapman 1978: 83) Sullivan's view, when compared with other views, is undoubtedly the most expansive. He does raise the important issue of what anxiety is and how to understand it.

4.2 A Pastoral Theological View: Helmut Thielicke

In our dialectic and correlation between experience, social sciences and theology, we now return to theology. In Reformed circles, it is easy to become carried away by the theological oeuvre of Karl Barth, Reinhold Niebuhr, Emil Brunner, Jürgen Moltmann, and Thomas F. Torrance (to name just a few theological heavyweights). In Practical theology, the list is no less impressive. Names like Schleiermacher, Firet, Miller-Mclemore, Graham, Anderson, Osmer, Thurneysen, Swinton, and Heitink are just as fundamental to the discipline. However, if we allowed this predilection for Reformed perspectives to limit our learning, we would be the poorer for our smallish vision.

The widely published and noted Lutheran theologian and ethicist, Helmut Thielicke, for example, of Hamburg, Germany, in a variety of venues following the Second World War, spoke about the problem of anxiety and offered, in response, his own inimitable solution. The primary source for Thielicke's views on anxiety comes from his book titled, Nihilism—Its Origin and Nature (With a Christian Response). (1962) Thielicke is writing in the face of what he terms nothing—its technical description is 'nihilism.' To discover nihilism as a way of thinking is, if I may draw a comparison, to the Old Testament philosopher nicknamed "Ecclesiastes" that stated right at the beginning of his treatise, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity." For Thielicke, nihilism is the last discovery to make, the last idolatry, the last "ism," and finally, the last god. (1962: 25-26) In the face of this emptiness and vanity, there arises within human beings "anxiety."

Thielicke begins by first defining the problem of anxiety. Anxiety occurs in the skepticism and nihilism of modernity; a modernity that has traded in Christianity for a self-defining and guiding world-view. Thielicke writes, "It is not only man's fear of

himself but dread of the abyss of Nothingness that yawns on the horizon of an atheistic world." (1962: 117) Anxiety in all its felt dread refers to a life which is fearful of itself—its own power, its own dictatorship, its own moral compass. Thielicke writes,

> …people today are shaken by the anxiety of fate, the fear of life *itself.* This is the real problem; where once the God of judgment stood there is now a vacuum. Perhaps it is precisely this nothingness that arouses within us the terrible *horror vacuii,* the anxiety of emptiness. Instead of asking, 'How can I get a gracious God?' perhaps one asks, 'Where is God?' (1962: 118)

The issue of theodicy is a very real problem for a generation who on the one hand witnessed the technological progress of human beings used to great effect in World War II, but is also aware that with Hiroshima and Nagasaki humanity cannot go back to a simpler, more concrete time. The presence or absence of God in the face of technological advancement, like the discovery of the polio vaccine with the more efficient ways to kill one another and in greater quantities than ever thought possible raises real existential issues (in addition to biological issues). Add to these issues the very real natural catastrophe's which occur, like Hurricane Katrina which struck the Southern United States in 2005 and from which communities still try to recover, and it is no wonder that Thielicke characterizes anxiety as the central issue of our time.

For Thielicke, anxiety is the threat of some vague thing—something 'indefinable.' Anxiety's object cannot be fixed; it is like a metal detector in a field of buried metal that is constantly sounding. Anxiety exists because it includes the totality of all situations in which I find myself while alive. The indefiniteness of a threat is the very essence of anxiety.

Thielicke compares it with the feeling of boredom. Boredom arises in the face of nothing stimulating. We constantly seek, when anxious, to specify something particular that provokes us, this however, is merely a symptom of the way anxiety manifests itself and our attempt to escape its torment. Anxiety has as a cause 'a non-objectiveness.' This indescribable instigator is always driving us toward specifying something definite, something definable as the origination of our dread. These indicators are, frustratingly enough, 'substantiations of subsequent projections.' (1962: 120) With anxiety, one loses hope—with fear, one may maintain the semblance of this second of Paul's theological virtues. Thielicke writes, "…nothingness smites man with oppressing anxiety," unfortunately, though, "one cannot say that it is something definite that makes him anxious." (1962: 125) Instead, it is our attempt at naming something and thus by giving it a name trying to objectify what is instead the "great, empty, white screen of Nothingness." (1962: 125)

Anxiety is the response of men and women when facing a seemingly endless void. It is our response to a silent nothingness. It is the dread of lawlessness in a world without a ruler. It is the sense of being an orphan in a fatherless house. Indeed, for the skeptic the world is a weird, homeless place where I am driven into endless flight. (1962: 222) Because nothing is off limits, as there is no law—everything is permissible, all is allowed. The effect of anxiety on human beings is similar to what it would feel like to be put out on a limitless field, an open expanse with no borders, no goals, and no boundaries. This is an accurate observation. In moving to Wichita Falls, Texas, now twenty-five years ago, in the middle of my seminary education to work as a student minister at Fain Presbyterian Church, the first thing that struck my wife and I after

arriving in the Dallas-Ft. Worth metropolis, was the plethora of mesquite (a scrubby little brush) and the absence of trees. The sky seemed limitless and huge. Anyone who has grown up with trees being ubiquitous and then moving to the American Southwest will know the truth and the force of Thielicke's observation. Not to have boundaries is to experience anxiety!

Thielicke uses one other illustration by equating anxiety to a 'bottle-necked' existence. (1955: 350) His first suggestion speaks of anxiety arising because of a vague indefiniteness with unlimited possibilities. His second speaks of constriction and compression also causing anxiety in an individual. For some, too tight and restricted a space can cause as many problems as a wide-open expanse. Anxiety, whether caused by indefiniteness or at the other end, a specific definiteness of boundaries, "is intolerable and therefore must be constantly repressed and constantly diverted. The more quiet things are, the more the yawning void appears and the more anxiety creeps in." (1962: 126)

Having named the problem and described its effects on people, Thielicke moves on to a solution. His panacea is both simple and theological. It is also pastoral. The remediation of anxiety occurs when God in Christ reaches out in grace to the individual. Thus,

> "It is the mystery of ultimate reality that it does not allow us to grasp it, but rather that it grasps us—where and when it wills. Expressed in biblical terms, the bridge is built not from the human side, but from God's side. And this is a matter of grace, a matter of the Christ event." (1962: 142)

As a matter of practice, we often focus on what we should do or have done. Here, Thielicke focuses on the indicatives of grace as always being prior to the imperatives of discipleship. What God has done in Christ, demands the response of faith. Building on this statement, Thielicke suggests that in Christ we have someone who can sympathize with us, while also leading us forward. Thielicke writes,

> "In the latter connection we can only say quite simply, or 'attest,' what this event means over against the fact of anxiety. It means, in the first place, that here we have a message about a Figure in whom the powers of guilt, suffering, and death are overcome, or better, through whom they are robbed of their power to separate, so that they are no longer able to cut off contact with God." (1962: 142)

It is in this vein that Thielicke suggests that Christ himself suffers what we suffer, and even more. He does this in our place vicariously and representatively. Christ, throughout his whole life, but particularly on the cross is baptized on our behalf, "plunged," as it were, "into the midst of the cauldron of life's anxiety." (1962: 144) Is this not one of the lessons learned from the incarnation? Death and anxiety are not simply dispatched on orders from a far off land called 'heaven.' Instead, Jesus Christ himself goes through hell in all its manifestations in this life and the next, suffering vicariously – representatively – on our behalf, all the anxieties to which we are prone and from which we suffer. Christ does this in "solidarity" with and for us. He does this in our place.

As Christ does this, we hear his voice. The voice of the Good Shepherd—the One man who said, "In this world you will have tribulation. But, take heart—nonetheless—for I have overcome the world." (2010: 23) So, as our hearts live in the security of the

Father, as we believe in what Christ has done and in who he is, for us, we (are becoming) become like the lilies of the field and the birds of the air. They are cared for and sustained by the Father.

In Christ, before the Father, we may become carefree. As carefree as a child playing on a playground knowing his or her parent is watching in the distance. We are allowed to walk bravely through the valley of the shadow of death, fearing no evil, because we are assured of his rod and staff, by feeling it both near us, and in our hands. (1964: 222) Thielicke suggests that to overcome the world and the anxiety of the world is the same as enjoying fellowship with the Father who is in control of this world. It is to be at peace with God. If God, then the world. The imperative which Christ gives to his disciples, that of 'Be of good cheer' is addressed to disciples, not only disciples, but siblings. We are promised that we are able to stand in the breach, which he has broken in the wall of anxiety. He writes, "By holding on to him we are at the breach, holding the hand of the Father." (1962: 145)

When one reads the Bible, Thielicke notes, one arrives at the conclusion that the opposite of fear and of anxiety is love. First John, as he remarks, clearly states, "There is no fear in love." Thielicke continues by saying,

> It is surprising because here there is no appeal to the strength, fortitude, and heroism in the face of anxiety (all this would not be anxiety overcome, but only anxiety repressed) and also because it does not recommend turning away from the question of meaning altogether and thus submerging oneself in vegetative apathy (this would only be capitulation), but rather because here the positive *power of love* is shown to be the real deliverance from anxiety. What the author of the First Letter of John meant as we learn only as we understand the ultimate root of anxiety, as we have tried to explain it, namely, that anxiety is a broken relationship and love is a restored relationship. (1962: 145)

My daughter Katie, when she was much younger, was overwhelmed by anxiety at the thought that she had been abandoned in the house. Often times she would search high and low for me and upon not finding me, because in her anxiety she had become increasingly less able to function reasonably, would rush out of the house and crying make her way next door to our beloved neighbor's house. Ringing the doorbell, knocking on the door, she would not relent until Barbara had let her in. Soon a call would come to me from next door. Barbara would inquire if I was in fact there. I was. Holding Katie's hand, she would walk her back to our house and discover with her that I had been there all along. I think this is what Thielicke is suggesting. In our anxiety, we forget God's presence. We lose the feeling of Christ's fellowship and communion with us. We feel unloved. Anxiety is both cause and effect. Love is the way, the only way, through that dark cloud of worry and dread which paralyzes and overwhelms.

In what is surely an autobiographical statement, particularly as Thielicke was one of the few brave souls in Nazi Germany who was able to preach and teach the gospel in the 1940's in Stuttgart, Korntal and Frankfurt, he notes,

> "When a man sees the fact of Jesus Christ and it dawns on him that the universe is fatherly and that he is loved, he loses his fear. Not that all the oppressing and depressing powers are banished from his life…but they no longer have any power over him. They can no longer compel him to gaze into the frightening abyss of meaninglessness and rob him of the peace that is assured him. And because they no longer have any power, he no longer needs to keep staring at them only to be caught in the grip of existential stare. If we want a simple illustration—and the nearer we come to the ultimate things the simpler everything becomes—we may think of a child, walking through a forest at night, holding onto its father's hand.

> The moonlight casts a ghostly shimmer through the branches and it its shadows trees and undergrowth take on bizarre and spectral shapes. Roots and potholes cause one to stumble and ominous sounds—the creaking of branches and the croaking call of night birds—press in. It is all there and it can produce fear. But the child walks on calmly and bravely, holding on to the father's strong and knowing hand, and is mysteriously withdrawn from it all." (1962: 146)

We do not, as Thielicke clarifies more than once in his sermons, know what is coming. Yet, as Christians, we know "who" is coming—Christus Imperator! This means that we may lose our anxiety, dread, and worry over that which is really—mere shadow. We may do this because we know what "ultimate reality" is. (1962: 147)

4.13 Parrhesia, Practical Theology and Anxiety

The direction towards which the pastor/ Practical Theologian should aim in his or her solicitous care is that state of existence described in the New Testament as *parrhesia* (παρρησία). McLeod Campbell illustrates the point of this statement in his own work. In the first 'teaching' titled "The Gospel" (these are parts of sermons, Bible studies, expositions and rough-drafts of forthcoming books, p. iii). McLeod Campbell includes in this lesson in his Fragments of Exposition (1843). This book went through a variety of iterations. In this study, he puts this in writing,

> It is sin that makes people afraid; it is the consciousness of guilt, of departure from God; a man cannot be abiding in God and be afraid. It is

> written, 'He shall not be afraid of evil tidings; his heart is *fixed* trusting in the Lord.' It proves the absence of the child's confidence, or at least a very low degree of it, when *any* thing makes us afraid. (3)

To know God as Father, the Father of our spirits, is to be delivered from the fear or anxiety we feel when we do not know God as friend or when we forget God and his almightiness. Knowing and trusting God banishes anxiety and fear. What McLeod Campbell means is that knowing Christ truly erases anxiety and fear, because in knowing Christ, we know the Father who sent him. The gospel, for McLeod Campbell, is like the sun, there is no corner hidden from its rays of light—it brings good, blessing, consolation, and peace to every heart that has received it. Adequate response is rejoicing.

In addition, in this study titled "the Gospel" which is based on Luke ii. 10, 11 McLeod Campbell separates between what we see phenomenologically and what is truth revealed through the Spirit of God. Thus, there is a difference between God's judgment (and his truth), and what human beings see and believe. (1843: 2) To walk in God's Spirit is to walk in his light. To walk in God's light is to understand that there is a difference between what human beings think and how they ought to live praising God. To know the gospel is to know because of God's Spirit. It is to understand the truth. The substance of the gospel, which is revealed and then known and understood, through the Spirit, is none other than Jesus Christ, both Son of God and Son of Man. Jesus is the "eternal Word, who dwelt from eternity in the bosom of the Father, but now is made flesh—becoming Son of Man—and thus, our brother." (1843: 6)

McLeod Campbell goes on in his Christocentric theology to share with his readers, from this tract, the magnificence of the person of Jesus Christ. He shares what it means that he is the Savior of all. This is objective fact, even though subjectively

unknown or misunderstood. Jesus, regardless, is universally important. (1843:8) The real adversity which we face, and which causes us anxiety and fear, is the fact that we are all related to Adam. Here, McLeod Campbell teaches what is common in Reformed Theology. This belief is that in Adam's fall in the Garden of Eden, all humanity has likewise fallen. However, in Christ we have someone flesh of our flesh and bone of our bone connected to us through the incarnation. Because Christ is our Savior, we have been lifted up, re-created, re-formed as human beings—and thus find relief for our souls. The only true and substantial ground of consolation is that Christ is our brother and Savior unconditionally. Anxiety and fear arises because people in their hearts cry out in need of a Savior. (1843: 11) God knows our need before we do, and he has met our need in Jesus Christ. McLeod Campbell states, "the one craving in man's heart supposed to be met in Christ, is the craving for safety…" (1843: 12) Nothing else may satisfy this particular need of our souls. Our cry for help will not be met by refinement in society, improvement of our civilization, scientific enhancements, or discoveries to make life easier. To segregate Christ to some corner of religion while looking for help or aid in other areas is to be mistaken and misinformed. He argues that "to know Christ as Savior is to banish all my fears, to fulfill all my hopes. I shall find within the circle of Christ all that my heart desires; Christ will be my whole life." (1843: 14) Here McLeod Campbell echoes Augustine who once famously noted that our hearts are restless until they find our rest in Christ. Christ is the only true fountain of joy and consolation. He continues, "Every feeling of disquiet, every craving of unsatisfied desire, every secret fear, is a part of the curse, and the true Savior must bring deliverance from all." (1843: 16)

It is clear that McLeod Campbell believes that Jesus Christ is the answer to our deepest fear, anxiety, hunger, need, and desires. In his ministry, McLeod Campbell journeyed throughout his parish and into neighboring parishes, some distance to share what he believed to be the gospel of the incarnation of Jesus Christ. While we have surveyed some variety of views about the sources of anxiety and fear, some theologically oriented and some psychologically oriented, the question of an appropriate approach remains. Is it too much to suggest that for the pastor as Practical Theologian a proper elucidation of the person and work of Jesus Christ might be the beginning point of the dialogue between people?

Pastoral theologian Carroll Wise notes, "Preaching is a form of pastoral care; that is it is a means through which the pastor attempts to speak to a congregation in terms of the meaning of the Gospel for human need." (1966: 68) The words of the sermon must be a soothing salve to the deepest injury within an individual's life. If it is less than that, if it seeks to be less than that—what we are left with is merely an abstract and boring theology dissertation. It may be an accurate sermon theologically and doctrinally, the exegesis may be impeccable, but of absolutely no use to a congregation. If people are to hear a Word in season to them and if people are to respond—their needs must be involved in the process of the homiletical moment. Carroll Wise aptly points out, here, "The essence of the Gospel is not in an abstract description of human behavior, but lies in the deeper motivation from which behavior springs." (1966: 70)

One of the issues with which McLeod Campbell struggled as he sought to minister to his people was what the Christian life was to look like. What behavior was to be witnessed of those who were understood to be Christians? Were they to stand out

uniquely from others as different? Another issue, for McLeod Campbell, was how it was to be manifested. The Christian life is not just a moral code exemplified. It is not just a list of do's and don'ts. It is not just fulfilling the legal aspects of the New Testament. Part of the answer to the question about the Christian life as far as McLeod Campbell was concerned involved the response of confidence, security, and comfort to the gospel. If the gospel did not inculcate these attributes, then it was *not* the gospel. The counterpoint to anxiety for McLeod Campbell would have been the New Testament theme of παρρησία.

According to Postmodern French Philosopher Michael Foucault, the Greek word "*parrhesia*" [παρρησία] first appears in the great Athenian playwright and poet Euripides (5th century). In the context in which he uses it, the word means "free speech." (Foucault 1983: 2) The word παρρησία occurs in Euripides' work "Ion" around line 670 where it occurs in the context of being free like an Athenian citizen and thus being able to speak without restraint. The Liddell-Scott-Jones Greek Lexicon indicates that the word may mean—free-spokenness, openness, and frankness (claimed by Athenians as their privilege). (1897: 1159) For Foucault παρρησία as a concept occurs in three different situations, rhetoric, politics, and philosophy. Foucault then goes on to rehearse the evolution of the word through Greek literature, politics and so on. In doing so, Foucault insists that what he is really after is the individual who tells the truth. He writes, "[the] problematization of truth has two sides, two major aspects." (1983: 65) The first is the reasoning involved in reaching the truth and is "concerned with insuring that the process of reasoning is correct." The second is the issue, for Foucault, of the importance for the individual and for the society of telling the truth, of knowing the truth, of having people

who tell the truth, as well as knowing how to recognize them." (1983: 65) Ultimately, his purpose in discussing παρρησία is the question of why this frankness in speech might be a problem throughout the different eras.

In the New Testament, παρρησία occurs roughly thirty-one times. While it shares the above definition in its appearance in the New Testament, it also has the connotation of "a state of boldness and confidence, courage, sureness, boldness, fearlessness." (BDAG 2000: 781) It can also mean "assurance." For the great German New Testament scholar Rudolf Bultmann, in his Hermeneia commentary on the Johannine Epistles (1973), παρρησία is the confidence that we have because of our faith in God's unconditional love. Confidence is the fruit of God's love for us and in us. The purpose of God's love is to grant us confidence, assurance, and calmness. Bultmann notes (in the context of 1 John 4:17-18), "The aim of the love of God to give us confidence in the world is reminiscent of the prayer of Jesus in Jn. 17:15: 'I do not pray that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil one.'" (Bultmann 1973: 74) Confidence is freedom from fear. Confidence is assurance. Perfect love casts out fear. Fear should only be of God, and since God's love is given to us—we do not need to fear anything, but rather have confidence (παρρησία). Whoever still has fear before God has not reached the goal opened up to him by the gift of God's love; for him God's love has not yet become ἐν ἀληθείᾳ ("reality"). Fear has, of course, its own consequent reality. (Bultmann 1973: 74)

For John McLeod Campbell the goal of the Christian life is to be one of παρρησία. If an individual is fearful or anxious, the goal towards which one should strive to inculcate in them is *parrhesia.* The goal of care of the soul at this point is to

pursue the reasons for their anxiety, and the response of the gospel to offer confidence in God. The whole point of the gospel is to encourage Christians in their living. As we minister to them through a variety of means, our purpose in so doing is gradually to replace their unease with confidence. Insecurity is to be replaced by security.

When my children were learning how to ride a bike, I learned a great deal about ministry (and about parenting). I learned lessons about patience, encouragement, and support. I also discovered that it was they that were riding the bike, not me. Of course, in the beginning there was a lot of enthusiasm on the part of my children, until they realized that it was a skill that must be both developed and learned. Falling, then, became the bugaboo. Falling hurts. One skins his/her knees. One bangs his/her elbows and other body parts. Once, one gets the hang of riding a bike—there is nothing quite like it! It is fun! Between the beginning of the learning and the end of the lesson, for the parent there is a lot of holding on, running beside, encouraging, constant support, and cheerleading. Eventually one holds on less and less than one did at the beginning. There is falling and more falling. This is part of learning to ride. *Voila!* at some point the child gets the act of balancing and peddling and takes off.

In some ways, I have concluded that ministry is quite similar with congregation members. The parallels are not exact, but the similarities bear remarking on. They are anxious about what is expected of them as Christians, particularly if they have been elected to a committee or a governing body. Will they look foolish, they wonder, how will they know what to do, what is involved, will I do a good job and so on? They are anxious. If one is asked to get up in front of the congregation, they are nervous. They break out in a sweat. They ask themselves, "Why did I agree to do this?" Instilling

confidence, assurance, and serenity is part of the pastor's work. For many we are constantly, but surely, slowly releasing our hands from the back of the bike. It was no different for McLeod Campbell.

In one of his sermons from the Row period, he indicated that one of the attributes, which Christ comes to give to people, is that of "rest." McLeod Campbell states, "Now, mark the promise (of Christ), 'I will give you rest.' – He (Christ) promises 'Rest.' Dear hearers, mark the word. 'Come unto me and I will give you *rest*.' (1832: 77) We may become so anxious about how we look, what we are doing, how we compare with others and so on, that we need to be reminded that the gospel promises rest. Busyness is endemic among Christians in society. It is endemic for pastors also. Are we keeping up with the Joneses? If someone gets a promotion before I do, what does that say about me? Their car is new, so shouldn't mine be new also? For McLeod Campbell, to focus our attention on Jesus Christ and all his benefits is to remove our attention from the apprehension and anxiety, which plagues us. We cannot look in two directions at once. To keep our eyes upon Jesus is to seek to keep on top of the waves, unlike Peter who lost focus and fell into the water. This, for McLeod Campbell, involves an intellectual and spiritual conversion. We have indicated that for him it involves an alteration in the frame of reference. One cannot see a bunny and a duck at the same time.

The truth of our existence for McLeod Campbell, and his relevance with regard to anxiety, is that ultimately any philosophy or psychology is bereft of the revelatory character of Jesus Christ's sacrificial death on the cross. Such disciplines may impart useful knowledge of the self. The cross of Christ, however, is the *sine qua non* of reality, and as such redefines *everything*. Such a death indicates God's love for men and women,

but also indicates satisfactorily, and ultimately, that Christ is not a mere inspired man or prophet, but rather he is God in the flesh *crucified*. God humbled himself, as such, to the point of death. As such, he is the anchor for our souls—"sure and steadfast" in his support of us, in McLeod Campbell's words. (1832: 85)

He and his work heal the conscience by speaking peace to us. In place of disquiet, Christ gives us peace. This peace is rest for the weary and the anxious. He releases us from guilty fears and allows us to rejoice in God. This stands in contradistinction from the message that the world speaks to us – indeed, for "the world is a false mirror." (1832: 86) It shows us differently from what we truly are. It is like the mirror in a funhouse in the circus—the reflection is distorted. It is not real. It makes the ugly and deformed look pleasing; for the world flatters and deceives. The message we receive from the world has no basis in truth. If we want to understand what we are in reality, we must look, instead, towards the blood of the cross, and there, in that blood observe exactly what God thinks of us.

Peace is not to be found anywhere other than in Christ. What God thinks of us—to discern truly what God believes about us and of us—is most precious; it is, for McLeod Campbell—a humbling discovery of truth. We are *loved*. We are *infinitely* loved. To come to Christ is to find rest for our souls. Ultimately, for McLeod Campbell, any anxiety we may feel over what others may think of us is to pale in comparison compared to our understanding of how God in Christ regards us.

Now, the Christ to whom we come and from whom we receive rest and peace is the one who has the Spirit of God for us. Christ has the Spirit on our behalf. Because of this, Christ is ever with us by the Spirit. Christ is a present reality. He is here. He is not

just here, but he shares his resources with us. Christ shares his strength with us, in us, and in our weakness; he perfects his strength in us. We are not alone. We are never alone. Peace and παρρησία, thus, come to us through an appropriate knowledge of Jesus Christ. (1832: 91)

Anxiety may be approached in a variety of ways, as we have seen. One way is following the discipline of prayer. This practice is fundamental in the life of the Christian. It can and may minister to others, but its primary ministry (in an oddly counter-intuitive fashion) is to the self. Prayer is not only an address it is also a response. The indicatives of grace always call for a response.

In a sermon on 1 Timothy 2:1-6, Sermon 26 in the Second Volume of his Sermon and Lectures McLeod Campbell asserts that we are encouraged to pray and that in praying we do so in order that we may live "quiet and peaceful lives" in all "godliness and honesty." McLeod Campbell's point here is that we cannot keep two things in our mind at once. To think about the needs of others, is to cease focusing our attention on ourselves. Duck or rabbit? Prayer is relevant to the Christian who is anxious, because it offers us communion and communication with God. To speak to God in prayer is to unburden our souls. To do so, even as we regard the needs of others as equally important. We may pray for ourselves. However, prayer for others may ultimately be just as beneficial to us. To regard the needs of others is to lessen our own concerns, problems, and difficulties.

To pray, then, is not just to ask for ourselves or for others, but it is also—in so doing—to make an important statement about God. To seek God's help is to confess that he is in a position to help. To pray is to make an important statement, then, about God's

nature and character. Prayer is meditating on God's character and as we do so admiring what we are taught to believe of him. To think about God, in this way, is to be moved to speak to him. In so doing, anxiety may be lessened.

To turn our attention away from God and to regard those around us, is to see people, and it is to understand their need, their natural evil, sinful state and the subsequent need they have, and the better condition to which they are called through the gospel. In prayer, we seek the good for ourselves *and* for others. In prayer, we solicit for others *and* for ourselves. We thank God for his goodness towards people even as we seek for them what we know they need. Prayer is not meditation; it is also not just expressing a desire either for others or for ourselves. To pray is to understand that in doing so we glorify God, for to pray *is* to trust that God will meet that need expectantly. Anxiety is dealt with here, in McLeod Campbell's way of thinking, by removing our attention elsewhere.

Prayer is the offering of our desires to God for things according to his will. When we conclude with the word, "Amen!" we express our trust that God has not only heard our prayer, but that God will answer it appropriately. God's will shapes our prayers, while at the same time our prayers shape God's will. Prayer is communion and communication. Prayer is participation by the Spirit of God in Christ's prayer to the Father. Our prayer is not just words in our head ascending heavenward. Instead, our prayers are mediated by Christ. He prays. He prays in us. He prays though us. We pray together. The center of the New Testament, for McLeod Campbell, is the Father-Son relation. It is an aspect of God's great scheme that he sends forth his own holiness and

love to dwell in this world of sin and misery, by dwelling in this world of sin and misery incarnate in human nature.

Christ has a two-fold ministry. He is sent by God as man. He prays to God as both God and man. Because he is not only connected with the divine, but also thus connected with this world in all of its ugly truth, he is agonized and afflicted by it, by the sights that he sees. He is thus moved to pray for the world, enduring a grievous burden because of the world's evil—so much so that he must come to God and intercede on its behalf. It is God's great purpose to make his own great love to come into the world, where there is no love, in order to experience the neediness and agony, the apprehension and absence of all delight so that Christ might call to God. Christ does this so that the world's evil might be destroyed and his light might shine out of the darkness. In us, the Spirit of Christ makes intercession so that we do not need to be anxious. Christ prays for us, with us, in us and in spite of us.

God desires all to be saved, all to be holy, and all to know that there is one Mediator between himself and humanity, the man Jesus. To rightly understand, is to comprehend that Christ is man, that he took our nature, and that in this work he glorified the Father, they would realize that such was a work not in some impersonal human nature, but rather in our human nature with all its faults and foibles, imperfections and sin. From that flesh, Christ glorified the Father and in that flesh he was the holy one of God *as* an atoning sacrifice, a propitiation for sin and his sacrifice for all people.

Christ's work was not just a work of power or just a manifestation of power. Instead, we are to see Christ's work as the mind of God expressed in that work. Christ's work in the flesh is God's provision for all, that the Father might be glorified. God's love

is universal. Therefore, we are ransomed. (1832: 189) What this means is that we have the freedom and liberation to draw near to God as dear children. Whatever our lack, it is fully met and over-balanced by the fullness of the gift of Christ. In Christ, we have peace—real and abiding peace.

In a second sermon on 1 Timothy 2:1-6, perhaps later that Sunday evening, McLeod Campbell emphasizes the role of the Spirit of God in bringing us to the truth and strengthening us as we abide in that truth. One aspect of this truth is the reality of God's love for all. This is an unmerited love, which comes forth and yearns over us continually. This truth is a vision of God's nature and character, which we ought to have before us daily. From this vision, we learn of a present love resting upon every human being. It is, in comparison, as if this love was a fountain from which we were able to drink as it poured forth from heaven. So great is this love of God for each of us—that one might compare it to a mother's love. God's love, as known in Christ is, however, far greater than even a human mother's love. (1832: 201-202) The reception of this love by us is met in our person, through the Spirit of Christ, by the Spirit of Christ. We receive this love and God receives our reception of his love as if he were looking upon the Incarnate Son and we receive the same blessing, "Behold, I am well pleased with my Son." Christ comes to do God's will and as he does so, his life and work is as the statement of the Psalmist, "Lo, I come to do thy will, Oh Lord." Our service comes through Christ, with Christ, in Christ and as such, we are to offer ourselves in a similar fashion. This is tied to the fact that in everything we do, whatever we do is through the strength of God alone—whether we pray, worship, speak, and sing hymns, just as we live — it is in God's strength. It is God's will to be strong in us. God gives us his Spirit, the

strength of his Spirit, so that we may trust in God. To do so, is to live in the light of God's unconditional love. (1832: 212)

In an early collection of his sermons from 1830 taken down by dictation in longhand and published for subscribers with the title Notes of Sermons (Vol. 3) McLeod Campbell explicated the Lord's Prayer. In Sermon Number Twenty Six, whose text was Luke 11:1-13 he sets out a theology of prayer, which touches upon a number of issues beginning with his therapeutic doctrine of God, and extending to his therapeutic doctrine of providence, and then his therapeutic understanding of the Christian life. His remarks also touch upon our subject of anxiety.

When we pray, the God whom we address is the God revealed to us in the Bible, which is none other than the God revealed to us in Jesus Christ. The Father and the Son know one another and love one another. We do not know God save for the Son's revealing of the Father to us. (1832: 3 with new pagination beginning with each new sermon) In teaching people to address God as "Abba, Father" Jesus is asserting that we have a Father. God is our Father. He does not become our Father. This is the gospel preached, when Jesus taught us to address God as Father, in our prayer, that God *is* Jesus' Father *and* also our Father. This is the gospel of the grace of God. Regardless of our sin and rebellion, God is our Father and continues to be our Father. One aspect of the gospel is that we are welcomed by God to approach him, in spite of our immorality and revolt.

Because of Christ we are adopted as God's children, we are "partakers in the adoption which is in Christ Jesus." (1832: 6-7) We are to understand by this that we are God's children and that he has a Father's love and heart for us. We may put our confidence in him as our Father. God desires our happiness, we do not have to pursue a

particular course of action or achieve a specific result in order for God to desire the best for us. God the Father desires us to realize that we are his children and Christ desires us to acknowledge in our relationship with him that we are disciples. To say to God, addressing him, "Our Father," is to believe just that about him.

To be a Christian is to have the Spirit of an assured trust in God. The Spirit within someone says "Father" to God with the certainty that he is truly addressing the Father of Jesus Christ, and thus his or her Father. To say in prayer, "Our Father" realizing that God truly is a Father in heaven should not be a matter of indifference to the individual praying. (1832: 14) Happiness, assurance, confidence, and *parhessia* are to be discovered in placing God in his rightful abode as ruler and governor over our lives. We believe that we will achieve happiness by usurping control of our situations and becoming our own masters. Nothing could be further from the truth. We will have more freedom and autonomy when we yield control of our lives to God and God's will. (1832: 19)

To say in prayer, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done," is to assert our assent to God's knowing what is not only good for us, but what is good in itself for us. What God wills for us is inherently good in and of itself. To do God's will no matter how difficult or counter-intuitive it seems is to be truly blessed; indeed, it is "infinitely more glorious" than otherwise. (1832) To make these requests to God is to confess that we are imperfect ourselves, and need God's intervention in our lives. When we ask God to give us daily bread, we not only do so asking for sustenance and drink, but also because God promises through Christ that we will be gifted with the Holy Spirit as we do so. (Luke 11:13 KJV)

For John McLeod Campbell pastoral ministry involved reframing the world-view of his parishioners. He sought to disabuse them of their incorrect understandings of God and of God's love for them in Jesus Christ. As he did so by preaching, teaching and pastoral care he sought through his role as a pastor to offer them what the author would term "a gospel validation." This is a variation on Harry Stack Sullivan's term consensual validation. As the lawfully called minister of the parish McLeod Campbell's actions and words carried a great weight. In ministering to them, he sought to validate them as human beings before a different kind of God than the one in which they had been taught to believe. From this everything else flowed. Particularly important is their standing—in Jesus Christ—before this God as his beloved children.

H. Richard Niebuhr, in his Cole Lectures from 1961 delivered at Vanderbilt University, presaging postmodernism notes that Christendom perennially faces what he terms the 'disinherited mind.' This is a mind bereft of background or capital to work, without a baseline or foundation of established axioms from which to proceed and with "a mind so impoverished that it must justify itself in each present moment by its works, its constant activity." (1996: 7) We are not only, a culture, impoverished mentally and spiritually, we are impoverished in values. The question of a good life is still a vexing one for us. As a society, we still struggle with this perennial "mice on a treadmill" constant movement typified by ceaseless activity without direction or aim, except to *get* **more**. McLeod Campbell speaks to this dilemma of anxiousness with his own theological *ressourcement* for a retrieval of pastoral theology or practical theology and its relevance for ministry today.

4.14 Provisional Findings

We determined that anxiety is not only a feeling, but that it is an orientation towards life, and an emotion, which can cripple. We have also suggested that in addition to experience, both theology and psychology are important resources in developing a Practical Theology of care. We noted that one of the hallmarks of anxiety is the uncertainty of what might cause the other shoe to drop, so to speak. It is an agitation or dread of something indefinite. Anxiety is uneasiness, which gives rise to a feeling of helplessness.

We highlighted the personal experience of the author. In looking inward, we discovered an important resource for understanding the feeling of anxiety. Such a personal struggle may give rise to greater understanding. It may also assist in feelings of empathy for others struggling with the same issue. We suggested that people who suffer with anxiety struggle with worry, and often resort to avoidant or corrective behaviors. There is an object, we determined, that threatens one which leads to anxiety; the problem is over the nature of the threatening object.

We attempted to tie a lack of assurance together with anxiety although there are slight differences between the two. We saw that a lack of assurance was caused by a faulty doctrine of God and a worry regarding salvation. We tied this worry together with the feeling of anxiety suggesting that anxiety is merely a lack of assurance without God as a referent. Both believe danger is imminent, but indeterminate. Anxiety, in the author's view, is perhaps the more secular version of a lack of assurance.

We looked at a number of characterizations about the cause of anxiety beginning with Hans Urs von Balthasar, then working through Soren Kierkegaard, Paul Tillich and concluding with Sigmund Freud and Harry Stack Sullivan. We referenced Lutheran theologian Helmut Thielicke and his pastoral approach to anxiety. We concluded with the work of John McLeod Campbell and raised the issue of the doctrine of God and its importance in assuaging anxiety. We raised the issue of the New Testament word *parrhesia* (παρρησία) which is the opposite of anxiety. We discovered McLeod Campbell's therapeutic Practical Theology as we excavated how others have treated this malady. Highlighting the person and work of Christ, we rehearsed the importance to McLeod Campbell at renovating one's worldview. He went to great lengths to participate in the re-thinking of reality and our place in it. For McLeod Campbell the construal of ourselves as orphans alone in the universe, differed greatly from the construal of ourselves as objectively beloved children adopted through Christ's mediation by the Father in the Spirit. For McLeod Campbell reality is different because of Christ's person and work. This differing frame of reference then leads to a freedom and liberation of the individual of the fears and anxieties besetting one. This, of course, requires a conversion. Or as Donald Capps would put it a "re-framing."

CHAPTER FIVE

Practical Theology, Shame and the Reality of our "Belovedness in Christ"

Trinity, Incarnation and Solicitous Care

"…this joy thou thyself art. The happy life is this—to rejoice to thee, in thee, and for thee. This it is and there is no other." (Augustine, ed. Outler, n.d. Bk IX, Chap. 22, §32, p. 139)

5.0 Shame and What it Does to Us

In the 1997 movie, "*Good Will Hunting*" Matt Damon plays a mathematical genius. He has been placed in therapy, according to the premise of the film, to help iron out some of his rough edges. This is later revealed due to his attack of a police officer. With a rare genius, Damon's character is none-the-less broken and uncooperative. Robin Williams co-stars in the movie as therapist Sean Maguire, who is approached by a college

professor colleague to help Damon's character, Will. Will, in his job as a night janitor, had solved a mathematical problem put on the wall outside the classroom given by the professor, as extra credit to the students; which even the best minds at the school had been unable to crack.

The mathematics professor, an old acquaintance of Sean's from school days, recognized Will's innate giftedness after he solved the puzzle, in an unorthodox and highly original way. Will's talent became a must-have for the math professor who began to dream big dreams as the person who had discovered the future mathematical Einstein. Will, however, was broken, intellectually dazzling—, but emotionally broken. So, Will was placed with Sean as part of the plea agreement from the assault charge. Instead of going to jail for his assault of a police officer, the court placed him in an intervention, which is therapy with a counselor instead of going to jail. The relationship between Will and Sean developed slowly. There was bantering, insulting, testing each other out. Slowly we see in the dialogue of the movie that the relationship developed. The lynchpin was Sean's recognition of Will's lack of experience in life. He is a genius. Nevertheless, he is an inexperienced genius. Emotionally he is a child. Perhaps the most emotional scene is towards the end of the movie where Sean finally breaks through Will's emotional defenses to clarify for him that it was not his fault that his (step) father beat and abused him.

Some might surmise that Sean, like many victims of abuse, feel they are to blame and are somehow deficient. This they conclude is the reason for the abuse. There must be, then, something wrong with me. As such, they possess a deep inner shame. Because of the actions of his (step) father Will, deep down believed he was not 'good enough' or

perhaps even lovable. If there is something wrong with me, which is the cause for the abuse, then how can anyone love me? The dialogue and this scene in the movie illustrate, at least to my mind—some of the issues surrounding shame. Shame is the experience, perhaps the most profound of all our experiences, of the feeling that there is something deficient inside which makes it impossible for others to love me.

Will: *[Sean is going through Will's profile. Inside we see what are pictures of Will after brutal assaults by his foster parents]* You ever have any, uh, experience with that?
Sean: Twenty years of counseling… I've seen some pretty awful shit.
Will: No. I mean, have you ever had any *experience* with that?
Sean: You mean, personally? Yeah. Yeah I have…

[Sean looks away for a moment]

Will: I'm sure it ain't good.
Sean: My father was an alcoholic. Mean fuckin' drunk. Used to come home hammered, looking to whale on someone. So, I would provoke him, so he wouldn't go after my mother and little brother. Interesting nights were when he wore his rings...
Will: He used to just put a belt, a stick, and a wrench on the kitchen table and say, "Choose."
Sean: Well, I gotta go with the belt there, Vanna.
Will: I used to go with the wrench.
Sean: Why?
Will: Cause fuck him, that's why.
Sean: Your foster father?
Will: Yeah…

[pause]

Will: *[looking at his file]* So what does it say? Will has an attachment disorder? Fear of abandonment? Is that why I broke up with Skylar?
Sean: Didn't know you had. Wanna talk about it?
[Will shakes his head, stares off]

Sean: Will, you see this, all this shit?
[Holds up the file, and drops it on his desk]

Sean: It's not your fault.
Will: *[Softly, still staring off]* I know...
Sean: No you don't. It's not your fault.
Will: *[Serious]* I know…

Sean: No. Listen to me son. It's not your fault.
Will: I know that.
Sean: It's not your fault.
[Will is silent, eyes closed]

Sean: *[steps closer]* It's not your fault.
Will: *[choking up]* Don't fuck with me, Sean. Not you.
Sean: *[steps even closer]* It's not your fault.
[Will shoves Sean back, and then, hands trembling, buries his face in his hands. Will begins sobbing. Sean puts his hands on Will's shoulders, and Will grabs him and holds him close, crying]

Will: Oh my God! I'm so sorry! I'm so sorry Sean!

(https://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Good_Will_Hunting)

Prominent psychoanalysis Karen Horney once made the observation that, "**The** basic evil [in life] is invariably a lack of genuine warmth and affection." (1937: 80) It is a deficit of love. Undoubtedly, the character Will has experienced this evil first hand. The author, himself, interacts regularly with people who struggle with shame. When eating lunch with a friend, he looked at me and asked, "What would your congregation think of you eating lunch with a fag[8]?" Naming, diagnosing, and understanding shame has now become important. In the preface to his very well written book, Psychiatrist Andrew Morrison states that in his opinion, "Much of human misery stems, from the gap between what we wish to be (or think we should be) and what we believe we are. This gap…is the breeding ground for shame." (1996: ix-x)

We possess an image, all of us, of ourselves in our head. It may or may not be accurate. As Horney theorized, we have an 'idealized self-image," by which we guide our thoughts and actions. Then, unfortunately, in contrast to this idealized image, there is the 'real image.' (Solomon 2006: 15) This persona may or may not be subject to alteration depending on others' responses. If positive, they may not be believed. If negative, they may just confirm what we already fear.

Morrison writes, "Shame is the most debilitating, painful feeling many have ever experienced. In response, those suffering from this experience or feeling, attempt to hide or disappear, that is, even to try to vanish from the face of the earth. They seek to become invisible. In this way saving face is attempted." (1996: 7) To experience shame is to want to disappear. To experience it is to be cut to the bone, overwhelmed with deep

[8] In the United States "fag" is a derisive term for a male homosexual. The origin of the insulting and contemptuous slang term is unclear.

and abiding embarrassment from which one can never escape. Psychotherapist Gershen Kaufman argues for the necessity of understanding shame when he writes,

> Examining the dynamics of shame has become imperative. Shame is the principal impediment in all relationships, whether parent-child, teacher-student, or therapist-client. It violates both inner security and interpersonal trust. Shame wounds not only the self, but also a family, an ethnic or minority group within a dominant culture, or even an entire nation. Any disenfranchised, discriminated-against, or persecuted minority group will experience the shame of inferiority, the humiliation of being outcast. Racial, ethnic, and religious group tensions are inevitable consequences of that shame. Just as personal identity becomes molded by shame, ethnic-religious identity and national character are similarly shaped. Shame is also an impediment in international relations, where the dynamics of diplomacy invariably are the dynamics of shame and honor. Shame is a universal dynamic in child rearing, education, interpersonal relations, psychotherapy, ethnic group relations, national culture and politics, and international relations. (1996: 7)

Shame is everywhere, it seems. This is part of the problem. The difficulty with experiencing shame is that the pain it causes never ends. It echoes resoundingly on and on in us, seemingly forever. Just talking about the shame we have experienced, reintroduces the emotional scabbing and scarring we have experienced. It can be painful. To acknowledge our shame is as if we were picking a scabbed wound and watching it bleed again.

The author begins this chapter with a fear (anxiety perhaps) and a worry (that I will be shamed) that I will simply confirm Pastoral Theologian Stephan Pattison's observation that, "the literature on the pastoral significance of shame is growing, it is fragmented, inconsistent theologically and psychologically, and thus far, less coherent and illuminating than it might be." (2003: 221) My hope is to succeed in this regard; to

be successful in both coherence and illumination! The author would like to be coherent and illuminating! Nevertheless—what is attempted here is a broad-spectrum view, coalescing hopefully in a somewhat intelligible understanding of shame as a phenomenon. This chapter's approach is somewhat phenomenological. Pattison continues by observing, "…the Christian theological tradition, whether biblical or non-biblical, largely fails to provide any real 'therapeutic wisdom' that aids in dealing with shame. What pastoral theologians and carers have to say about shame is largely informed by contemporary therapeutic resources." (2003, 21) If this is an accurate assessment of the problem, then we (Pastors and Practical Theologians) are faced with the challenge and the attempt at a solution. First, however, we must begin the excavation and evaluation of the problem of shame.

5.1 The Variety of Perspectives—Beginning with the Personal

There is an assortment of schools of thought regarding shame, just as there are for other personal difficulties or neuroses. Some are psychological. Some are theological. In presenting their unique perspectives, each author is trying desperately while ensconced in a darkened room, and while blindfolded, to use their hands to discover and interpret their findings. You know the rest of the analogy. One individual grabs a foot and says, *"Eureka, I've found it!"* Another person grabs the tail and likewise says, *"No, I've discovered it!"* Yet, a third specialist cries out, *"No, you fools (while grabbing the ear) I've got it!"* Each individual has put their hands on a specific part of the elephant and imagined that what he (or she) has discovered is the whole of the elephant. Perspective is

important. In truth, however, each has just given us **one** aspect. As Stephen Pattison notes,

> there is no one way of approaching or understanding shame, no one 'reality' that underlies all experiences of shame, no simple 'lowest common denominator' that links all uses of the term 'shame' together. Furthermore, there is no 'master narrative,' that satisfactorily accounts for all, or most, aspects of the phenomenon of shame. All that is available is a range of different discourses in which shame is variously situated and understood. Sometimes these discourses are complementary, at other times they may be contradictory. (2003: 181)

Regardless of the cornucopia of views, what we will attempt to do here is to construct a somewhat holistic model. By necessity, it will be a working model, subject to adaptation and change. It will by no means be complete.

We have covered, in a fashion, both a 'lack of assurance,' and 'anxiety,' and used the phrase coined by philosopher Gabriele Taylor (1987) to describe them as 'emotions of self-assessment.' To assess ourselves, is to offer some judgment on our present status. This act and evaluation is where we look inward and measure ourselves against others, and against the image, we have of ourselves. With a lack of assurance and anxiety, the grade is never good. Shame may also be interpreted to be an emotion of grading and judgment about one's self. Professor Michael Lewis writes, "Shame can be defined simply as the feeling we have when we evaluate our actions, feelings, or behavior, and conclude that we have done wrong. It encompasses the *whole of ourselves;* it generates a wish to hide, to disappear, or even to die." (1992: 2) In short, it is about negative self-assessment. We grade ourselves harshly. As one may observe from the previous chapter,

there is a fluidity of ideas about the nature and cause(s) of anxiety. The issue of a "lack of assurance" seems less tendentious.

Lack of assurance is straightforward. It can be defined pretty accurately. It has its origin both in our doctrine of God and personal experience. Perhaps the most precise, and certainly the most memorable, image of anxiety was broached by Kierkegaard. He envisaged anxiety to be similar to the experience of someone looking down from a vast precipice. Imagine the dizziness if that someone was afraid of heights! The swirling, spinning vertigo, which expresses itself as a punch to the stomach and the inability to move, captures Kierkegaard's illustration aptly. Perhaps the most systematic description and definition of shame is by Theologian James William McClendon, who writes in his Systematic Theology (Ethics) Vol. 1,

> Shame is, roughly speaking, a sense of deficiency or worthlessness. When we compare what we seem to be with what we think we might be there may arise a loss of face or presence, a dejection that takes all the wind from our sails. A man without shoes in a society that strongly values shoe wearing may have no guilt, but he is liable to feel profound shame if he sees himself shoeless. And the uncovering of more sensitive areas of the body than feet is even more likely to produce shame. Bonhoeffer believed the root of this deficiency pertained to the creature's awareness of estrangement from the Creator. Thus the nakedness felt by our first parents ("And they knew that they were naked; so they stitched fig-leaves together and made themselves loincloths," Gen. 3:7*b*) symbolizes the lonely exposure that alienated male and female feel when they have abandoned God; that exposure, Bonhoeffer says, is the elemental shame, capable of attaching itself afresh to situations that repeat the primitive sense of deficiency and loss (1978:20-23). So the gospel remedy for shame must be a restoration of the divine presence (Rom. 1:16; 2 Tim. 1:12 ASV). (2002: 106)

The author has two adolescent daughters; it has been interesting to watch their self-evaluation of their bodies. As they look in the mirror, one can notice in their eyes the idealized image that American society tells them they must be like in order to be attractive. That cultural fantasy contrasts with the lesser image they have of themselves. There is, unfortunately, a discrepancy between their version of the ideal, which may have no bearing on reality whatsoever, and the distinct reality of their individual body. The comments they make are indicative of many adolescents who wish their bodies were somehow different. Inevitably, they are displeased with themselves. McClendon continues,

> [in attempting to hide from God or another]…the primal defection from presence is found in the experience of shame. In genuine presence, I am with another and she or he with me, and there is a wholeness in the shared act or fact of our being there. But shame is a failed wholeness. Thus face-to-face with another, but ashamed, I sense a loss of my own presence. (2002: 116)

Shame, perhaps more than any other emotion, is a feeling of diminishment. As McClendon points out it is a sense of deficiency in ourselves. It is the feeling of worthlessness. The root meaning of shame is **to cover up**, **to envelop**, while in some languages it has the connotation of *hurting*.

Shame is defined by Helen Merrell Lynd as a wound to one's self-esteem; it is a painful feeling or sense of degradation stirred by the consciousness of having done something unworthy of one's previous idea of one's own excellence. (Merrell Lynd 1953:

22-23) It is a feeling where, comparatively speaking, one falls short. Gabrielle Taylor writes,

> …in experiencing any one of these emotions [guilt, shame] the person concerned believes of herself that she has deviated from some norm and that in doing so she has altered her standing in the world. The self is the 'object' of these emotions, and what is believed amounts to an assessment of the self. (Taylor 1987: 1)

Shame, however, is something altogether more than just this. It is more than a perpetual disorienting dizziness. It is more than the fear of being outside of God's purview. It is the self, looking in the mirror, while trying to hide from your own reflection. It is also the feeling of a negative evaluation one has in front of another. If we grade ourselves harshly, imagine what someone else might think. Shame is just as much about *another's* assessment of us, as it *is* about our *own* assessment. There is an objective pole to shame. In addition, there is also a subjective pole. Yet, for Princeton Professor Donald Capps, shame is primarily about a sense of 'self-estrangement,' a 'wave of self-rejection,' even 'of self-revulsion.' Our self's exposure to **itself** is, therefore, the worst. (1993: 76)

We become aware of these emotions—**a lack of assurance, anxiety, and shame** as they arise. Individuals may be aware of these feelings of self-assessment. They may have to be slowly pulled from us. Superficially speaking, we might not even be aware that this is the issue troubling us. We may not be precisely able to articulate a name for this feeling, whatever the particular feeling. However, it is there and real—but we know it is uncomfortable and that we need to dampen them.

We have all at one time or another experienced shame. We are all familiar with shame. We are also familiar with the fear of *being* shamed. Shame can be good when it curbs unacceptable behavior. It functions as an automobile seat belt in this way. Its function is to place a hedge before one. Shame can also signal embarrassment. To be different in a culture, or to exist outside of a particular niche, however large that culture may be (from school on up) or however small that niche or group—is to risk being shamed.

Even though the author was born in Montreal, Quebec, Canada, and is **"technically"** (as my wife points out quite frequently!), a **Canadian**, I was raised in the American Southeast. I grew up in the Southern states of Arkansas, Mississippi, and South Carolina in the United States and received my education in the Southeastern United States. One may notice this from the way I spell words. My spelling is distinctly American. My father had been transferred by his Railroad Equipment manufacturing company (Canron) from Montreal, Quebec, Canada to South Carolina (Tamper) to build a new manufacturing plant for railroad equipment and to contribute in running the plant as Assistant to the President. My parents were both born and raised in Quebec. My father in a small farming community called Huntingdon, just outside of Montreal. My mother was raised in northern Quebec near the Hudson Bay. In 1966, we immigrated with roughly 200 Canadian families to the Deep South; it was (and remains for them) a cultural shock. Grits, chitlins, fatback, pig's feet, greens, fried okra are just some of the foods prevalent in the Southeast, never heard of or imagined in Canada. Over the years, we have lived in several different locales, moving frequently, as my father took various jobs, or was promoted, so I was personally something of an oxymoron. The specific

words I picked up from my parents contrasted with the language in the Deep South. However, in returning home in the afternoon, I used the words I had picked up at school. Particularly present was "Yes, Ma'am or No Ma'am," "Yes, Sir or No sir." These were not Canadian!

The rest of the family remained in Quebec working and living there. We visited regularly every summer for vacation checking on both Nana's and Aunts and Uncles (and cousins). We visited friends of my parents and distant cousins, traveled to historical sites, and imbibed the different atmosphere. A highlight was visiting Ottawa and the Parliamentary buildings of Canada. We also toured the Prime Minister's residence and Cabinet offices. We regularly visited Montreal and Quebec City. Our time spent on vacation in Canada was anywhere from two to six weeks, depending on family circumstances. Through this traditional trek, and our often up-rootedness, the idea of home became for the author both terribly important and spatially clouded. In some ways, I felt like Canadian geese summering in one place and wintering in another.

I developed occasional acquaintances in Canada with neighborhood children, who were, with only one or two exceptions, French Canadian (Francophones). Even though language was a barrier, (I didn't speak French) we just spoke louder to one another, pointed, talked slow, and somehow communicated. Kids can conquer most difficulties. They teased me until they realized that I was from the U. S. Then they cut me some slack and my lack of French was acceptable. Because of that, my not knowing French in a majority speaking French Province was from then on not often an issue. Most people we met as friends or family all knew we were not French educated. My uncle Ian, my mother's brother, was so fluent in French we teased him he actually thought in

Quebecois. In the Southeastern United States at the time, there was no need; Spanish perhaps, but not French.

However, when I was an adolescent in the 1970's and 1980's Quebec was embroiled in the Separatist movement, in which most of its Francophone citizens were seeking to secede from the Canadian Confederation. This has its origins in the French-and-English War prior to the American Revolution. A significant battle, 'the' significant battle was on the Plains of Abraham near Montreal between the French and English. The English won. From then on, both cultures developed side-by-side, sometimes intermingling, sometimes remaining isolated, occasionally interacting.

The desire among most Francophones was for an independent French Quebec. The relationships between Francophones and Anglophones had always been uneasy and sensitive, not always, but enough to be an issue occasionally. One on one there was never an issue. French Quebecers befriended and dealt with English Quebecers. My Dad's Mum lived next door to a French Canadian family for almost forty years and even though neither one of them completely understood the other's language, both of them would have done anything for the other. Quebec occupies a unique place in Canada. Quebec was a part of an English Confederation even though the majority of Quebecers were French Canadian. Anglophones had always been in the minority in Quebec, but relations had been mostly workable and relatively good. It is true that both cultures were different; Quebec was bi-lingual, with most Quebecers generally seeking to learn the other culture's language and if not the language at least the most common words. At worst, there had been an uneasy alliance. In fact, Prime Minister (1948-1957), and Francophone, Louis St. Laurent when growing up believed all men spoke French and all

women English, because his parents were French and Scottish, and naturally spoke to him in their native languages! He spoke to his Dad in French thinking that men spoke only French. He spoke to his Mum in English thinking that women naturally spoke English. He relates being terribly confused in school, because he soon learned otherwise (that men could speak English and women could speak French) upon enrolling. This fact caused him no amount of consternation. Pierre Trudeau, another French-Canadian Prime Minister had a similar upbringing. Beginning in the late 1960's native French Quebecers began to push for native French speakers to have increasing political power. However, most leaders in Quebec, outside the Catholic Church had been English (this is a broad generalization and should be treated as such). Most English were Protestant. General De Gaulle, France's first President following WWII visited Quebec in 1968 and in an ill-advised moment uttered, "*Libre Quebec*," "*Libre Quebec*!" In so doing, he indicated his belief that French Quebec needed to be sovereign—and independent. His words pointed to the belief of many that Quebec was like France during WWII when the Nazi's invaded France and occupied it putting the Vichy Government in place. The Canadian Prime Minister at the time, who himself was French-Canadian (although like St. Laurent he had had a French father and an English mother), Pierre Trudeau angrily replied, "*Quebec does not need to be liberated*." "*It already is!*" Tensions continued from then to run high between English Quebecers and French Quebecers all through the seventies. English Quebecers flew the Red and White Canadian Maple Leaf Flag adopted during Lester Pearson's term of office as Prime Minister in the 1960's in front of their homes, while Separatists waved the Quebec Blue and White *Fluer-de-lis* from their flag stands on the

side of the house. Driving down the street it was easy to tell who believed what—front doorsteps were decorated with one or the other.

Growing up in the South I knew of mixed relationships and marriages between White's and Black's (very few though) and so was amused to no end when told in hushed terms while visiting a distant cousin of my father's, by another cousin that his marriage was *mixed*—he was English and she was French!! In whispered tones it was made clear that she was *quite* different, *very* different in fact, (having unique *morals*, being Catholic, being raised French, thinking as a Francophone) because she was French. Why is it that we put up walls of separation between ourselves because we are different, I wondered then about this and still do.

Oblivious to most of this because I was a youngster in the 1970's, all I knew or really cared about was that I loved to fish and often went into bait and tackle shops to buy worms. I had learned a few passable French phrases for ordering bait. Around the corner from my maternal grandmother's home in Chateauguay, Quebec there was a Frenchman who sold worms and grasshoppers for fishing. I learned to ask for worms in French! I was quite proud of that. The St. Lawrence Seaway with its various lakes and rivers was just a few feet from both my grandmothers' apartments. My paternal grandmother, who lived in Valleyfield, literally lived on the water—off La Baie St. Francois. The other grandmother who lived in Chateauguay lived right on the Chateauguay River, which emptied into Lake St. Louis, a part of the St. Lawrence Seaway. My Aunt and Uncle lived in a cottage on Lake St. Francis, just thirty minutes from my grandmother in Valleyfield, which was another part of the St. Lawrence Seaway. Generally, there was no problem, because my Southern accent usually gave away that I was from the U. S., as did

the words I used. Once you say "Yes, Ma'am" or "Yes, Sir" in Quebec it is obvious you are not from there! My cousins used to poke my younger sister and say to her, *"Say something, say something,"* because of her accent, which was very pronounced with a drawl and was multi-syllabic just like most Southerners speak!

On one occasion, however, I went to the corner shop near my grandmother's home in Valleyfield. I had not been in this one before. When I went up to the counter, I asked for worms in English, but I was greeted with an angry stare. It soon became obvious that my English was not welcome there, for the proprietors were French. I then tried in French, poor French, I might add. At first, I was ignored, and then when I pushed to be waited on, I was belittled in French and finally asked why I did not know how to speak French! I tried again by using the French phrases I had learned for worms. There were a few other customers inside and there was much pointing, derision, looking at me icily, and talking back and forth (in French, with the occasional swear word). I was shocked, being only eleven or twelve and did not know what to do or how to respond, but I knew I was distinctively the subject of the conversation. I particularly remember my face going red and stammering in my best Southern accent something like *'I'm sorry, I don't know how to speak French because I am from the U.S.'* 'From *Caroline-de-Sud.' "Then what are you doing here!?"* came the angry response. Becoming more and more embarrassed, and my face getter redder and redder, I dropped my head and mumbled something to no one in particular about not wanting worms anymore and getting out of there as fast as I could. The angry words in French as I left needed no translation.

As James Fowler points out, "Shame is about the self—its adequacy and worth, its defectiveness and its unworthiness." (Fowler 1993: 816) Standing there in front of

the counter, I was being told, "I did not matter, because I was not French." Even worse, I was **English!** (What is terribly amusing about this whole incident is that many years later I learned I was adopted by my parents at three months of age in Montreal and you guessed it—one of my birth parents was French-Canadian! My French teacher in high school Miss Proctor, who was pretty much convinced I was not a natural at learning French—would now be terribly amused by this information!!).

Even though this was a shame-provoking experience, and cause for reflection even now, it is just a drop in the bucket compared to experiences that others have had. I have had, unfortunately however, a certain *reticence* in attempting to speak French since. Helen Merrell Lynd writes that shame is "A peculiarly painful feeling of being in a situation that incurs the scorn or contempt of others." (1958: 24) I am not alone. We have all experienced events that have left us feeling ashamed. We have all had others attribute negative feelings and judgments to us. The issue in shame is whether we will agree with the attribution of someone else so that it becomes a part of who we are at our core. John Bradshaw notes that,

> When shame has been completely internalized, nothing about you is okay. You feel flawed and inferior; you have the sense of being a failure. There is no way you can share your inner self because you are an object of contempt to yourself. When you are contemptible to yourself, you are no longer in you. To feel shame is to feel seen in an exposed and diminished way. When you're an object to yourself you turn your eyes inward, watching and scrutinizing every minute detail of behavior. This internal critical observation is excruciating. It generates a tormenting self-consciousness… (a) paralyzing internal monitoring [which] causes withdrawal, passivity and inaction. (1988: 13)

What Bradshaw is articulating here is that there is an indefinable emptiness at the core of the shamed individual. This is negatively transformative in some ways, "You are no longer you." The attribution of others becomes internalized. We accept their judgments. We respond to their scorn. The result is that we are no longer ourselves, and we withdraw. We become passive. We are unable to act. As Karen Horney writes, and I quote again, "…basic evil is invariably a **lack of genuine warmth and affection**." (1937: 80) If the basic evil of human existence is a lack of genuine warmth and affection towards others, perhaps the remedy is quite the opposite.

5.2 The Cultural Context

To feel shame is to have judged ourselves by a particular conglomeration of beliefs, which taken together compel us to identify our emotions, categorize them, and classify them by name. It is, unfortunately, to feel inferior to another. (Merrell Lynd 1958: 22) One aspect of this evaluation of ourselves comes from the culture in which we live. Cultural norms influence our outlook immensely. Many cultures attribute honor to an individual, which is prized. At the same time, taking someone's honor away by speaking about them in a pejorative way is to be avoided. It results in shame. This is still the case in the United States.

Culture shapes us in ways, both positive and negative. Through the clothes our peers wear, to the expressions they use, to their likes and dislikes—the culture in which we live both challenges us and shapes us. The fact is that in our cultural milieu—as Donald Capps argues—shame *predominates*, not guilt. (1993: 35) Guilt may have been the currency of religion in earlier generations, but it is not now so. Something new, a different frame of reference, a new direction is therefore needed. Capps does this by arguing that **narcissism** is the new sin. It may be described as both cause and effect. He derives this suggestion from Nicholas Lasch. Capps notes that narcissists do not feel guilt, so much as they feel shame. Narcissists cannot maintain interpersonal relationships. Capps quotes Ben Burstein approvingly, who suggests four types of narcissistic personalities:

> (1.) the craving (typically emotionally undernourished),
> (2.) the paranoid (characterized by hypersensitiveness, rigidity and suspiciousness),
> (3.) the manipulative (appears disingenuous, contemptable of others, unprincipled, devious), and
> (4.) the phallic (arrogance, exhibitionistic, and recklessness are typical). (1993: 20-24)

Shame, then, is about depletion and devaluation. Capps sums up the problem,

> In our own ways and in our own setting and contexts of work and family life, we have been known to employ the meaner, less flamboyant methods of the craving, paranoid, manipulative, and phallic narcissists: sulking and pouting, criticizing, and suspecting, deceiving and exploiting, showing off and putting down. Even when we are not engaged in such questionable methods of self-repair, we seem chronically depleted, doubtful of our worth, emotionally hungry, and highly attuned and sensitive to shame.

> Moments of elation and satisfaction cannot be enjoyed or even trusted because we know that soon the bubble will burst, the joy will dissipate, and the life will go out of us, leaving us once again, feeling empty and depleted. (1993: 36)

In a church full of people, it is not uncommon for the author to encounter behavior characterized here by Capps. Congregations contain people good at sulking and pouting, criticizing, suspecting, deceiving and exploiting, showing off and putting down. Occasionally, and to the author's shame, the pastor is also capable of this kind of behavior.

It is a cultural, human phenomenon. My daughter is a cheerleader for the high school that she attends. Several of her teammates were recently discussing their sexual activities, and the sexual activities of peers known to all. What is acceptable, what is not acceptable, whether one is experienced or inexperienced all have a bearing on whether one (of the cheerleaders) are (a)shamed or not. To be popular (whatever that means) and to conform to the perceived cultural norm is instrumental in being shamed or being accepted. To be isolated and not part of a niche group is to experience being judged and shamed. Individuality is prized—so long as one fits into a particular group. To be too much the individualist is to risk shame. The California (USA) Indie Pop Band *Echosmith* recently had a top forty hit titled: "I Wish That I Could Be Like the Cool Kids." It is a song highlighting teenage angst and the desire to fit in. The lyrics are as follows,

She sees them walking in a straight line, that's not really her style.
And they all got the same heartbeat, but hers is falling behind.
Nothing in this world could ever bring them down.
Yeah, they're invincible, and she's just in the background.

And she says,

"I wish that I could be like the cool kids,
'Cause all the cool kids, they seem to fit in.
I wish that I could be like the cool kids, like the cool kids."

He sees them talking with a big smile, but they haven't got a clue.
Yeah, they're living the good life, can't see what he is going through.
They're driving fast cars, but they don't know where they're going.
In the fast lane, living life without knowing.
And he says,
"I wish that I could be like the cool kids,
'Cause all the cool kids, they seem to fit in.
I wish that I could be like the cool kids, like the cool kids.
I wish that I could be like the cool kids,
'Cause all the cool kids, they seem to get it.
I wish that I could be like the cool kids, like the cool kids."

Songwriters
JAMIE JEFFERY SIEROTA, NOAH JEFFERY SIEROTA, JEFFERY DAVID SIEROTA, JESIAH DZWONEK, GRAHAM JEFFERY SIEROTA, SYDNEY GRACE ANN SIEROTA
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From the 2013 album "Talking Dreams"
Echosmith - Cool Kids Lyrics | MetroLyrics

Culture, specifically, the culture of the U.S. is unique. Every culture is. It influences others through the music played on the radio, and is in turn influenced by the movies shown in theatres, the communal history it shares, the music heard and the art seen in magazines, newspapers, and on the internet. Culture is also the broad likes, dislikes, and arguments over sporting events, community expectations and the common observance of public celebrations. The highlighting of cultural heroes from various endeavors is also a cultural symptom, but also produces a cultural education.

Today in the U.S. there is an increasing pluralism, but regardless some holidays continue to be observed by all. Memorial Day (celebrating the Armed Services), Fourth of July (American Independence), Labor Day (Work), and Halloween (All Saint's Day

sort of), Mother's Day, and Father's Day are all neutral holidays, which are celebrated in this country by most. For someone from another country, the initial celebrations might appear unique and different. Before every sporting event, the National Anthem is played, further binding this country's citizens together. So too, in the U.S., particular sports are highlighted and valued over others. One example of this is N.A.S.C.A.R. (The National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing), a sport I am not familiar with in any other country. This may be, by drawing in citizens of all nationalities, termed the acculturation of people in the U.S. to some of its (sports) values.

In addition, in the U.S. stand the heroes of yesteryear (and some from today) who all rose to prominence through hard work, achievement, and/ or education. Andrew Carnegie, Muhammed Ali, Henry Ford, Dwight D. Eisenhower, Alexander Graham Bell, Henry Kissinger, Bill Gates are just a few of the names. Psychotherapist Gershen Kaufman terms this the success script. (1985: 28) The American culture, of which these heroes were a part, values success. Success arises through hard work and industry. In the U.S., the prototype of the American citizen is the self-made man. Among the historical consciousness of the U.S. is the settling of the West over the years from its origin as a country with just thirteen colonies and a stark, forested, blank unknown land beyond their reach. Achievement, success, climbing up the ladder, hard work all combine in this country in powerful ways in our culture to mold all, place expectations upon everyone, and to grade each. George Washington, Davy Crockett, Daniel Boone, Lewis and Clark, Elvis Pressley, John Glenn and Neil Armstrong to name just a few, highlight important heroes who were "independent and self-sufficient." They conquered through sheer force of will. This is another of the cultural scripts that Gershen Kaufman

highlights as powerful in both shaping opinion, guiding cultural criteria, and judging the level of success. (1985: 29)

Independence, in the United States, is also valued. Standing on one's own feet is part of the cultural milieu here in the U.S. To need anything beyond what one can provide for one's self or one's family is shaming. To need is to be perceived as inadequate. What does this say about those who cannot quite live up to the so-called American Dream?

Unfortunately, "shame," writes Pastoral Theologian Ed Wimberly, "is all too often the dominant experience of the self," making our self-assessment of shame prevalent in our society today. This may be seen as a crisis. (Wimberly 1999: 14, 17) Causing this difficulty, Wimberly suggests, is our culture, which may be characterized as a *culture of shame*. The society in which we live all too often undermines a person's sense of self—driving them to feel worthless because they perceive themselves as fundamentally flawed, and thus unlovable. The culture itself and the conflictual messages we receive from our society interfere with our maturation into adults with positive mental, emotional, and spiritual health. (Wimberly 1999: 17) To feel shame is to accept the faulty premise that has been presented to us through a variety of visual, aural, digital, and cultural messages and upon accepting it, internalizing it as if it were both illustrative and definitive of who we are. (Wimberly 1999: 30)

The heightened experiences of shame have manifested themselves today, and been recognized as such, because we live in a new kind of culture. Stephen Pattison writes,

> "Most theologians have devoted their attention to notions of guilt, offence, and forgiveness in trying to understand the nature of human alienation from neighbour and the divine. This bias has continued almost unchallenged until very recently." (2003: 190)

Indeed, it may be noted that there has been a distinct transition from a culture where the overarching framework was legal in nature, concerned with obeying rules, to a distinctly different one in tone and tenor. Failure to live within that earlier culture's framework resulted in a feeling of guilt. Guilt required forgiveness. Today, however, the cultural framework is not characterized by guilt so much as shame. This is the transition. It is a huge one.

Princeton Professor Donald Capps argues convincingly that we as a culture are no longer influenced by guilt and sin, but that our culture today is instead moved more deeply by the felt emotion of shame. He writes, "Shame has replaced guilt as the experience that causes individuals to feel bad about themselves, to feel that something is seriously wrong with them." (Capps 1993: 39) If guilt is about doing something wrong, shame is, in contrast, about feeling more like I am, throughout all my being, something which is simply and categorically, wrong.

Gerhart Piers and Milton Singer in their classic study titled, Shame and Guilt: A Psychoanalytic and Cultural Study argue that "guilt is generated whenever a boundary is touched or transgressed, shame occurs when a goal is not being reached. It thus indicates a real 'shortcoming.' James Fowler notes that, "Guilt has to do with self-judgment and remorse about violating rules or principles or about consciously injuring others. Guilt is

about something I have done or contemplated doing…" (Fowler 1993: 816) Guilt anxiety accompanies transgression; shame, failure." (Piers, Singer 1971: 24)

They note that behind the feeling of shame "stands not the fear of hatred, but the fear of contempt which, on an even deeper level of the unconscious, spells fear of *abandonment*, death by emotional starvation." (Piers, Singer 1971: 29) They continue, "Indeed, it is not the malevolently destructive eye (a peculiar form of castration anxiety), but the all-seeing, all knowing eye which is feared in the condition of shame, God's eye which reveals all shortcomings of mankind." (Piers, Singer 1971: 30)

Shame experienced is powerful. We hide our shame behind the guises of anger, contempt, depression, denial, or superiority. The character 'Will' certainly did this in *"Good Will Hunting."* John Patton (1990), Professor Emeritus of Pastoral Theology at Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, Georgia (and a former professor of mine) notes that we defend against shame with rage, righteousness, and the exercise of power. He also approves of Heinz Kohut's observation that in response to shame, we may either withdraw (flight), or respond with anger and rage (fight). (1990: 66) Professor Michael Lewis (1992) observes that narcissism can be one response to shame. Withdrawal can be another; humiliated fury, lack of confidence and avoidance, in addition, can all be responses to shame. Underlying these emotional subterfuges is the primary, core feeling of shame. This must be covered and hidden at all costs.

Donald Capps (1993) argues that narcissism—as a result—can become a 'state of being' in the shamed individual. Francis Broucek (1991) likewise argues that pathological narcissism is one main reaction to shame. He suggests three types of narcissism in the shamed individual:

(1.) the egotistical,

(2.) the dissociative type, and finally,

(3.) the turbulent type. (1991: 60)

Pastoral theologian, and my former teacher, John Patton writes, "Shame has a twofold meaning.

> *First*, shame denotes the painful sense of degradation caused by consciousness of guilt or of anything degrading, unworthy, or immodest.
> *Second*, it is the restraining sense of pride, decency, or modesty that strongly influences our behavior." (Patton 2001: 68)

Shame is a condition that provokes people to defend against it, often by maintaining a sense of power, such as the power to forgive, or by an assertion of righteousness. Sometimes responses to shame and shaming may be severe.

Though it has been more than five years, sensitive souls have not forgotten the tragedy of Tyler Clementi. A freshman at Rutgers University in New Jersey in the U.S., he had been unknowingly taped by his roommate in their shared room in a sexual encounter with another man. He had asked his roommate for some time to be alone in their room. Not knowing, but guessing what Tyler was up to he engaged in what he thought was a harmless prank. Tyler had told no one he was gay. The roommate accessed his computer through a friend's computer and turned the video camera on. It captured Tyler's action with another student. Soon the surreptitiously obtained video was

posted by his roommate on the Internet without Tyler's knowledge. Upon the discovery that his sexual encounter(s) with another male had been not only filmed, but broadcast Clementi drove to the George Washington Bridge over the Hudson River and threw himself off of it, dying in the process.

As Gershen Kaufman points out, "To feel shame is to feel seen in a painfully diminished sense." (1985: 8) The motive for his suicide must remain conjecture—could it be, however, an extreme case of the attempt to hide, to disappear? Perhaps it was also a case that Tyler perceived a supposed cultural standard that he felt he had transgressed, through this homosexual act; maybe it was the fear of disappointing his parents. It might have been embarrassment at having his deepest-self revealed on-line and publically. Morrison writes, "Shame is the belief we have about ourselves that we find intolerable." (1996: 12) There was within Tyler some kind of standard, the author suspects, which he felt he had transgressed. Indeed,

> "Shame is that feeling of self-castigation which arises when we are convinced that there is something about ourselves that is wrong, inferior, flawed, weak, or dirty. Shame is fundamentally a feeling of loathing against *ourselves*, a hateful vision of ourselves through our own eyes—although this vision may be determined by how we expect or believe other people are experiencing us." (1996: 13)

Clementi was a sensitive soul and a gifted musician. His sexual orientation may have been a secret. He had been away from home in school only three weeks. As the British newspaper 'The Guardian' notes, "Clementi's suicide is the latest example of the damage that can be inflicted when the age-old habit of pranks between teenagers meets the huge social power of technology." (http://www.theguardian.com/world/2010/sep/30/tyler-

clementi-gay-student-suicide accessed July 31, 2015) What is at issue here is the act of public shaming. It is the assessment by one or more individuals that another should be made to feel embarrassment or remorse for this action or that state (of existence). You name it. Shame can be heaped on anyone about anything. Given the tenuous nature of public acceptance of gays, lesbians, and transgendered individuals currently, is it too far in reach to suggest that Tyler was overwhelmed by intense feelings he could not control or out of which he could make sense? As Morrison highlights, "The culture of shame is all around us." (1996: 197) It is a part of the very fabric of our existence today.

5.3 Biblical and Theological Views

Any Pastoral Theological study of shame must not only take into account the pertinent emotional and psychological data, but also must consider the Biblical and Theological data as well. We continue to use the Whitehead's model of critical correlation between different sources. Therapist Carl D. Schneider rehearses some of the various meanings of shame in his book Shame, Exposure, and Privacy (1992) noting that the English language only has one word—shame. Indo-European languages commonly have two or more, he points out. "Greek has available the various meanings of αἰσχύνη, ἀεικές, ἐντροπή, ἐλεγχείη, and αἰδώς; Latin can draw upon *foedus, macula, pudor, turpitude*, and *verecundia*; German has *Scham* and *Schande*; and French, *honte* and *pudeur*." (1992: 18) The language Schneider does not mention is the Hebrew of the Old

Testament/ Hebrew Bible. בּוֹשׁ is the most common word for shame, but the following similar words are also used כָּלַם, חָפֵר, חָתַת, חָוַר, סִיג, שִׁיג, בָּהַל, פָּחַד. As Old Testament scholars Ernst Jenni and Claus Westermann point out in their Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament (1997) בּוֹשׁ means "'to be ashamed'," in two senses:

> **First,** objectively, establishing the fact ('to come to nothing'), but at the same time,
>
> **Second,** subjectively, characterizing the feeling of the one come to nothing ('to feel ashamed'). (1997: 205)

The similar-meaning words following בּוֹשׁ above are all synonyms, which can mean something similar either in the objective or subjective sense.

Gerhard von Rad (1972), perhaps the premier Old Testament scholar of the twentieth century, observed in the third chapter of his Genesis commentary that shame is like a rift. This deep grievous fissure, this rift is caused by shame, and may be traced all the way into the very inner most being of both Adam and Eve. It is nothing less than a cleavage of their relationship with God. Shame, thus, seeks to conceal. It is afraid of 'nakedness.' Shame, now, following Adam and Eve's sin governs our whole being. (1972: 91)

Claus Westermann, a colleague of von Rad's at the University of Heidelberg, in his likewise magnificent commentary on Genesis argues that, "Shame (a puzzling phenomenon) is a reaction to being unmasked or exposed. (Westermann 1994: 251) Furthermore, he writes, "Being ashamed …is a reaction of the whole person as the

blushing which accompanies it indicates." Shame, on Westermann's reading, is something that occurs through *and* in our relationships with others. To feel shame is to be human, and in so feeling this emotion, people can be very positive. It could, as a reaction to a mistake, be effective in deterring a repeated offense. He continues, "In the background is the human awareness that shame can come and go without any explanation. One can suddenly feel ashamed where one previously experienced no shame, and vice versa, an indication of certain important variations in human existence. (1994: 251)

Beyond the individual words used in Scripture, the word 'shame' and its offshoots, according to Jill McNish, appear (roughly speaking) 220 times in the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible. (McNish 2002: 221) However, when I searched the word 'shame' with my Logos Bible Software, I arrived at 143 instances of the word shame just in the Old Testament itself. Shame, at least as it appears in Scripture, appears to be about 'exposure.' It is also about failure and defeat, and about being isolated and cast out. There is also the sense that shame is the result of sin and of the resulting separation from God.

McNish (2002: 221-222) notes that 'shame' may be categorized in 5 different ways in the Old Testament. Thus,

1. Shame experienced in connection with bodily nakedness. (Isaiah 47:3)
2. Shame is experienced because of failure. (Jeremiah 20:11)
3. Shame is experienced because of defeat in battle. (Jeremiah 50:2)
4. Shame experienced because of sin. (Daniel 9:8)
5. Shame is also an emotion arising from the status of being an outcast. (Zephaniah 3:19)

Gabrielle Taylor writes, “Public esteem is the greatest good, while to be ill spoken of is the greatest evil.” (1987: 54) Building upon anthropological studies of the past several decades, Diane Bergant notes that,

> Honor has been described as the convergence of the societal markers of power, gender roles, and respect for those in superior positions. Honor itself is a claim to personal worth in one's own eyes and in the eyes of others. It derives from compliance to the identity conferred upon one by society. It is the basis of one's reputation. Shame is the sensitivity that one has regarding this reputation. It is a positive attitude, concerned with public opinion. It keeps one's behavior in check lest the rules of propriety be transgressed and one's honor be placed in jeopardy. When honor and shame are gender-based, they have different meanings for men and for women. Honor is seen as a male attribute and shame as a female aspect. For men, shame is a loss of honor; for women, it is the defense of honor. Because such honor is thought to belong to men, a shameless woman dishonors the men of her family. Thus, for the sake of male honor, women were conscientiously protected and controlled. The men of such a group are responsible for the shame of the women of the group. Depending upon the group, this can take several different forms. In some situations, husbands oversee their wives. In others, brothers exercise significant control over the lives and activities of their sisters. Although honor and shame exhibit themselves in the lives of individuals, control is exercised by the social group. It is the group that determines and regulates propriety and gender-based behavior. It is the group that confers reputation or revokes it. In a very real sense, it is the group that is honored or shamed by the conformity or non-conformity of its members. Social sanctions attached to the behavior of individuals serve the good of the group, both safeguarding traditional mores and tolerating the unfolding of new ones. (Bergant 1996: 33-34)

Anthropological studies of various cultures have assisted social science interpretation of the Bible. Indeed, the pairing of honor/ shame has for some, offered a suggestive framework by which to understand Scripture. One example is Jerome Neyrey’s study titled Honor and Shame: In the Gospel of Matthew. (1998) He writes that shame is the reverse of honor, in that it is a “loss of respect, regard, and worth and value

in the eyes of others…it is a loss of face, respect, and dishonor." (1998: 30) A shamed person would "be held in contempt, made little of, to be dismissed." (1998: 30) Shame is loss of stature in the public's opinion.

There are differing expectations between males and females about shame (in antiquity). Females are defensive about their reputation and chastity, while males may be more aggressive in seeking honor. Females may not gain honor, so much as lose the honor (of their families) which they already possess in being virtuous, chaste, moral. (1998: 32) Men, on the other hand, may compete for both glory and honor—gaining such redounds to their public credit. (1998: 33)

Bergant is clear, however, that this dominant understanding of honor and shame has not been without its critics, who have argued that this paradigm is too broad. Nonetheless, it seems to be a helpful frame of reference. Philosopher Hannah Arendt divides life into two spheres—public and private. (Arendt 1985) It is in the public sphere where we may earn honor or receive shame. The private sphere is altogether different.

In the New Testament Gospels, any number of interactions between Jesus and others could be cited as examples of shame and its healing. I mention just one; Jesus and the leprous man in Matthew 8. Here is a man cast out by society. His very existence is 'shameful.' The only thing he possesses now in his interaction with Jesus is his request. He says to Jesus, *"You can make me whole, healed, well—if you desire."* Of course, Jesus complies and the man is made whole—and his self-esteem (honor) is restored (as is his health). The examples could be multiplied. Jesus desires above all else to heal the hurting, maimed, sick and defenseless.

Professor Michael Lewis (1992) specifically looks at the Creation story in the Old Testament. He does so because the Biblical account of shame's origin has influenced the Western mind significantly. He thinks of it as a broad cultural myth that has had a deep affect upon how we interpret the world. Central to the story, for Lewis, is shame as the focal emotion, the behaviors of both Adam and Eve in the recognition of their nakedness, their sense of exposure before God, and their attempt to hide themselves. He uses this understanding to highlight his own constructive contribution to shame studies.

Perhaps the theologian most sensitive to understanding shame as a theme in the Bible was the Lutheran pastor and martyr of the Confessing Church, Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Bonhoeffer has long been a formative influence upon me. He discusses the subject of shame in two books. The first is Creation and Fall (1959) where the subject comes up in a commentary on the first chapters of Genesis. The second is in his posthumously published Ethics (1961). In both works, the thrust of his remarks are essentially the same.

In his exposition of shame Bonhoeffer states that shame, as a reality in human beings, is the result of a world split into two differing aspects *tob* and *ra* (good and evil, although Bonhoeffer also defines the Hebrew words as pleasure and pain). He writes, "Shame arises only in a split-apart world [in der Welt des Zwiespalts]." (1959: 102) We, in shame, are separated from God. Instead of seeing God, we unfortunately see only ourselves. (1961: 145) Because the world is divided into two partitions human beings must cover up themselves. We mask ourselves. We perceive that before God we are naked. We perceive ourselves in our disunion with God. (1961: 145)

We, because of this divorce, long for reunion, for the restoration of this lost unity. (1961: 146) Adam's relationship to Eve and also his relationship to God is now only partial, fragmented—full of good, but also full of evil. As divorced from God, we are also full of obsessive desire. He notes, "Humankind, which has fallen away from God in a precipitous plunge, now still flees from God. For humankind the fall is not enough; its flight cannot be fast enough." (1959: 128) As such, by seeking to flee and to hide we have been laid bare (in a strange turn of events), before God and the Other. We are naked. Shame is our "ineffaceable recollection" of our estrangement from God. (1961: 145) What is ironic about such a covering that we seek, or that we have used to hide ourselves, is that in so doing, humanity highlights its limits; indeed, we as ashamed human beings acknowledge our limit. (1959: 103) In acknowledging limits, human beings feel shame. Bonhoeffer writes,

> Adam, in shame, against Adam's own will, has to acknowledge the other person, so against Adam's own will Adam admits to the Creator that Adam is fleeing from his Creator, hiding from God. Adam does not boldly confront God; instead when Adam hears God's voice, Adam hides. (1959: 127)

We realize our nakedness and our shame. We have lost something integral to humankind, to ourselves. (1961: 145) We feel shame because our behavior towards the Other is now characterized by hatred, envy, is avidly passionate, without limit—but is also a realization of our separation. (1961: 145) Where before there was fellowship between humans, now there is enmity.

Shame is an unwilling witness to a fallen world and to a shamed people. Shame points to a prior, different relationship with God and with another. It is also a testimony to revelation. Before there was no need; now there is. Shame points to our limits. Shame points to the other. Shame even points to God. (1959: 124) The starkest cause for this sad state of affairs is that something has happened to our createdness—to us as created beings, as God's creatures, because of the fall. Our eyes, unfortunately, have become opened. We now see, not only God, but also ourselves. What we see, however, is our nakedness and our shame. (1961: 147) The whole world, because of shame, is now covered as if by a veil. It is silent and lacks explanation. It is enigmatic. It is opaque to us, but not to God. The world as God's creation is also ashamed along with humanity and hides itself from our view. (1959: 126) This existence is artificial and has been acquired, because of our desire to be as God.

Because of shame, we acquire a conscience. Bonhoeffer writes, "Conscience means feeling shame before God; at the same time one conceals one's own wickedness in shame, humankind in shame justifies itself—and yet, on the other hand, at the same time there is in shame an unintentional recognition of the other person." (1959: 128) Conscience is the awareness of our disunion with God and God's purposes. Conscience drives us to conceal our fallenness. At the same time, we try to justify not only ourselves but also our actions. Our relationships, intended as benefit, are influenced by shame even as we recognize the *Other*.

Shame can only be overcome, Bonhoeffer notes, when the original unity between God and humankind is restored. With separation comes shame. It is only, our fellowship with God, incapacitated, disabled, and surmounted—through the forgiveness of sin.

Fellowship is restoration of affiliation with God. Confession to God and before other men and women accomplishes this because; forgiveness and the diminishment of our shame are based on the action and personhood of the One, the New Man, who vicariously bears our shame. Our forgiveness by God is none other than 'Christ's blood and righteousness that is my adornment and my fine raiment.' (Bonhoeffer quotes an old Lutheran hymn from 1638 here) (1961: 148) Reunion with God and the lessening of shame, if not complete healing of it, occurs **through Christ**. As Bonhoeffer's Ethics and Cost of Discipleship show, this must be worked out before God, by being united to Christ and his merits. Remarkably, Calvin makes the same case in his Institutes (3.11.23) where he uses the analogy of Isaac covering himself with a dead animal's fur to procure Esau's blessing from Jacob. He says, "And we in like manner hide under the precious purity of our first-born brother Christ, so that we may be attested righteous in God's sight." (McNeill edition 1960: 753-754) Covering and uncovering, protection and safety are of prime concern when suffering from shame.

A Scriptural example of what Bonhoeffer is characterizing may be seen in the book of Job (40:4). Job has pretty much lost everything. He is sitting alone. He is isolated. He is friendless. He sits among the ashes. He has been afflicted with sores, what we might describe as carbuncles. He has lost his property. He has lost his children. He has lost his honour. He has lost his good name. He has lost just about everything one can lose. In addition, he is losing the argument with God. There is nothing left that he possesses, nothing but shame. It is out of this darkness, this hole of desperation and nothingness that he says plaintively to God

4הֵן קַלֹּתִי מָה אֲשִׁיבֶךָּ יָדִי שַׂמְתִּי לְמוֹ־פִי׃[9]

"Look! (God), I am insignificant. What can I say to you? [Nothing!] My hand covers my mouth." (my translation)[10]

"The head that is hung in shame" says Tompkins, "is experienced as the head and face of the entire self. The individual is ashamed of himself. It is not possible to be ashamed or humiliated in this way without self-consciousness.

Attribution is one of the keys to understanding the famous French existentialist philosopher Jean Paul Sartre's understanding of shame which appears in his thick, peculiarly phrased, densely difficult tome titled Being and Nothingness (1956). Of course, Sartre's allusion to the **"Look"** is by now famous and oft quoted. The point of his reflection is to overcome the solipsism he feels is rampant in both realism and idealism. Now, epistemologically speaking Solipsism is "the view that there is only a single mind in the universe and that it is one's own." (Pollock and Cruz 1989: 18) How do we establish the reality of others? That is the rub. Nevertheless, for our purposes, what is crucial in Sartre's illustration is how the 'look' attributes a judgment to someone which elicits (a feeling, any feeling, but Sartre focuses on pride and shame) the feeling of shame. To discover that someone is looking at us is to become aware that we are being seen. Sartre writes, "It is the shame or pride which makes me *live*, not *know* the situation of being looked at. Now, shame, as we noted at the beginning of this chapter, is shame of *self;* it is the recognition of the fact that I am indeed that object which the Other is

[9] Anon, 2003. *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia: SESB Version;* Electronic ed., Stuttgart: German Bible Society.
[10] I got this illustration from Jill McNish's Union Theological Seminary 2002 doctoral dissertation on shame. (p. 223)

looking at and judging." As Joseph Catalano (1985) explains in his commentary on Sartre's WW II work, for us to look is to lose ourselves in that process *of looking."*

This is what Sartre calls the 'pre-reflective cogito,' which is an unthinking and unreflective act.[11] If we, for example (Sartre's classic image) are looking through a keyhole seeking to discover something about another unknown to them, we lose ourselves in the process of 'looking' and 'seeing.' Then, hearing behind us footsteps, the sound of someone arriving behind us, and observing us looking, we then will become aware that they are attributing some judgment about us. I am 'objectivized' by the Other. (Catalano 1985: 166) The seer and the looker are now the seen-one and looked-at. I no longer am the only one regarding. I am regarded. Because of the Other's look, we are situated within the world of things, objects. I become an object for the observer. Thus, we become aware of 'the Other.' Correspondingly, we also become aware that we are an object for 'the Other.' In so realizing our freedom is stolen. Sartre notes, "Shame reveals to me that I am this being, not in the mode of "was" or of "having to be" but *in-itself.* When I am alone, I can-not realize my "being-seated;" at most it can be said that I simultaneously are both am it and am not it. But in order for me to be what I am, it suffices merely that the Other look at me." (1956: 262) My existence and being is established as a for-itself (a reflective and reflecting being) for another. If Sartre were a Christian, one might say that this look and its effects is his version of the fall. (Catalano 1985: 162) Sartre's philosophy is so unique and the language he uses, as well as its concepts, could take us too far afield, of what I want to highlight here in this sketch. It is most importantly, however, what we take from Sartre, which is the attribution by *another*

[11] Cogito is Latin for "I think." It became famous through Rene Descartes' famous dictum: "I think, therefore I am." (Cogito ergo sum)

that we place on ourselves. Shame is not just exteriorly placed on us by another, but at some point we have to or just will (consciously or unconsciously agreeing with them) interiorize that attribution. For Sartre, this is bad faith. Sartre, here, is worth quoting at length,

> "To be looked at is to apprehend oneself as the unknown object of unknowable appraisals-in particular, of value judgments. But at the same time that in shame or pride I recognize the justice of these appraisals, I do not cease to take them for what they are-a free surpassing of the given toward possibilities. A judgment is the transcendental act of a free being. Thus being-seen constitutes me as a defenseless being for a freedom, which is not my freedom. It is. in this sense that we can consider ourselves as "slaves" in ,so far as we appear to the Other. But this slavery is not a historical result-capable of being surmounted-of a life, in the abstract form of consciousness. I am a slave to the degree that my being is dependent at the center of a freedom which is not mine and which is the very condition of my being. In *so* far as I am the object of values which come to qualify me without my being able to act on this qualification or even, to know it, I am enslaved." (1956: 267)

Sartre goes on later in the chapter to describe what it is like for us to be completely engulfed in shame. The Other (person) looking at us and attributing to us his views, ideas, concerns, and judgments is 'the immense, invisible presence which supports this shame.' (1956: 269) In so doing, he clasps it on every side; he is the supporting environment of my being-unrevealed. As we will discover, shame is both attributed to us by another, and in addition attributed to ourselves *by* ourselves. The issue as I see it almost daily as a pastor, is whether we will let that attribution stick to our parishioners or will we endeavor to supplant that judgment with another, greater **'gospel'** one? If it is important what another thinks, then surely it is supremely important what the Triune God

thinks. By validating who God *as* Father has made them to be in Christ by the Spirit, it may just be possible to *lessen* their shame. At least that is often the challenge.

The self is completely salient in the face that blushes or hangs down. (Tompkins 2008: 360) We feel small, trifling, and inconsequential, not worthy of anyone. To be looked at dismissively is overwhelming. This is certainly Job's affect. To have 'shame' attributed to us is overwhelming. To receive shame is and can be soul destroying.

In the quintessential American novel (USA) from the nineteenth century The Scarlet Letter, Nathaniel Hawthorne writes about a brave, enduring and heroic character named Hester Prynne, who is shamed by her society, because she has had a child, Pearl, out of wedlock. The story takes place in a Puritan society during a long-ago forgotten time. Forgetting, conveniently, the Bible and John chapter 8 (the woman caught in adultery), the leaders of the town force her to wear a bodice with the letter A embroidered on it symbolizing her ignominy.

There is no hiding, no disappearing, and no way can she remove this element of her life, indeed, she is to bear this letter on her chest before everyone, daily. There must be some part of Prynne, in the narrative, that wishes to destroy the eyes of the world. She may never shake that attribution of her by the society, as she knows it. As Helen Merrell Lynd (1958) notes, "Shame sets one apart (from others). (1958: 64) In doing so, she notes that shame is an isolating experience. (1958: 66)

The novel begins, essentially, with Hester being pulled from jail so that she may be publically displayed in front of the townspeople. Shame language surrounds the description of her actions and their effect on her, the baby, and the community. As Mario Jacoby reminds us, the language of shame is not recent, by any means. Jacoby notes that

when one feels disgrace, when one loses one's honor—the result is degradation and disgrace. This is to be branded with a stain or a stigma. He writes, "Jane Austen wrote of a disgrace never to be wiped off," and Shelley of "the brand of infamy." (2002: 2) For Hester Prynne the Scarlet Letter sewn on to her bodice, never to be removed is a symbol of her dishonor, humiliation, and the deeper wound, of the loss of chastity outside of the bonds of marriage, which will never heal.

She emerges from the dark, dank, primitive prison from where she has been incarcerated into the intense, revealing light of day. Hawthorne continues,

> When the young woman—the mother of this child—stood fully revealed before the crowd, it seemed to be her first impulse to clasp the infant closely to her bosom; not so much by an impulse of motherly affection, as that she might thereby conceal a certain token, which was wrought or fastened into her dress. In a moment, however, wisely judging that one token of her shame would but poorly serve to hide another, she took the baby on her arm, and, with a burning blush, and yet a haughty smile, and a glance that would not be abashed, looked around at her townspeople and neighbours. On the breast of her gown, in fine red cloth, surrounded with an elaborate embroidery and fantastic flourishes of gold thread, appeared the letter A. (Hawthorne 2007: 43-44)

The imagery, which Hawthorne devises in this story, is among the most powerful in American literature, particularly when thinking about it in relation to the experience and feeling of shame. Hawthorne's novel is a fecund ground in which to mine as we reflect further on shame. The attribution she receives, versus her personal self-assessment conflict powerfully almost overwhelmingly.

The community in which she lives and its governing authorities all seek to attribute a particular diminished status to her, which is both cause and effect for shame.

The focus here is not particularly what Hester has done, but what she has *become* through this act. For those looking on the proceedings, this one act of adultery "is not a separate act [like guilt] but (becomes) a revelation of the whole self," (Merrell Lynd 1958) indeed, in their view, what has been exposed is what she is to her core. It is what she *is*: **Adulteress. Whore. Slut.** Not someone who has done something questionable (sinful), on one occasion, but someone who has **become**, through adultery, the sin of adultery itself. Henceforth, the Scarlet Letter blazoned on her visage almost branded there for all to see -- for all time. This, in Merrell Lynd's words, is what shame ***is***. (1958: 50)

At one point in the narrative, Hester in petitioning the Governor of the Colony regarding who will take care of her child Pearl, herself or another, confronts herself in the hallway mirror of the Governor of the colony's house. Hawthorne relates, "Hester looked, by way of humouring the child; and she saw that, owing to the peculiar effect of this convex mirror, the scarlet letter was represented in exaggerated and gigantic proportions, so as to be greatly the most prominent feature of her appearance. In truth, she seemed absolutely hidden behind it." (Hawthorne 2007: 83) This is a remarkable illustration of what happens to the shamed person.

Hester has to decide how to respond once again when faced with the ignominious letter; she battles ahead and once again, her affect, her mien is different from the norm. Tompkins writes, "[in shame, normally]…the judge in the self finds the accused self disgusting." Therefore, the shamed individual may respond with contempt. Tompkins notes, "The accused self may fight back and accuse the judge of excessive piety, holding him in equal contempt. The accused self may become afraid of the judging self that perhaps the accuser is correct." (2008: 369)

As Helen Merrell Lynd points out in a statement, that in its veracity, may be taken as a commentary on what Hester is viewing, and on what and whom she is seeing, “Discrepancy appears between us and the social situation, between what we feel from within and what appears to us, and perhaps to others, seen from without. We have acted on the assumption of being one kind of person living in one kind of surroundings, and unexpectedly, violently, we discover that these assumptions are false.” (1958: 35) This revelation may shock to the core. The question for Prynne, and indeed, for all of us, “How, when shamed, will we respond?” Will we accept the attribution? Is there a greater, 'gospel,' attribution to which we might bow?

Hester Prynne was married into a loveless marriage with an older man. He wanted the companionship of marriage. She wanted security and protection. She did not pretend that she loved him. He was acceptable to this arrangement. There is no suggestion in the novel whether they ever consummated their marriage or not. Upon discovering that she has a child, after some years absence—he is incensed and becomes within himself detective, judge, jury and executioner towards the man who is Pearl’s father. Throughout the novel, Hester’s lover remains unknown. Thus, he cannot share in her shame. The issue throughout Hawthorne’s novel is whether she will agree to their (the authority’s) estimate of her. She is shunned by the community. She becomes, in consequence, a distant member of the community—always seen, never regarded. She is constantly present and yet ignored by everyone. Merrell Lynd notes, “Experience of shame may call into question, not only one's own inadequacy and the validity of the codes of one's immediate society, but the meaning of the universe itself. (1958: 57)

Throughout the novel Hester Prynne's behavior, through force of will and true Christian sanctification, slowly and quietly, without ostentation, seeks to raise her above their shaming label. The A, the shaming Scarlet Letter on her chest, begins over the years to be interpreted by the townspeople as **"Able"** and not adulterous, because of her Christian discipleship, which is discovered to be very, very real. It becomes almost palpable. As such, their assessment, their attribution about Hester Prynne begins slowly to change. A fundamental issue in Hawthorne's book is whether Hester will accept the community's assessment of her identity and being, or if she will have within herself or perhaps develop on her own the resources to aggressively combat their views. She clearly occupies her own status among the members of the community. She lives alone with her daughter Pearl at the very edge of the village. In town, she is often harassed by adolescents who throw rubbish and mud at her, not precisely knowing why. Gershen Kaufman, who writes very persuasively on shame, notes,

> Contained in the experience of shame is the piercing awareness of ourselves as fundamentally deficient in some vital way as a human being. To live with shame is to experience the very essence or heart of the self as wanting. Shame is an impotence-making experience because it feels as though there is no way to relieve the matter, no way to restore the balance of things. One has simply failed as a human being. No single action is seen as wrong and hence, reparable. (Kaufman 1985: 8)

One may say this of the Rev. Mr. Dimmesdale at the beginning of the book, but even more importantly one may make this judgment, with good reason, at the conclusion of the book. He certainly makes it of *himself*. If Hester Prynne is covered in adulterous shame symbolized by the Scarlet Letter "A" on her chest, correspondingly, her secret lover, the

Rev. Mr. Dimmesdale dies daily, slowly, agonizingly, through the shame and guilt he feels, first for the act which conceived Pearl, and secondly, for the cowardice under which he suffers in remaining unknown. Hester's shame is public, Dimmesdale's is private and interior,—consequently **he** is his own worst judge. Of course, all is revealed at the end, when Dimmesdale confesses his crime against God and man. Hester has heroically risen above the Scarlet Letter's diagnosis of her personhood, while deeply etched, almost burned into his chest is the letter "A," which is a symbol of his silent suffering.

5.4 Affect or Mien (Visage)

What is fascinating is the sheer force of will which Hawthorne has Hester Prynne manifest in order not to indicate what she is feeling. Hawthorne has her rise above the expected affects when she is revealed to the community in her Scarlet Letter. Silvan Tompkins, (2008) in his study of affect(s) writes,

> We distinguish the following affects:
>
> *Positive*
>
> 1) Interest–Excitement: eyebrows down, track, look, listen
>
> 2) Enjoyment–Joy: smile, lips widened up and out
>
> *Resetting*
>
> 3) Surprise–Startle: eyebrows up, eye blink
>
> *Negative*

4) Distress–Anguish: cry, arched eyebrow, mouth down, tears, rhythmic sobbing

5) Fear–Terror: eyes frozen open, pale, cold, sweaty, facial trembling, with hair Erect

6) Shame–Humiliation: eyes down, head down

7) Contempt–Disgust: sneer, upper lip up

8) Anger–Rage: frown, clenched jaw, red face (2008: 185)

Tompkins argues that shame may urge us "to respond either with self-contempt or with shame or both. If I respond with self-contempt, part of the self assumes the role of a judge who lifts his upper lip in a sneer, pulls his head and nose away from the offending psychic odor, which is experienced as emanating from that other self, or part of the self, which is the object of contempt." (2008: 360) As Tompkins notes, we experience ourselves, both as subject and object.

Jungian analyst Mario Jacoby (2002) argues that shame has a variety of affects. Feelings of inferiority are one member (as it were) in the family. Another member in the family is humiliation. Shyness and inhibition go hand in hand as additional members, so too does embarrassment. These are gradations of the affect or mien of shame. Indeed, Jacoby writes, "Besides acute experiences of shame that the affected person identifies as such, there are shaming experiences that result in feelings of anxiety. I call this phenomenon "shame-anxiety," and mean by it the fear of being shamed, through one's own fault, one's own carelessness, adverse circumstances, or "coming on too strong" to others." (2002: viii)

Sylvan Tompkins writes, who has done more than any other person in studying affect(s) and deriving information from them, regarding shame,

> …shame is the affect of indignity, of defeat, of transgression and of alienation. Though terror speaks to life and death and distress makes of the world a vale of tears, yet shame strikes deepest into the heart of man. While terror and distress hurt, they are wounds inflicted from outside which penetrate the smooth surface of the ego; but shame is felt as an inner torment, a sickness of the soul. It does not matter whether the humiliated one has been shamed by derisive laughter or whether he mocks himself. In either event, he feels himself naked, defeated, alienated, and lacking in dignity or worth. (2008: 351)

The self in judging its own actions may even engage in self-judgment and subsequently be found guilty. In this case the judge feels exonerated, even vindicated that it has evaluated itself and found itself wanting. When one is caught in an experience of shame, judge, jury and self are all guilty and the affect is magnified. It may, this experience, even become unbearable.

Our physical response to shame, as Charles Darwin famously observed in *Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals*, more than a century ago (But nonetheless perceptively), is that we will invariably blush. Indeed, he writes noting that, "the small vessels of the face become filled with blood, from the emotion of shame, in almost all the races of man…" (Darwin 1872: 316) Furthermore, "Blushing is the most peculiar and the most human of all expressions." (Darwin 1872: 310) We have all known people that blush at the drop of a hat. In fact, it seems to be made worse when they seek to keep from blushing. "Blushing" writes Darwin, "is not only involuntary; but the wish to restrain it, by leading to self-attention, actually increases the tendency." (Darwin 1872: 311)

> In most cases the face, ears and neck are the sole parts which redden; but many persons, whilst blushing intensely, feel that their whole bodies grow hot and tingle; and this shows that the entire surface must be in some manner affected. Blushes are said sometimes to commence on the forehead, but more commonly on the cheeks, afterwards spreading to the ears and neck. (Darwin 1872: 312)

Because of this felt sense of shame, we often desire to conceal ourselves, or to be concealed. In seeking to do so, we may turn the whole body away, most especially the face. We might also look downward or away, as Darwin also notes. (Darwin 1872: 322)

As Carl Schneider points out in his book Shame, Exposure and Privacy the brilliant Russian Orthodox theologian and mystic, perhaps his country's greatest philosopher during the nineteenth century Vladimir S. Soloviev, noted in his book The Justification of the Good that, "shame undoubtedly remains, even from the external and empirical point of view, the distinguishing characteristic of man." (1918: 28) Of course Soloviev is thinking of the Christian understanding of the Fall of Adam and Eve and the subsequent status of human beings.

When intensely blushing, many people will find it hard to focus their minds and their thoughts. They become, at best, confused. Common expressions such as "he" or "she," being covered with confusion, seek to describe this situation. They may speak, but make little or no sense. They are often much distressed, stammer, and make awkward movements or strange grimaces. They may be said to have lost their presence of mind. In certain cases, involuntary twitching of some of the facial muscles may be observed. (Darwin 1872: 323)

Sylvan Tompkins is convinced that, "the primary motivational system is the affective system." (2008: 4) Following Darwin's lead, Tompkins is convinced that the

face, particularly the eyes and the muscles around them, are the most important organs of expression and communication of affect. In fact, just as the hands and fingers are the primary organ of manipulation and exploration, the face is the primary organ of affect. (2008: 123) Although the (inner, subconscious) drive system plays a central role in the maintenance of the life of any individual organism and the reproduction of any species, the affect system is of greater significance for human beings. (2008: 83) Thus,

> Much of the information, which is transmitted over sensory and motor nerves, is motivationally neutral. The visual system is designed for the continuous reception and transmission of constantly changing information none of which is per se desired or rejected. There is a very restricted class of reports that "motivate" and provide blueprints for utilizing both input information and the feedback control mechanism. These reports are of two kinds—a variety of pleasure and pain signals from the drive system and a variety of positive and negative signals from the affect system. Both systems generate responses that in turn generate sensory feedbacks, which are not neutral for the organism, which experiences such reports. They are immediately "acceptable" or "unacceptable" without prior learning. (2008: 12)

The affects constitute the primary motivational system not only because the drives necessarily require amplification from the affects, but also because the affects or mien are sufficient motivators in the absence of drives. If this is so, we are confronted with the paradox that everyone is much more clearly acquainted with his drives than with his affects. (2008: 95) Drives, however, as some have argued may be unconscious.

However, it becomes critical to provide a theory of the innate activators of the affect system, given that it is what induces our behavior…The affect system in man is activated by a variety of innate activators, such as drive signals and other affects as well as external activators. (2008: 139) In the case of affects, naming is much more

problematic and variable. Although each affect may have a set of specific innate stimuli, the number of learned stimuli is not specifiable. Further, what one does with regard to each affect also varies widely. (2008: 111) With regard to shame in particular, Tompkins observes,

> The shame response is an act that reduces facial communication. It stands in the same relation to looking and smiling as silence stands to speech and as disgust, nausea, and vomiting stand to hunger and eating. By dropping his eyes, his eyelids, his head and sometimes the whole upper part of his body, the individual calls a halt to looking at another person, particularly the other person's face, and to the other person's looking at him, particularly at his face. The child early learns to cover his face with his hands when he is shy in the presence of a stranger. In self-confrontation the head may also be hung in shame symbolically, lest one part of the self be seen by another part and become alienated from it. (2008: 352)

Shame is the narcissistic affect par excellence. All at once, one's self-image and the image one wants others to believe in of one's self are proven false. Such shame cannot be managed or controlled… Shame, however, is linked with vision and perception, with self-understanding and self-presentation, with the whole of one's existence. Shame is related to the feeling of being wrong… Shame results when one fails to achieve one's ego-ideal and is forced to accept one's own inferiority, in particular when a personal faux pas, perhaps innocent in itself, has been noticed by somebody else. (Nauta 2009: 66)

We have covered, in a fashion, both a 'lack of assurance,' and 'anxiety,' and used the phrase coined by philosopher Gabriele Taylor (1987) to describe them as 'emotions of self-assessment.' Each of them has its own unique affects. Michael Lewis calls them "Self-conscious evaluative emotions." (1992: 87) We become aware of these emotions

as they arise. We may not be able to articulate what they are specifically, but we know how to dampen them. We may seek to hide them behind other less offensive emotions. Silvan Tompkins notes,

> In contrast to all other affects, shame is an experience of the self by the self. At that moment when the self feels ashamed, it is felt as a sickness within the self. Shame is the most reflexive of affects in that the phenomenological distinction between the subject and object of shame is lost. Why is shame so close to the experienced self? It is because the self lives in the face, and within the face the self burns brightest in the eyes. Shame turns the attention of the self and others away from other objects to this most visible residence of self, increases its visibility and thereby generates the torment of self-consciousness. (2008: 359)

We will do just about anything to avoid experiencing or feeling this emotion. I have dealt with many parishioners who have resorted to illegal drugs or alcohol, just so they could lessen the confusion they felt from these emotions. Self-medication seems so much more reliable for some. When we experience these emotions, they require some kind of evaluation or judgment on our part. Sometimes we believe ourselves ill equipped to do so. Or, alternatively, we do not trust our judgment. The first step in dealing with these emotions is to classify them and understand them. This requires looking within. We have seen that a lack of assurance was and remains a problem for Reformed Christians and as a response left them feeling unsure about God's disposition towards each person (and to them in particular). Many people, when pressed, guess at God's nature and character. They then wonder how these will be discovered in our lives. This uncertainty may also breed anxiety.

We have also discussed anxiety, and have covered how it is a feeling of general distress over something vague and ill defined. Where fear has a specific object, anxiety is dread over no object in particular. Both emotions of self-assessment can interfere with one's sense of self, leaving the impression that one does not matter after all. Indeed, it is not too far a statement to say that in experiencing these emotions we cannot articulate clearly what we feel or suspect, that in reality *"I am not..."* How we fill in the blanks becomes the script for our lives and by which we attempt to live our lives.

5.5 Experiences of Shame

Sometimes Scarlet Letters may not be real, but metaphorical. Sometimes they may be real, but unseen. In the USA, to say the name Monica Lewinsky is to invite a whole host of images and phrases from others. Just the name itself invites much. At its core, Lewinsky's story is about shame and shaming. Lewinsky, for the non-American reader, was an intern during the then President Bill Clinton's administration (1993-2001). In 1998 it was revealed that he was engaged in an extra-marital affair with Lewinsky (an intern)—or to use his words 'that woman.'

This revelation, and the subsequent very political investigation it spawned, led eventually to a published report by the independent counsel hired to interview all the parties involved. Clinton, as a result, narrowly missed being impeached. Kenneth Starr's report was as salacious as it was informative and quickly monopolized the publishing world. Carried on bookstore shelves, it was purchased almost as fast as it was stocked. Never before had legal proceedings inspired such interest. To this day, images of Clinton's escapades remain in the public's eyes. From the testimony which remains in

the public's collective memory, as do images of an ejaculate-stained blue dress Lewinsky was wearing on one occasion (which she kept as evidence) when she was alone with Clinton (evidently in the Oval Office). Of her red beret, which she wore in some pictures and of a photograph in particular, where she is wearing the beret, smiling and looking into Clinton's eyes, while standing close to the President as he greets well-wishers in the crowd. These remain ensconced in the public's memory, even almost two decades later. To do an internet search of Bill Clinton is to be presented almost immediately with her name in the search results.

Though some 16 or 17 years have passed since that event, Monica Lewinsky is still trying to recover (herself) and to put a once promising life back together. It seems she has been perpetually and eternally branded (like Hester Prynne in "The Scarlet Letter) "slut." She wears a metaphorical Scarlet Letter. She is now forty or so. She recounts being outside of the same narrative and storyline her friends exist in. They have married, had children, and gotten advanced degrees. Some friends have divorced, been remarried, and also gotten more advanced degrees. Her narrative is quite different in contrast.

Clinton, because of his Southern charm and personality, has largely moved past that relationship (one of many purported extra-marital dalliances, the latest is with a woman termed by the Secret Service "Energizer") and has assumed the role of elder statesman, earning large sums of money for speaking at various events. In a recent Vanity Fair article from a few years ago (http://www.vanityfair.com/style/society/2014/06/monica-lewinsky-humiliation-culture#6) Lewinsky indicates that she has begun finally trying to take back control of her

life, by attacking the specific issue she says almost completely derailed it. The issue with which she takes umbrage is the label "Slut-shaming." Arguing for its ubiquitous and nefarious presence in American culture, she discusses at length her struggle to overcome being covered by various risqué names and epithets, (the Blow-job Queen is one) while Clinton was and is pretty much congratulated as a man for his extra-marital conquests. As the woman caught in adultery in the Gospel of John, chapter eight she has had to endure most of the shame, while Clinton like the man that is not named or even really mentioned has remained untouched.

We live in a conflicting and conflicted society. It is hard for young women to know which script to follow. To paraphrase Trinidadian rapper Nicki Minaj in David Guetta's song *"Hey, Mama"* (2015) women, with their paramours, (it used to be husbands) are supposed to be ladies in public, but (sexual) freaks in bed. However, as Lewinsky has illustrated with her life, they are shamed when they do so.

Having two daughters, I am not entirely sure I like this suggestion of Minaj's. Responding with a counter-script is part of parenting. Attribution here is formative. Lewinsky's crime, if there was one, at least in the court of public opinion, was that she was caught 'being a freak' with Clinton in the Oval Office. There is a double standard at play in our (American, but I venture to suggest we are not alone or unique for that matter) society and even as Lewinsky points out feminists may be culpable of misogyny. She raises numerous issues in the article, but one question is pertinent enough to be mentioned here, "How do we cope with the shame game as it's played in the Internet Age." Shame, any shame, can be deeply disturbing. Kaufman writes, "Shame is acutely disturbing to the self. In fact, no other affect is more deeply disturbing. Like a wound

made from the inside by an unseen hand, shame disrupts the natural functioning of the self. (1996: 5) If we have been shamed, how do we reclaim our dignity? She raises additional questions, important ones, at least for our awareness: Who controls the narrative of our lives? How may we define (re-define) our pasts? Can we continue to let our pasts determine our futures? How does one move forward following shame? Can shame and shaming be overcome? By what controlling narrative will we live our lives?

Shame is the sense that each of us suffering with this malady possesses our own Scarlet Letter, perhaps not for adultery, but for something else, something humiliating, something from which we feel we should run and hide, or cover ourselves up so as not to be seen, judged, and to inspire disgust in another. This self-loathing and sense of unloveableness may be deep within. Kaufman writes, "…shame is central to conscience, indignity, identity, and disturbances in self-functioning, this affect is the source of low self-esteem, poor self-concept or body image, self-doubt and insecurity, and diminished self-confidence. Shame is the affect that is the source of feelings of inferiority. The inner experience of shame is like a sickness within the self, a sickness of the soul." (1996: 5) Shame is the feeling of someone attributing to us, something about which we may feel diminished, marked, less. Shame is the experience of someone who stands before others while they laugh in derision at something one has said or done. Shame is looking at our reflection and imagining it to be the picture of Dorian Gray. It can destroy.

There is, for example, a young woman in my congregation who has become pregnant out of wedlock. The child's father is of another race. Generally, the congregation has been gentle, kind, and supportive. They have not cast aspersions. As

one member loudly said, “Babies are always a cause for joy.” There has been no gossip or drama. However, when members of the congregation announced a baby shower for the young woman, one older church member in particular told the young woman’s mother she was not attending, because “she should not be having a shower and should be ashamed of herself for her condition.” Part of her statement included, “Her pregnancy was just not right.” She could not tolerate such behavior, she blurted out. Shame.

Shame. It surrounds us. It is often heaped on us. It is often attributed to us. Sometimes we actually believe what we have been told. Professor Gershen Kaufman writes, “Contained in the experience of shame is the piercing awareness of ourselves as fundamentally deficient in some vital way as a human being.” (1985: 8) In this case, it was the perceived judgment by the single congregation member on the daughter as failing in some way. In conversations with me, the mother’s pain (and her shame) during the unplanned pregnancy was palpable. So too, was the daughter’s state over her unplanned condition. She had not calculated it. She did not know what the future held. She was not sure she should be ashamed, but she was also not sure she had something about which to be ashamed. Cultural mores are changing.

“I don’t matter.” “I am trifling…” Job, in our reflection above, is not alone. I have a parishioner (he has been a church member for 16 years now) that was involved in quite a bit of difficulty some years ago when he was much younger. He and I are the same age. Enmeshed in a depression and in a shame inspired by his family of origin, which he could not escape, he robbed a bank, threatened a person with a knife, and raped his girlfriend. Judged with committing assault, robbery and rape, he was sentenced—and he found himself in prison. He was given 30 years.

Upon his release, after serving a little more than half his sentence he began to attend my church. He felt like Job. He had nothing. It was difficult. He was different, prison had changed him, but as far as our society and the congregation felt, he wore his own "Scarlet Letter." He slowly began to try to put his life back together in a better, healthier, more productive way. It was not easy. He eventually went back to school, graduating from college with a degree in business, has been married to a beautiful young lady for more than 18 years, and has a job now as a court reporter. There were successes along the way, and also some setbacks. His story over the years, however, is a remarkable one of conversion, new life (the new creation as Paul puts it in 2 Corinthians 5:17) and the attempt at living out a faithful discipleship. This growth has not been easy. The issue for him, as it was for Hester Prynne, is whether to believe what people will now attempt to put on him. Will he accept their attribution? What epithets will they use to describe him? What epithets have they used to describe him? Ex-con? Rapist? Sex-offender? Criminal? Bank-robber? He is required by our state law to register every month as a sex-offender with the local Sheriff's department. It is difficult for him, because it seems that no one is taking the time to learn his story and to discover how different he is today. He remains among some of the members—*his actions of yesterday*.

Among others, he is a marvelous witness to what Christ can do in the life of a person. He certainly, in his pastor's estimation, has a large letter "A" on his chest for "Able." His face and information may be found online in the sex-offenders registry. Will their attributions, can their attributions, stand against what God has made of him in Christ? This is the point at which Christianity either stands or falls. Does the gospel not

speak about change? Sociologist Helen Merrell Lynd makes an important observation about this, in her groundbreaking book on shame, Shame and the Search for Identity,

> The characteristics that have been suggested as central in experiences of shame—the sudden exposure of unanticipated incongruity, the seemingly trivial incident that arouses overwhelming and almost unbearably painful emotion, the threat to the core of the identity, the loss of trust in expectations of oneself, of other persons, of one's society, and a reluctantly recognized questioning of meaning in the world—all these things combine to make experiences of shame almost impossible to communicate. (1961: 64)

Noticing this Andrew Morrison also writes,

> "Shame inevitably takes its place as the dominating feeling state of failure, inferiority, defect, and insignificance in the attainment of personal and culturally valued aspirations and ideals. Shame may arise through parental misattunement and preoccupation; the role of ideals and unreachable aspirations in shame's generation; and the dominant part played by society in setting the stage for shame through poverty, racism, sexual abuse and harassment, alcoholism, and the stigmas of illness, homosexuality, and aging. (1996: 195-196)

We heap it on one another sometimes purposefully. We do so with forethought. Unfortunately, sometimes, we do so without thought—or with malice. Ultimately, when purposeful, it is an attempt at belittling; of making someone smaller, of encouraging them to feel that they do not matter, or matter less than others. Racism: **shame**. Sexual orientation: **shame**. Poverty: **shame**. Sexism: **shame**. Sadly, Christianity: **shame**. Helen Merrell Lynd writes about shame, and what it tells us, in so doing highlighting that discrepancy which appears between us and the social situation, then between what we feel from within, and what appears to us, and perhaps to others, when seen from without.

We have acted on the assumption of being one kind of person living in one kind of surroundings, and unexpectedly, violently, we discover that these assumptions are false. (1958: 35) She writes,

> [The] …Sudden experience of a violation of expectation, of incongruity between expectation and outcome, results in a shattering of trust in oneself, even in one's own body and skill and identity, and the trusted boundaries or framework of the society and the world one has known. (1958: 46)

The young mother expected our church to respond in a particular way. Happily, it responded in a far better way than she envisioned. Our values may contradict the cultural values of which we are a part. Our economic status may be different from others. We may be one sex trying to succeed in a workplace full of co-workers of another sex. We may be judged unfairly because of this. Others may attempt to shame us because of our difference. Different clothes, different looks, different behavior, different race, different likes, dislikes, friends, experiences, perceptions all can elicit shame and shaming behavior. Cause for shame may be anything or become anything.

Rolling Stone writer Nina Burleigh in a September 2013 article for her magazine titled, "Sexting, Shame, and Suicide—A shocking tale of sexual assault in the Digital Age (http://rollingstone.com/culture/news/sexting-shame-and-suicide-20130 accessed January 2014) tells the sad story of a young girl who was photographed in compromising circumstances by four acquaintances. All were young teens. After she passed out at a party from consuming too much alcohol, they took advantage of her. They stripped her of her clothes, colored on her with permanent marker, wrote sexual epithets on her skin, and took sexual liberties with her while photographing their exploits. The young teen's candid pictures of her were posted by them on-line. They quickly went viral on the

internet. When she awakened in the morning, she couldn't remember a thing, but realized something wrong had happened to her. She was disheveled, her clothes were barely on her and there was magic (permanent) marker all over her. After dressing herself and making her way home she began to do what most teens of her age do, she began texting those at the party to try to discover what had occurred. She soon realized to her horror, not only what happened, but that there were pictures of it that were circulating from person to person like wildfire throughout her school. Shamed by her friends in school, she was quickly overwhelmed by emotions. She did not make it more than two days, before feeling embarrassed and humiliated she hung herself with a belt in the bathroom adjacent to her room in her house. She literally had been shamed into suicide.

Shame, as Neo-Freudian Erik Erikson observes, supposes that one is completely exposed and conscious of being looked at, in a word—'self-conscious.' One is visible (against our desire) and not ready to be visible; that is why we dream of shame as a situation in which we are stared at in a condition of incomplete dress, in night attire, or "with one's pants down." (1980: 154) Exposure, particularly against our will, is shaming. Shame is early expressed in an impulse to bury one's face, or to sink right then and there, into the ground in an attempt to stop the revealing of ourselves. (Erikson 1980: 71) Shame is also about covering and being covered. The million-dollar question here is about with what one is covered. Are we covered with that which is shame inducing? Alternatively, do we seek to cover ourselves in protection from being covered by someone else? Shame is about wanting to disappear when exposed. It is the desire to cease to exist. It is also the desire—to be covered and protected so implicitly that one is

sheltered and protected. Indeed, "The one who is ashamed would like to force the world not to look at him, not to notice his exposure. He would like to destroy the eyes of the world." (Erikson 1980: 154)

5.6 Leon Wurmser and the Mask of Shame

We have traveled far in our discussion of shame. We have covered much ground. We have tried to understand shame from a variety of perspectives using psychology, literature, the Bible and theology, current events and personal experience. We conclude our investigation with perhaps the deepest study available. Swiss native, Leon Wurmser, a Neo-Freudian psychoanalyst, has been a professor of psychiatry at several American (USA) universities. One of his most remarkable essays appears in the large, dense, and difficult to get through book The Mask of Shame (1981) where he presents his findings on shame, both by warranted argument and by related analytical experience. Briefly stated here, Wurmser's ultimate thesis is that shame arises from deep within because of the individual's flawed sense of self. It is to feel that one is unloved. This self-judgment goes something like this, "I have not been loved (by another) because I am at the core (of my being) unlovable—and I shall never be loved." (1981: 93) At the core of this self-judgment is our perception of how others view us, and thus in turn, our own response in self-judgment—and consequent anxiety about ourselves in light of their critical, shaming view. (1981: 86) Shame (and shame-anxiety) is experienced by us as a radical

abandonment and isolation. In this experience, we disappear almost completely as a self. (1981: 63) Shame is thus, "at its deepest layer, our self's ever-deepening conviction of its *unlovability*—…because of an inherent sense that the entire self is somehow beyond our responsibility or control 'dirty,' 'untouchable,' 'rotten,' indeed that at our deepest, darkest core we can never be loved. The most radical shame of all, the unnamable terror, is to offer one's self (to another) and be rejected as unlovable…*Basic shame is the pain of essential unlovability*. (1981: 92-93: 189) To feel shame before another is very centrally, the feeling, "I'm a fool for having believed I could be appreciated or loved; I've been cheated and not taken seriously; I've been treated with ridicule." The dread inherent in this feeling is that ultimately this experience will be reproduced not only by those we do not like, but even those closest to us, and that "they are going to put down, humiliate, and laugh at us. Thus proving our unlovability. So, for the shame-riddled individual this prophecy becomes almost self-fulfilling. (1981: 197)

Shame as a condition, ultimately for Wurmser, has its origin in the family system, but also may appear, pervasively, in and through our social interchange. (1981: 19) The feeling of shame is the wish to hide, to flee, to 'cover one's face,' 'to sink into the ground,'… it is the deep desire to obscure ourselves, indeed, to disappear. (1981: 59) We have been stripped naked. The ultimate goal of shamed people is to shroud themselves. J. K. Rowling's hero-character wizard Harry Potter gets an invisibility cloak as an heirloom from his deceased parents. When surrounded by this cloak, one becomes invisible to others. Potter uses this cloak to good effect through the series of books (and now movies) about his coming of age and defeating his greatest opponent, Voldemort. Every shamed person would love to have an invisibility cloak with which to surround

themselves at opportune moments. Even a small child hides if he is shamed—retreats into a corner or another room or a least hides his face. (1981: 54)

Interwoven with the experience of shame is that of being judged negatively by someone. To be judged deleteriously by someone inspires shame. This shame is sometimes perceived to extend so deep as to be a "personal flaw." Shame, for some, is to be observed, watched, and graded as failing. Shame, in this case, may be perceived as 'a defect of the self.' (1981: 24) Internalized shame, shame that has slowly seeped into the soul, is usually more archaic and compelling than 'realistic' shame (shame in response to outer reality), external shame may be used to shield against the much more menacing inner shame. (1981: 46-47) Shame is an experience that effects and is affected by the whole self. This whole self-involvement is one of its distinguishing characteristics and one that makes it a clue to identity…Coming suddenly upon us, experiences of shame throw a flooding spot light on what and who we are and what the world we live in is. (1981: 53) In response, we feel revealed as if standing in a shower naked, when someone bursts in on us unannounced.

In content, basic shame is the pain of feeling unloved and unlovable, reaching back to very early trauma and recast in the many particular contents of shame: weakness, defectiveness, dirtiness, masochistic excitement, and falling short in competition. In very severe shame—proneness, this traumatic sense of unlovability is present. In more common (or neurotic) or 'normal' shame there are only derivatives of non-traumatic feelings of such basic shame. In moments of non-shame feelings, we may nonetheless experience an anxiety-shame, which poses the imminent threat or reality, the danger, of our unexpected exposure, humiliation, and rejection. It is possible that we would go

through life feeling bashful, because we deeply desire to avoid situations and people, our actions or the actions of another—that would bring about such humiliation. (1981: 50) In this way, we may attempt to guard our boundaries of privacy and intimacy, or at the very least to cover up any weakness. God forbid we should discover our image of ourselves is completely inaccurate in a negative way; that we are in reality, lesser than we imagine ourselves or desire ourselves to be.

A first systematic attempt, according to Wurmser, to establish a theory of shame and the drives and drive conflicts underlying it was made by Freud in 1905. He considered the eye the specific erotically stimulating zone for two major sexual drives of exhibitionism and *Schaulust*, the wish to look (curiosity, voyeurism, spying, or watching: **scopophilia**): 'In scopophilia and exhibitionism the eye corresponds to an erotogenic zone.' The particular quality in a source that excites the eye in such a sexual way is beauty. Freud adds that very early these drives involve other people. He views exhibitionism at this time as primary, scopophilia as secondary (if it is considered clearly sexual, genital oriented activity). Shame seeps into us gradually, and is primarily directed, against exhibitionism; only later does it refer to curiosity. Exhibitionism is seen as the passive form of scopophilia; in pregenital forms, these passive wishes to be seen genetically follow the intense wishes for looking. Freud calls shame 'a resistance,' 'a mental dam,' and somewhat later on, a 'counterforce against this double instinct.' Looking itself is traced yet further back to touching.

(1) First stage, autoeroticism, the subject looks at part of his own body.

(2) In the active stage, looking is directed towards an extraneous object.

(3) In the stage of turning around upon the self, the change from an active to a passive instinctual aim is effected, and the aim is now to be looked at.

(4) In the exhibitionistic stage, an extraneous person is once more sought to whom one displays oneself so as to be looked at by him. (1981: 147)

Wurmser, having been inspired by Greek, uses the terms Theatophilia and Delophilia for two very important partial drives of a broader and more archaic nature than scopophilia and exhibitionism. Theatophilia can be defined as the desire to watch and observe, to admire and to be fascinated by, to merge and to master through attentive looking, operating as a basic inborn drive from earliest infancy. Delophilia is defined as the desire to express one's self and to fascinate others by one's self-exposure, to show and to impress, to merge with the other through communication. (1981: 158) Genetically shame has two roots, originating on the one hand in anxiety related to theatophilic and delophilic impulses—in traumatic failure in the perceptual expressive fields—leading to many layers of defenses and wishes. Shame also relates to the feeling that one has a basic flaw: being a loser, defective, weak or dirty—all redounding to the taint of unlovability. (1981: 169)

Surrounding this emotion like flies at a picnic on a warm summer day, are the negative attributes of weakness, defectiveness, and dirtiness. To be perceived as weak can and often does inspire shame. The same may be said of defectiveness and dirtiness. The cognate feelings of shame consist of embarrassment, put down, slight and humiliation, shyness, bashfulness, and modesty. The sense of humiliation is just a strong form of such shame; indeed, humiliation itself is a shame-inducing situation. Disgrace, dishonor, degradation, and debasement are terms closely related to, if not largely synonymous with, humiliation; even the situations themselves that evoke such feelings

are often called ‘shame.’ (1981: 51) Shame is about the revelation of the self with the similarity to exposing one’s sexual organs, activities, and feelings. (1981: 32) The aim in shame is hiding—and has two logical levels: it may pertain to the activity of exposing oneself as well as to the content of what is exposed. (1981: 59)

The wish inherent in the feeling of shame is, ‘I want to disappear as the person I have shown myself to be.’ Alternatively, simpler but less precise: ‘I want to be [seen as] different than I am.’ (1981: 232) For one thing, shame itself forces one to hide, to seek cover and to veil or mask oneself. In turn, shame itself in its variants and aspects is masked, disguised, and unrecognizable—and neglected. The hiding of shame is the shame about shame. (1981: 302, 306)

Shame in its typical features is complex and variable—a range of closely related affects, rather than one simple, clearly delimited one. It shades into moods on one side, attitudes on the other. Anxiety is a cardinal part of shame. (1981: 17) Shame, however, may be called the most generalizable, most quickly spreading and flooding affect of them all. In any object relationship, and particularly in the treatment situation, exposure always looms, and thus the discrepancy between expectation and show may suddenly and deeply open up. (1981: 55) Shame’s aim is disappearance. This disappearance may be, most simply, in the form of hiding. It may be most radically, in the form of dissolution (suicide). It may be mythically, in the form of a change into another shape, an animal or a stone. It may be archaically in the form of freezing into complete paralysis and stupor; most frequently, in the form of forgetting parts of one’s life and one’s self; and at its most differentiated, in the form of changing one’s character. (1981: 84)

The factor in front of which one is ashamed is the *object pole*—expectations, criticism, and punishment. This pole is usually a person. The other factor is the aspect of which one is ashamed, the *subject pole*—that is the action itself, its results, and most importantly its reflection overall on the acting person. Our self-image and the image we present to others are, in shame, modified in the direction of an anti-idea. (1981: 43-44) In shame one feels frozen, immovable, paralyzed, even turned into a stone or another creature, such as an ass or a pig; contempt by another has succeeded in changing the human partner into a mere thing, into a nothing. The loss of love in shame can be described as the radical decrease of respect for the subject as a person with his own dignity; it is a disregard for his having a self in its own right and with its own prestige. The aggression against someone is the violent denial of any personal value in the self, the degrading of one's value system as a person, equating him particularly with a debased, dirty thing—a derided and low animal or waste. (1981: 81) Primary shame, of course, is nothing but the absolute sense of unlovability. (1981: 191)

If one traces the origins of shame even further back, in retrospection (not in developmental research), one reaches a stratum where it often becomes confluent with very archaic forms of guilt, disgust, and panic. These extremely primitive affects emerge as parts of the cardinal conflict in severely ill neurotic (borderline) patients and in psychotic patients. This basic conflict has been mentioned as the polarity between the wish for total union with the omnipotent object and its opposite, the proto-defensive attempt to find the omnipotent self in separateness, ultimately in absolutely isolation.

Both drives are unfulfillable; both separation from the symbiotic object, experienced as icy coldness, and the feeling of self-loss and fragmentation when merging

with the other result in furious and devastating rage. (1981: 191) Shame is often hidden behind a vast array of clinical states, behavior patterns, symptoms, and character attitudes. Severe generalized depression and anxiety may have shame as a prominent and specific part of its core. Homosexuality, drug addiction, imposture and lying, paranoid symptoms and writing inhibition may be set up to deal with a gnawing sense of shame. A number of other affects may, temporarily, or as a rigid character posture, defend against it: contempt, spite, rage, as well as "numbness." …Three symptoms are seen as particularly important in the fight against shame—depersonalization, lack of understandability, and shamelessness. (1981: 217)

5.7 Transitions to a Gospel of Grace

Having laid out Wurmser's Neo-Freudian approach, highlighting and surveying his understanding, we might summarize his view of shame as the sense by someone of being unloved and unlovable. Building on this facet, I quote Carl Schneider, who points out, that shame is not just a feeling, but reflects an 'order of things.' (1992: 20) Pastoral theologian Stephen Pattison in his book Shame, Therapy, and Theology identifies the modern person as follows,

> The modern individualized self is 'frail, brittle, fractured, fragmented.' Not only made anxious about issues of basic trust, identity, and belonging, it is self-observing and acutely aware of the observation and opinions of others. It is narcissistic and inherently shame-prone. (2003: 144)

Edward Wimberly agrees with Wurmser's view and writes, "I define shame in terms of the loss of love. It is the loss of meaningful community. It is the experience of being unlovable and the belief that one will never be loved." (2011: xvii)

The relevance of the thought of John McLeod Campbell to the issue of love and unlovability will be explicated at the end of this chapter. If there is one word that characterizes his theology, it is that of the word: **"love."** That this is needed and worthwhile may be noted when Stephen Pattison observes the poverty of the Christian tradition is manifest in trying to understand and relate to contemporary experiences of shame. (2003: 220) He writes, "Mostly, pastoral theorists fail to correlate shame with specific theological ideas or religious practices." (2003: 221) The calling of the pastor is to come alongside people, all kinds of people, young and old, as not only a shepherd but as someone who is also journeying. As John Patton notes, one aspect of this is to help them "with the pain of being themselves." (1985: 186) Encouraging them to have understanding, compassion, and empathy both for themselves, as they come to recognize who they are, and also for others, as they come to recognize who their neighbors truly are, is absolutely fundamental, and can only come through a gradual, personally affirming and supportive approach. Jacob Firet (1986) called this **"agogic."** 'Love covers a multitude of sins, the Bible tells us, as we love one another deeply' (1 Peter 4:8).

McLeod Campbell believed that what we believe about ourselves in the light of God, and of God in the light of ourselves also affects, and influences how we feel about ourselves and how we interact with others. He was concerned about proper attribution. It affects our discipleship and our ethics. In seeking to inculcate a new way of thinking—and of living as a Christian, McLeod Campbell preached, taught and engaged in

therapeutic pastoral care. McLeod Campbell would have approved Ed Wimberley's statement when he writes, "What we believe about ourselves shapes our behavior toward ourselves, others, and God." (1999: 16)

The therapist's task, as Morrison suggests, is to remove the masks of deception and expose the shame, to speak of it directly and respectfully, and then to try to find ways to lift its burden through genuine self-acceptance. (1996: 10) The shame we experience, or from which we suffer, may be considered as an opportunity for growth. When we experience these strong emotions, lack of assurance, anxiety, shame—they require some kind of recognition, evaluation, or judgment on our part. Often we would prefer just to avoid them. The first step in dealing with them, however, is to pigeonhole them. Naming the demon (figuratively speaking) still works. Then one may begin to seek to understand them. Grasping them and then naming what one has grasped, even if it is not all encompassing is crucial. In this regard, Professor Michael Lewis states, "Emotions, our own and those of others, affect us during every waking moment. It is difficult to construct a sentence or to look at a person without feeling some emotion." (1992: 1) Psychological struggle may issue, as Anton Boisen has shown us, in a greater self-understanding. This in turn may then issue in a deeper religious experience. He writes in Religion in Crisis and Custom (1955), "…the sense of personal failure, which is taken as the primary difficulty, is not necessarily an evil. When frankly recognized and intelligently handled, it becomes a precondition of growth." (1955: 45) Such experiences like disappointment in love, domestic tragedy, vocational failure, business reverses, and chronic illness or disability may create the space, which results in religious quickening. (1955: 43)

In thinking about this a little further, William James in his Gifford Lectures later published as The Varieties of Religious Experience (2002) argues that all religions have a common denominator.

He writes, "It consists of two parts: —

> 1.) An uneasiness—reduced to its simplest terms, is a sense that there is *something wrong about us* as we naturally stand.
> 2.) Its solution [which is] a sense that *we are saved from the wrongness* by making proper connection with the higher powers. (2002: 392)

James explains that in recognizing our wrongness we may suffer in response. However, when the person suffering recognizes or realizes that there is a better, more accurate part of him or her, which exists, healing has commenced. Deciding which road to take – to continue in suffering or to struggle with the decision to identify one's real being is fraught with difficulty. To decide for the second road is to come to the realization that we are connected with, in James' words, that "*MORE* of the same quality, which is operative in the universe outside of us," and which through hard work may be kept in touch with. To get on board with this greater part or higher being allows one to be saved when "all his lower being has gone to pieces in the wreck." (2002: 392) This event results in healing for the divided self caught in the struggle. It also allows for the change of our personal center and the ultimate surrender of our lower self. Ultimately, this help must come from beyond us. However, because we are united with it, our feelings of security and joy arise. (2002: 393) This is a conversion experience, or as I have suggested earlier, using Donald Capps' suggestion, this may issue in an opportunity for "reframing." I suspect this is the point of engaging our parishioner(s) in a conversation(s), which may become the occasion for "therapeutic wisdom." (Capps

1983: 84) It is an opportunity to overturn the previous incorrect validation, which they have received from others, with our own gospel-inspired evaluation and attribution.

Accepting and internalizing the shame attributed to us by others becomes sadly a state of being. For example, Jacoby illustrates the shame producing interactions between a "caretaker" and an infant, arguing that when the infant is not cared for in a sensitive enough way, "affect attunement remains fragmentary at best." He writes,

> "This situation may prompt in the infant the following pattern of interaction: "I really have to accommodate myself to everyone else if I don't want to be in the wrong place at the wrong time—if I don't want to feel ashamed of myself and unwanted. I would do better to avoid this danger completely by holding back all spontaneous expressions." (2006: 36)

More severe disturbances in the emotional encounter between caretaker and child would result in a "tape" such as, "No matter who I am, no matter what I say, I alienate everyone. No one will ever accept me, and if I seek relationship with others, I will meet with humiliating rejection." (2002: 36) John Bradshaw calls this "Toxic shame." (1988: 10) Indeed, toxic shame becomes a core identity. We feel worthless, a failure, and that we fall short as a person. Toxic shame is the rupture of the self-with-the-self. (1988: 10) Donald Capps says something like this when speaking about 'problematics of shame's influence upon the self.' (1993: 87)

The individual's core feeling of shame is termed primary shame. This is the shame that has seeped into the very essential part of a person's existence. When the major compelling experience of the self is disgrace and ignominy—this is **primary**

shame. (1996: 10) Matt Damon's character *'Will,'* in *"Good Will Hunting"* illustrated the guises of rage, contempt for others, and the exercise of power (in breaking off a potential long-term relationship before he got hurt). To have our mask forcibly lifted, without our consent can cause overwhelming emotions, not least of which is severe and intense humiliation. Therefore, we avoid the subject and the consequent feeling. Donald Capps, for this reason, calls shame "isolating." (1993: 83)

Dealing with shame, however, may also be revelatory. As we discover our difficulty, we may be more open to its resolution. The unconditional love given by a significant other may re-interpret our valuation of ourselves. It may also provide a window into the human soul. As Morrison points out, "To understand shame is, in some sense, to understand human nature." (1992: 2)

We have discussed anxiety, and have covered how it is a feeling of general distress over something vague and ill defined. Where fear has a specific object, anxiety is dread over no object in particular. It is object-less. Both emotions of self-assessment can interfere with one's sense of self, leaving the impression that one does not matter at all. This is certainly true for shame. Jungian analyst Mario Jacoby notes the interconnectedness of shame and anxiety when he writes, "Feelings of shame can be qualitatively distinguished from those of anxiety, but they can also be seen as a particular form of anxiety. Then again, anxiety is always at work when we anticipate potential shame producing situations." (2002: 5)

Indeed, it is not too far a statement to say that in experiencing these emotions we cannot articulate clearly what we feel or suspect, but that in reality what our emotions testify to is the phrase of self-assessment *"I am not..._____"* You can fill in the

blank. If dizziness on a ledge is a suitable image for anxiety, perhaps a child shrinking in the corner is a suitable image for the shame-riddled-individual.

5.8 The Relevance of John McLeod Campbell for Responding to Shame

In his first volume of Sermons and Lectures (1830) in the very first sermon McLeod Campbell, in preaching on 1 John 5:9-12, makes the following key observations. Following is a summary of his views. In the Bible God has given us a record of his love for us. Jesus Christ is his greatest illustration of that unconditional love. We constantly believe others when they tell us this or that. The Doctor makes this diagnosis and we believe him. The Banker tells us this about our money and we believe him. A next-door neighbor tells us something about what is going on in the town in which we live, and we believe him. We live our lives by faith in this person and in that person. We believe their witness. If their witness is true, the witness of God to himself in Jesus Christ is incomparably greater. God desires our faith in him. Jesus witnesses to us about the Father. He reveals God as Father.

Faith, in McLeod Campbell's understanding, changes the way we see things. Faith gives us new eyes to see God, see our neighbors, God's purposes in the world, even ourselves in the light of Jesus Christ. (1830: 3) Faith believes that the gospel is not conditional. Faith understands that God has given us eternal life, objectively speaking, in

his Son. This has been done outside of us. It does not require our assent. The relationship, which the Father and Son share in, is given to us in Christ. This is eternal life. This holy and eternal love and life is shared with us. This life is the life, which the Father and Son shared before the beginning of the world.

Religion, Christianity is not just our safety from judgment that universal hostility about which Tillich speaks so eloquently, it is not just exemption *from* punishment, but rather Christianity is about, or ought to be, happiness and joy, and life and peace because we receive such *as* we share in the life of the Father and Son. It is not what we possess or have in ourselves, but those things, which God graces us with in Christ. We have not, but nonetheless possess! God has chosen us in Christ. We are adopted. We are thus heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ, his Son. All that heaven possesses is ours by grace. We are wealthy, not with earthly possessions, but with heavenly graces. Salvation then is the discovery of what God has made of us in Christ and of what he gives to us. We are participants in God's very Triune life. God lifts us up. He "has given us a participation in this very life which he had from all eternity. And the whole history of the incarnation of God has its explanation in this, as the great purpose which God had in view." (1830: 8) God as Triune shares his life with us. We become participants. We share in fellowship.

The relevance here for us in McLeod Campbell's thoughts is the attitude of the pastor towards his or her people. How do we regard them? *Why* do we regard them in the way that we do? On what basis do we view them? McLeod Campbell has suggested that we view them in the light of Christ and that this should be their designated characteristic. In addition, he has suggested that part of our ministry is to suggest to them

that the gospel has a different view of them than the world may have. Attribution is different for McLeod Campbell. Here, McLeod Campbell, presents them (and us) with an alternate picture, a different reality, from the one which the world presents us with.

Which view shall we believe? Faith is coming to realize that this alternate reality may be, in fact, the more meaningful one. This is what Watzlawick, Weakland, and Fisch suggest is second-order change. They note,

> "Second order change is ordinarily viewed as something uncontrollable, even incomprehensible, a quantum jump, a sudden illumination which unpredictably comes at the end of a long, often frustrating mental and emotional labor, sometimes in a dream, sometimes almost as an act of grace in the theological sense." (1974: 23)

Second order change is an everyday phenomenon. People do find new solutions to problems. This conversion in one's frame of reference, which we have highlighted earlier, is known as the concept "bisociation." It is the observation of our example first as a bunny and then as a duck—there is "an abrupt transfer of the train of thought from one image or context to another. It may come about by a free play of mind, a discovery outside of the logical processes we take for granted. It may be an act of imagination. (1974: 23) As someone once noted, the definition of insanity is doing the same thing repeatedly while expecting different results. McLeod Campbell is weaving, suggesting, and providing an alternate understanding of reality based upon the person and work of Jesus Christ. This different view of reality also means a different view of our neighbor and also of us.

To say that God has given me eternal life is to say that I have been granted a share in God's own blessedness. McLeod Campbell notes, "The incarnation and the dispensation of the Spirit, have their origin in this high purpose of God, that men should be partakers of a divine nature." (1830: 8) Salvation is not merely the doing away of a negative, which is punishment for our sin, but it is instead *a positive* in that what we are given is nothing less than heaven itself. Christ in becoming what we are lifts us up in sharing his life with us, so that we might become what he is.

In this process, God re-educates us by the Spirit, so that we learn to have the feelings which God has, of our loving what and who he loves, for our hating what evil he hates, for our learning to be holy as God is holy. We learn through practice, prayer, and faith to become in living in perfect sympathy with God. We become one with him in happiness and in character. McLeod Campbell notes,

> "God blesses men by giving them a participation in his own nature, and in this way, a participation in the blessedness springing from such a nature. Mark the greatness of this statement: it is that God has given us all that was needful to our sharing God's own happiness; and that God's gift to us, is that which was his blessedness from all eternity—that of eternal life which was with the Father is given to us. And this life is in his Son." (1830: 9)

There is in McLeod Campbell's therapeutic Pastoral Theology a statement that God loves us irrespective of who we are or what gifts and talents we possess. God does not love one person more than another, because of anything—be it past behavior, exterior beauty, worthiness, faults, or foibles. We are not worthy of God's grace in Christ. Nothing we can do or say, nothing we can be—will persuade God to love us. God loves us just

because that is his nature to love, "God loves persons independent of their character." (1830: 14) God does not hate the sinner, but rather despises the sin. Sin causes a person to suffer whatever that sin may be. To know and understand God, to believe in God's witness to us in Christ and in the Bible is to come to realize the depths of God's love and care for us. God claims us as his own in eternity and then in the cross of Christ. Christ died for us so that whatever stood between God and people might be destroyed and abolished. God loves even those who pursue behavior, which would indicate that they are God's determined enemies. McLeod Campbell states, "…God's love is revealed and explained, and God's hatred to sin set forth, in Christ's dying for sinners, and that the unchangeable character of God's love and holiness are both therein revealed." (1830: 15)

What else besides this does God gift us? Christ's work has taken away our condemnation, and Christ has the Spirit for us. The taking away of our condemnation, puts us in a state to "view with open face, as in a glass, God's glory, in order that my being changed into the same likeness." (1830: 15) Christ, following his death and resurrection, ascended on high, "leading captivity captive, he received gifts for men, even the rebellious, that God the Lord might dwell with them." (1830:15) It is only by God's Spirit ministering to me as he comes to dwell within me, that I can dwell in the light of God's truth. God's Spirit, which is Christ's Spirit, takes the things of Christ and reveals them to me. Thus, for McLeod Campbell, God's work in our lives in Christ by the Spirit is not only ontological in nature, it is epistemological in nature also. God grants us the "mind of Christ," and this is "eternal life." Of course, we only see in part and we only know in part. McLeod Campbell continues,

> "While the remission of sins puts me in a condition to view with open face, as in a glass, the glory of God, it is by the Spirit that I am enabled to look; and so looking, in the strength of the Spirit, I am changed into the same likeness, from glory to glory, by the Spirit of the Lord. God's character is revealed in the actual work of Christ—the work of Christ, now that he has ascended upon on high, is to give me the Spirit—and the reason why Christ has the Holy Spirit for me, is to enable me to dwell in the light of this revealed character. What has been the mind of God from all eternity has been revealed in the personal work of Christ, and because, in so revealing God, he has led your captivity captive, and because he has the Spirit for you, to enable you to live in the light of his work, therefore this is a true record, 'That God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." (1830: 16)

While others may have impressed upon us their negative judgments of our character, actions, and being, here in God's work in Christ we are given a new reality to contemplate. We are now under grace. Although in the past, we were under law. Now the reality in which we live, move and have our existence is grace. When God reveals to us that Christ is a Mediator, what he intends us to understand is that there is in Christ all that is necessary for us to have free access to and full communion with God. There is nothing keeping us from the Father. Comprehending this requires metanoia. To accept this truth is to realize it has entered into us by faith.

Late Professor of Systematic Theology at the University of Aberdeen, Scotland James B. Torrance relates the following story in his book Worship, Community and the Triune God of Grace (1996). It is a vivid image of what John McLeod Campbell was trying to get at in his ministry, preaching, teaching, pastoral care, and writing. Torrance was visiting a colleague at the University of Edinburgh named Roland Walls. He was now a member of the monastic order "the Community of the Transfiguration." It was situated just a few miles outside of the city of Edinburgh. One day Torrance noticed in

Roland's garden a peculiar piece of sculpture. He looked at it closely. Walls noticed his interest in the statue. Walls then shared the story of its origin. The young sculptor had confessed to his parents, his church, and his community that he was gay. As a result, he was disowned. In his distress, he made his way, somehow, to the Roslin Community. Roland found him kneeling, praying and weeping in the chapel. Roland asked him if he wanted to talk. The young man poured out his heart. At the end of the conversation, Roland simply embraced the man and held him. His weeping soon stopped. That hug symbolized everything for that young man. He knew then, that he was loved, accepted, forgiven. We saw a bit of this in the movie "Good Will Hunting" when Sean embraced Will and he realized that someone did love him, that he was worthy of being loved, and that he mattered. That young sculptor went home and began to work on a piece of artwork. Inspired, he could not stop. It is of two men embracing. One man is him. The other, personified by Walls, is Christ. The only way one can distinguish between the two men is that Christ has the remnants of the nail scars on his hands. Torrance writes, "That young man saw himself in the fallen Adam (man), and in that symbolic embrace he saw himself accepted by Christ, the second Adam." (1996: 55-56) The sculpture now stands just outside the chapel at the Community. This unconditional love reaching out to another is what McLeod Campbell helps us discover in his pastoral theology. Indeed, F. Barton Evans III, (1996: 20) an interpreter of Harry Stack Sullivan's interpersonal psychotherapy, notes that perhaps it is love between people that ultimately liberates us. Maybe that is the foundation of any real Practical Theology. McLeod Campbell would surely agree with Evans.

5.8 Suggestions and Conclusions

James and Evelyn Whitehead write that the challenge for the pastor both interpersonally and theologically is to find that balance by which we can present our own educated insights and beliefs forcefully, without, however, forcing them on others. (1980: 90) We have been sought out for help. To share our training and education requires strength, clarity, humility, and an ability to deal with the ambiguities of life. The Whitehead's also advise a well-thought out vocabulary. This suggests effective communication skills with others. At the same time, they note that "to struggle and 'contest' with God, is, to be sure, to enter into a threatening relationship." As we attempt to assist others, we will struggle with God. At the same time to contend with God is also to receive a blessing, if we hearken back to the story of Jacob (Genesis 32).

Our response to an individual that comes to us for help, following our 'trilogue' between sources, involves what the Whitehead's call "assertion." As we resource the issue which is of concern we will carry on a reciprocal dialogue between Scripture and the Christian Tradition with Cultural Information and then Personal Experience. (1980: 97) Each angle of the trilogue is both valuable and important. All three are indispensable dialogue partners. From this trilogue comes an informed and educated response to the issue at hand. Assertion is the recommendation following this trilogue, in consultation with the individual.

We have made the argument that the attitude and framework of the caregiver, i.e. the Practical Theologian, is that of love. We have also argued against a maudlin view of love, which only loves when it is in turn loved. Jesus suggested that this conditional love

was the kind of love that the Pharisees illustrated in their ministry. Naturally, he inveighed against it. Instead, he called us to a higher self-renouncing love which is empathetic and compassionate, so much so that it recognizes that we are who we are *only* in relationship (love of God and neighbor). This kind of selfless love is agape. Martin Buber once noted, "In the beginning was the relationship." (Buber, Smith 1958: 18) We previously noted that Scottish philosopher John Macmurray made the same argument in his Gifford lectures. So, we are to minister to others with the attitude of love which is a part of our relationship with them.

John McLeod Campbell shares with us what this looks like when he counsels his readers in a 'teaching' or 'Bible Study' that we are to "bear one another's burdens." In so doing, we are to mentor them. The text McLeod Campbell bases his remarks upon is Gal. vi. 1-5, 10. He notes that we are "love one another; and the love we owe every person is the love which Jesus had for everyone." (1843: 36) He is not speaking of some maudlin, sappy, imitation of the love, which the Apostle Paul had in mind, but rather the authentic self-giving, humble, incarnate love, which God has for us in Jesus Christ. Our attitude is to be the same towards others, particularly those who struggle; as God has dealt with us gracefully, so too are we to deal with others in the same gracious manner. As Christians, we believe the answer is to be found in Scripture and in the attitude and purpose of God towards humanity. Indeed, "We know there is something for them in God, and our business is to help them to come to God for it." (1843: 37) Our attitude, in so doing, towards others should be one of humility and care. He writes, "If a person thinks himself to be something, he *becomes* nothing; he is out of his place as a receiver, out of the element of light and love, in which alone he can be to the glory of God, or a

help to his brother." (1843: 40) We are, thus, to follow Christ's example. As Christ washed the feet of the disciples and commanded them to do so to others, we also are to have the same attitude as one who washes another's feet. McLeod Campbell writes, "We know there is something for them in God, and our business is to help them come to God for it." (1843: 37) To often our conversation is spent in criticism of others. We may find it difficult to know what to do, and what we are called to do, but somehow when it comes to what others should do—we have no qualms about knowing what they should do. It is only in bearing another's burdens, that it may be said that we bear our own. He notes, "When a person puts themselves under another's burden—feels a desire, as one pressed down by it, to help that other's soul—they will speak tenderly…as one entering into the difficulties of his situation, yearning over his soul, desiring to restore him, in the spirit of meekness." (1843: 42) McLeod Campbell then notes this,

> "If we would come to our brother as Christ comes, not as a lawgiver, but as one sympathizing with his difficulties; remembering that what he needs we once needed, and testifying that we have found help in Christ, and that in Christ he also may find it, this would be bearing his burden…these are the cords of love and the bands of man, whereby our God would have us bound together." (1843: 43)

As we approach the other in ministry with love as the *raison d'etre* of our solicitous care, we should also be open to hearing their background, their history, their hopes and dreams, their problems. This involves seeking to understand the person as a whole. Anton Boisen terms this "the whole person, in his whole setting." (1946: 13) Bill Arnold, in his Introduction to Pastoral Care, writes that solicitous care appropriately carried out responds to other struggling persons in a way that takes them seriously on two differently planes. The plane's first level is that we take seriously what they believe

themselves to be, and the value, which that belief attaches to that perspective. The plane's second level is that solicitous and compassionate care offered by us, the caregiver. This care occurs in light of who we believe them to be according to our theological understanding of them *as* persons, and the concern we have for them in the light of that belief. (1982: 15-16)

The view we have of those who seek us out for care influences how we care for them. More importantly, however, is who we are as we interact with them. We have made the argument that the attitude of Eusebia (εὐσέβεια) is fundamental. This is a perspective by which we seek to interact with others (and with God). Doing and action are crucial on this view, but perhaps more fundamental that what we do, is our 'being.' Pastoral caregivers speak of the ministry of presence. There is a presence in our being with someone. We are not required to say anything or to do anything in particular. However, the greater presence to which we point, hopefully, is that of the Triune God of love and grace. Much has been made of Karl Barth's fondness for Matthias Grunewald's Isenheim altarpiece with its image of the crucified Christ centered in one of the panels. On the right as we look towards Christ is none other than John the Baptist holding a Bible in his left hand and pointing to Christ in his right hand. Between the two figures, Crucified and Witness is the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world whose blood drips into a chalice. We are to witness to Jesus Christ in our ministry. We are called, in a manner of speaking, to reconcile two fundamental documents, one living, a person, and one written, Scripture. The individual is, however, our primary source document. (Boisen 1946: 38)

We are also, however, to witness to grace, which is Christ's person and activity in our lives. Grace, as Scottish Theologian T. F. Torrance noted repeatedly, is not a thing, not a substance, and not an impersonal *something*, but rather the **very presence of the incarnate person**—*the person*. The person of Jesus Christ is spiritually present to us, through the ministry of the Holy Spirit, his Spirit, and as he is with us, he is always working in our lives to make us more the person we might be. In this Athanasius, the great Church father of Nicea is followed. In a spiritual sense, we begin as a Quasimodo kind of human being, but as we mature, we slowly begin to walk increasingly upright from our bent over position, thinking differently, acting more maturely (Christ-like). T. F. Torrance writes,

> "he (Christ) redeems us from thralldom to depersonalizing forces repersonalizing our human being in relationship to himself and to other human beings. But what Christ has done, and continues to do, goes far beyond that, for he anchors our persons immutably in his own Person in God, the generating source of all being." (T. F. Torrance 1992: 69)

T. F. Torrance continues along this line of argument by noting that Jesus is also the **humanizing human**. In his life and ministry, he takes our fallen, impaired, weakened humanity into his incarnate existence, healing it and reconciling it to God through the Spirit. This occurs at an ontological depth. Christ's gracious incarnation as man brings God's creative activity to bear intensively upon God's entire creation—specifically healing, personalizing, humanizing and reinforcing *our* humanity. As one pastoral care writer notes, "Grace is one of the most important frames of reference within which we discuss God's involvement with us. Two of the most prominent manifestations of that grace are in his initiative and his faithfulness to us." (Arnold 1982:30) The author would

add "in Jesus Christ," to Arnold's statement. In his incarnation, Jesus Christ's hypostatic union between divinity and humanity, two natures in one person, therapeutically heals our human nature by taking it up, establishing it, securing it and anchoring it forever in its undiminished integrity **in** the Son of God. (T. F. Torrance 1992: 70)

The final chapter of this study is a summary of the author's findings and decision-making proposals for the individuals seeking help with the difficulty of a lack of assurance, anxiety, and shame. J Gordon Myers suggests, "The critical test of any method of theological reflection *in ministry* is not simply the quality of the insight to which it leads but the quality of the ministerial action which is its fruit." (Whitehead 1980: 99) This, succinctly put, is the decision-making aspect of the process. The issue here is a practical concrete course of action.

CHAPTER SIX

A Therapeutic Atonement *and* John McLeod Campbell

The eternal life (of God) being unchanging in its nature, it follows, that what it was in Christ as an atonement, it will be in us as salvation. Therefore, Christ, as the Lord of our spirits and our life, *devotes us to God* and *devotes us to men* in the *fellowship of His self-sacrifice*. (1873: 317)

6.0 What Language Shall we Use?

The late Don Browning, perhaps the United States' most illustrious Practical Theologian, in his book Religious Thought and the Modern Psychologies: a Critical Conversation in the Theology of Culture (1987) observes that we should jettison neither religious nor ethical language. This also applies to science, which is one way to interpret life in favor of the language of worldviews or ethics. We must become bilingual. Furthermore, he argues that while we expect religion to have specific metaphysical and ethical perspectives, clinical psychologies themselves cannot avoid metaphysical and ethical horizons, which is also their frame of reference. They presuppose, Browning suggests, their own unique ontologies and epistemologies—as well as theories of

nonmoral good. In addition, they make judgments about ethics—that is to answer the question what is good for human flourishing. (1987: ix-xiii)

Browning insightfully raises the issue of what language we might use. Is it to be psychological? Is it to be theological? How do we relate the different paradigms? What, with these questions in mind, do we do with the doctrine of the atonement? If Browning has invited us to think about this issue, Douglas Purnell in his book Conversation as Ministry: Stories and Strategies for Confident Caregiving (2003) suggests an answer. He remarks that Pastoral conversation is,

- Is grounded in the worshipping life of the Christian community,
- Involves a deep knowledge for and love of the Christian tradition,
- Is shaped by participation in the practices of Christian faith,
- Calls for a reflective awareness of self,
- Demands a disciplined attending to the other,
- Meets people in the circumstances and experiences of their living,
- Requires an active and formed imagination,
- Is open to hearing the voice of God in fresh ways,
- Bravely addresses God with life's hard questions,
- Is open to conversation,
- And offers the possibility of love, mercy, peace, justice, healing, reconciliation, new birth, wholeness, nurture, and sustenance.

(2003: 11)

The author would add to this list the ability to listen. I have often noted to my children, and this is a continuing area of growth for me, the truth that we have two ears

and one mouth. The ability to be present with another and to listen is perhaps the most crucial skill. Purnell comments,

> "Treat every conversation that you enter as unique. Be present to the other, listen to each person as deeply as you possibly can. Seek to discern what someone wants from the conversation, then respond with the integrity of your own being as a person of faith. Whatever the situation, whatever the focus of the conversation, it will come to life and breathe and sing and dance in wonderful ways. You will be aware of the presence and image of God in the other person. You will be engaging deep and rich pastoral conversation." (2003: 153)

The goal of such conversation is to present that person with whom we are engaged an opportunity to grow as a person and as a disciple of Jesus Christ. We do not come into this world fully formed. There are minutes, hours, days, weeks, months, years of learning to think, learning how to think, to perceive, to interpret, how to walk, how to talk, how to behave, indeed what it means to be a human person and how to be a human person. We are constantly growing as Erik Erikson suggested, not only emotionally, but also ethically, morally, religiously. As Archbishop Desmond Tutu commented in an address in Atlanta, Georgia years ago, "We need other human beings in order to be human." (2009: 65) We are made to live together, for fellowship, to exist in an ever-expanding network of relationships, which are interdependent. Tutu continues, "This is how you have unbuntu[12]—you care, you are hospitable, you're gentle, you're

[12] Michael Battles notes that *Ubuntu* is the plural form of the African word *Bantu*, coined by Wilhelm Bleek to identify a similar linguistic bond among African speakers. *Ubuntu* means 'humanity' and is related to *umuntu*, which is the category of intelligent human force that includes spirits, the human dead, and the living, and to *ntu*, which is God's being as metadynamic (active rather than metaphysical). Tutu, notes Battles, is from the Xhosa people, which have a proverb, "*ubuntu ungamntu ngabanye abantu*,' which means 'each individual's humanity is ideally expressed in relationship with others' or 'a person depends on other people to be a person.' (2009: 39)

compassionate and concerned. Go forth…conscious that everybody is to be revered, reverenced as created in God's image… Go forth to care for them, to heal them especially those who are despised and marginalized. God forth to make the world a better place…" (2009: 66)

Atonement as an understanding of reconciliation may assist this imperative.

6.1 Atonement

In the recent film *Atonement* (2007), based on the popular Ian McEwan novel of the same name, central character 13-year-old Briony Tallis drastically changes the course of several lives by what she witnesses during the progression of a day and how she responds to what she has seen. Sixty-four years later, still overcome with guilt and regret, she seeks in some way to atone for her actions, which had irreversible consequences for her sister and the son of a family servant.

The movie is about a horrible wrong committed by an adolescent girl and her honest attempt years later at somehow, beyond all hope, of setting things right. As the movie opens, we see that Briony has a secret adolescent schoolgirl crush on the older son, Robbie, of one of the family's servants. The promising young man has been assisted by Briony's privileged family in school, even sending him to Cambridge University for studies with the goal of medical school following. Robbie in turn dotes on Briony like a younger sister, but is madly in love with her older sister Cecilia. Revealed to us is that Cecilia is likewise overwhelmed with passionate romantic emotions for Robbie, an ill-advised liaison in status conscious pre-WW II Britain.

As the movie unfolds, we see that in addition to Robbie and Cecilia, Briony is joined in the house by her much younger cousins, Jackson and Pierrot Quincey, and her older female cousin, Lola, all of whom are visiting. It is a seemingly idyllic summer for them; it is not certain to the viewer that war is on the horizon in 1935. The cast of this story's characters is added, here, because during the early afternoon Briony's brother, Leon returns home with a friend, businessman Paul Marshall. By the end of that evening, events are revealed, which cannot be reversed any more than the attempt at piecing Humpty-Dumpty back together, with Briony unfortunately at the eye of the storm.

Early in the day, Briony witnesses an event, as the movie continues to unfold, between Robbie and Cecilia charged with eroticism and flirtation, sexual attraction and frustration at a water fountain on the family estate, which unnerves her adolescent values. Robbie accidentally breaks a vase, which Cecelia is holding, near the fountain. One of the pieces falls into the water. Cecelia takes off most of her clothes and jumps in to retrieve the broken part. When she emerges, she has the piece and soaking wet she emerges from the fountain. With water dripping off her soaked undergarments little is left to the imagination. Robbie is shocked, uncertain, apologetic, and even speechless. Briony sees all this, in fact, the camera is focused on her during this scene, and is likewise is stunned. She does not quite have the emotional history or maturity to interpret the event appropriately. We see this fact revealed in the emotions all over her face.

Things are only worsened when Robbie later writes a prurient letter to Cecilia on his typewriter, in jest—of course, one of many attempts to articulate his feelings for her in writing, following the event at the fountain, only to set it aside on the desk for a more romantic one. This letter, the viewer sees, was one of many false starts and stops.

Unfortunately and quite mistakenly, he later gives it to Briony to deliver to Cecilia, only realizing after he has done so which letter he really handed to her. The camera shows us his shocking realization. The letter is the brutal, sexual, blunt advance in writing that he thought had been set aside. Briony, full of adolescent curiosity reads the letter and is at once appalled, aroused, angered, and resentful. She begins to doubt Robbie. She delivers the letter to Cecilia who upon reading it is both aware of Robbie's feelings and of Briony's transgression. Robbie, at roughly the same time, arrives for a family dinner to which he has been invited. The camera reveals the palpable electricity between Cecilia and Robbie upon his arrival. We follow them and they soon end up as if hypnotized and only partly aware of their actions in the mansion's library. Their passion is overwhelming, they embrace, one thing leads to another, and they are caught in the middle of making love against the bookshelves by none other than Briony. Her emotions are explosive at this discovery and she is almost overwhelmed. Robbie, we see is embarrassed at being caught. So is Cecilia. Briony's shock, however, is the greatest of all. Her discomfort upon reading the letter gives way to confusion and fear that Robbie is a sexual maniac who has roughly forced himself on Cecilia. Neither Robbie, nor Cecilia knows what to say to her following her discovery of them in the library and quickly retreat to the dining room where dinner awaits. Making matters worse, the movie reveals that the two young twin cousins have gone missing.

The household, in a panic, quickly sets out to find them. Briony, flashlight in hand, tromps through the woods searching for them, as do all the other members of the house. Amidst the darkness, the shouting, the aiming of the flashlights into dark corners, confusion, and chaos grow—as does everyone's anxiety. Where could the twins be? The

tension is substantial. The camera reveals the chaos from the point of view of Briony. The mad search. The darkness. Sometime during her pursuit of the twins, she hears struggling, crying and discovers her cousin, Lola, is being raped. She thinks, as the emotions of the whole day come crashing in on her psyche, she sees Robbie on top of Lola. The scene switches from reality to her projection. It is hard to make out who the male is in the night as he quickly rushes off into the darkness. In reality, we see on the screen, that it is Leon's friend Paul. Briony's already fragile nerves are overwhelmed. She is sure the rapist is Robbie, or almost is as the entirety of the days incidents come crashing in on her nerves.

Soon we see that the police are called and during the investigation, Briony accuses Robbie, wrongly of the rape, and he is taken away in handcuffs. Cecilia believes him innocent and so he is. We learn later that there is no resolution to the ill-advised accusation that leads to his imprisonment. Robbie is assumed guilty. To make matters trickier Paul and Lola end up married a few years later, so she cannot provide evidence against her husband of the rape—nor would she want to. The movie plays and Robbie's hopes for vindication end. As the war begins, Cecilia, who has not been in contact with her family since that fateful night, volunteers as a nurse and Robbie, as a prisoner, is legally conscripted by the British Army. The couple, we understand, has not seen one another since the night of the arrest.

I used quite a few sentences to set the movie up, because it is such a memorable film. The pathos of the events in the movie call into question issues like sin, redemption, separation, forgiveness, reconciliation, guilt, and atonement. Despite the narrative of Briony's novel, appearances may be deceiving. We learn later, much later in the movie,

that, in fact, what really happened is quite different from the story written by and portrayed by Briony. In reality, Robbie Turner died of septicemia at Bray Dunes, Dunkirk on 1 June 1940 prior to the British evacuation, and Cecilia was killed in September of the same year by a bomb that destroyed the Balham Underground station where many Londoners had retreated to for safety. Both died without reconciling. Neither had seen the other since that horrible night, although they had continued to communicate with one another by letter.

Briony, the young writer, has decades later become Briony, the noted and award-winning gray-haired aged novelist at the end of her literary career. She is dying. Her last novel is revealed titled "Atonement." It is the story on the printed page, one after another, of her mistake so many years ago. It is her last attempt at atonement, but really, it was her first. Because in fact, we see as the film continues that she soon realizes her blunder, but cannot somehow set it right. Robbie is wrongly incarcerated for the crime for which Paul is guilty, and the responsibility and sorrow have weighed on her soul ever since. It is both a decision and an error, which like all the King's horses and all the King's men cannot be undone, once it has occurred. In McEwan's novel, as an addendum to the film, we read the words of the 77-year old Briony who upon being interviewed by an entertainment reporter is curious about the purpose for her last novel. She responds,

> The problem these fifty-nine years has been this: how can a novelist achieve atonement when, with her absolute power of deciding outcomes, she is also God? There is no one, no entity or higher form that she can appeal to, or be reconciled with, or that can forgive her. There is nothing outside her. In her imagination she has set the limits and the terms. No atonement for God, or novelists, even if they are atheists. It was always

> an impossible task, and that was precisely the point. The attempt was always…I like to think, that it isn't weakness or evasion, but a final act of kindness, a stand against oblivion and despair, to let my lovers live and to unite them at the end. I gave them happiness, but I was not so self-serving as to let them forgive me. (McEwan 2001: 350)

In her novel, she writes that Cecilia and Robbie lived happily after the war. This is the way it should have been. In Briony's imagination and on the words of the written page their love continued through the events of that unforgettable night, and had never abated. Reconciled, together, at peace. It was her attempt to have them live on in fiction, united as lovers, when in reality the events of that night separated them forever. Through her novel, long after all the characters were dead, they would remain a happy couple. In this way, she sought to atone for her actions.

This movie, and McEwan's novel, raises the issue of reconciliation, of how to set things right once they have become so entangled and personally cataclysmic. Can one seek forgiveness from the dead? What is atonement exactly? Does Briony, with her heartfelt narrative, really make amends? What is real? What is lasting and eternal? Do Cecelia and Robbie, somehow live happily "in a reality," even if only a fictional 'reality' through her novel? Is her action, belated though it is, enough to set things right, somehow? What is atonement here?

6.1 Atonement as a Theological Doctrine

The atonement as a theological doctrine is not viewed often in relation to pastoral issues involving health and well-being. Indeed, for many, merely, to mention the word

‘atonement’ is not to think of it in terms of pastoral concerns, but rather in dogmatic categories. It is to think of it in terms of blood and gore, abuse and death. When a person comes to the pastor with a problem that perhaps needs some time and reflection—for example—a husband is struggling with remaining married to his wife, and seeks counsel; I suspect it would indeed be unusual (and jarring) for the pastor to say in the middle of a conversation, *“Let’s talk about the atonement.”* Even in the course of the discussion where the talk drifted in that direction. The atonement seems too far from his concern to be useful. To mention such a theological category would seemingly suggest a communication gap was drastically present between people. On what occasion, then, would the gist of the atonement be normative to mention? Is there any such instance? The author was once was speaking about a family problem to a ministerial colleague. My sister was having some difficulties. He looked at me across the table and said, “The only thing, John, that will help now is the blood of Christ.” What? The blood of Christ. Maybe…how, and in what way? Atonement again, but…?

One of the difficulties that occur, initially, in seeking to understand the atonement is the Biblical origin of the word and the concept about which it speaks. The word atonement, as has been rehearsed numerous times, was a neologism (a new word) coined by the translators of the Tyndale Bible of the early sixteenth century, and then later, the King James or Authorized Version in 1611.[13] In this, they followed a Middle English rendering of the Greek word καταλλαγὴν that appears once in Romans 5:11, by using the phrase **“at-one-ment.”** To be at one. What they meant by coining this phrase was a sense of unity or reconciliation between two people or parties. Two persons or parties,

[13] In addition, it was used in the Coverdale Bible of 1535, the Taverner Bible of 1539, the Geneva Bible of 1560, and the Bishops Bible of 1572.

separate, because of some difficulty, were thus made "at one." Australian Biblical Scholar Leon Morris notes that,

The word 'atonement' is one of the few theological terms, which derive from Anglo-Saxon (language). It means 'a making at one', and points to a process of bringing those who are estranged into a unity. The word occurs in the OT to translate words from the *kpr* □□□ word group, and it is found once in the NT (AV-KJV), rendering *katallagē* (καταλλαγή which is better-translated 'reconciliation' as RSV). Its use in theology is to denote the work of Christ in dealing with the problem posed by the sin of man, and in bringing sinners into right relation with God. (Douglas; Morris 1996: 102)

By doing so, the translators of the English Bibles mentioned surely wanted to emphasize the sense of overcoming estrangement between the two heretofore-differing parties. The movement from estrangement to unity and fellowship is (at-one-ment) "*atonement*." The Christian doctrine of the atonement infers that our relationship with God can only be mended through a specific act or event issuing in the birth, life, and death of God himself. In ancient Israel, the crucial event was the sacrifice on the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur). For Christians, atonement happens through the death of Jesus of Nazareth, called the Christ, in a Roman execution one day during the afternoon. (Fiddes 1989: 4)

In dogmatic treatises, there is usually an historical survey of how the atonement (this sense of reconciliation) has been viewed throughout the different historical periods. One such standard is Gustaf Aulén's book Christus Victor (1957) that presents a typology of the atonement as follows. Although Aulén's typology is simplistic and overstated, it quickly became a valuable reference work for many. Despite its weaknesses, it remains

the most-used categorization of the various viewpoints about reconciliation between God and humanity.[14]

The first type, according to Aulén, is the "Dramatic" or "Classical" theory whereby Christ through his birth, life, death and resurrection conquers the evil powers in the world, the "tyrants under which mankind is in bondage and suffering, and in Him God reconciles the world to himself." (Aulén 1957: 4) The second type is the Latin theory where the concepts of satisfaction and merit as they are a part of the penitential system are fundamental. Its root idea "is that man must make an offering or payment to satisfy God's justice," notes Aulén. (1957: 82)

Human guilt demands a sacrifice, but not just any sacrifice—an undefiled, pure, unblemished offering. God's honor has been so insulted that only an act of equal or greater merit is acceptable. Only a human being may offer himself to atone for human sin, and an undefiled human being at that. Jesus Christ is the one person, both undefiled and pure, because born of a Virgin, yet without sin who may satisfy the necessity of an offering and sacrifice. Aulén comments, "…it is important to note how clearly it is stated that the sacrifice must be offered by a man on mankind's behalf; and because 'there was no other good enough to pay the price of sin,' the Son of God comes to make an offering. (1957: 84) The third type of atonement, for Aulén, which receives the least amount of coverage of the three, is the 'subjective' view of the atonement. This view is sometimes termed the 'Moral Influence' theory of the atonement. Aulén suggests that Abelard is the originator of this view. This is because the concept occurs in Abelard's commentary on Romans. Abelard, notes Aulén, formed his theory in opposition to the Anselmian-Latin

[14] Conversation with Professor George Stroup, Director of the author's Master of Theology (Th.M.) thesis at Columbia Theological Seminary, Decatur, Georgia, USA.

penal view. Aulén writes, “He [Abelard] emphasizes especially that Christ is the great Teacher and Example, who arouses responsive love in men; this love is the basis on which reconciliation and forgiveness rest.” (1957: 96) This love awakens in men and women a feeling of response that may only be described as ‘meritorious.’ This merit is fulfilled by Christ’s intercession on our behalf in his ascension. (1957: 96) According to Aulén, Abelard's views are echoed in the outlook of Schleiermacher in the nineteenth century. Salvation and atonement appear, here, as two sides of a coin. Salvation takes pride of place in that it is effected in the individual’s sense of God and strengthened as that sense improves and grows. Atonement, then, is the sense of blessedness “which follows on a deepened consciousness of God.” (1957: 136) Aulén characterizes this view as subjective in its complete conception. (1957: 137)

Aulén's book has received both plaudits and its fair share of criticism. In narrowing down a variety of views to present them as “types,” one always risks over-simplifying that which is incapable of being reduced. What is of interest to us about Aulén’s book is the idea in itself of ‘typologies.’ Even though Aulén clearly favored a view of the atonement he termed the Christus Victor model, he was also clear in stating that when categorizing the atonement levels all of the views as reducible, culturally contrived, interchangeable, and incomplete.

Here I want to look at a few views of the atonement suggested by significant contributors in the pastoral theological field, critique them, and then offer for thought John McLeod Campbell’s atonement theory as a resource. Most, if not all, interpreters of the atonement accurately discuss atonement as forgiveness or reconciliation and then stop there. McLeod Campbell is one of the few who discuss the atonement not only from an

aspect of forgiveness or reconciliation, but also from an aspect of living into that life which God has given to us in Jesus Christ. McLeod Campbell called this the prospective aspect. To put this in the vernacular of marriages and weddings, it is not only to be pronounced married by the minister at the conclusion of the wedding, but it is also the living as a married couple from here on. It is one thing to be declared husband and wife, by the pastor; it is another thing entirely to be married for some years. From one perspective, one cannot get any more married than when the minister pronounces a couple husband and wife. It is a performative utterance on the part of clergy signifying that the statement and the act exist as one event.

From another perspective, to be married for twenty-five years is to be a whole lot more married in some kind of qualitative way than are newlyweds. There is a substance, a quality, and thickness and a history that is present in the couple married for some time, which have weathered life and living together, that is not present in a newly married honeymooning couple. McLeod Campbell understood that to be forgiven in Christ through the atonement meant one thing—but not the whole thing. In addition for him, as the opposite side of the coin, is living into that forgiveness as a forgiven person. McLeod Campbell termed these two aspects, these two sides of the same coin, the 'retrospective' and the 'prospective.'

6.3 Atonement amidst Pastoral Problems

Andrew Purves, of Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, writes, "A specifically Christian pastoral theology…will be a pastoral theology of the incarnation and the

atonement, and of the primary doctrines that follow." (Purves 2001: 11) If Purves is correct, then Pastoral Theology has to do, and importantly so, with Jesus Christ. Thus, McLeod Campbell notes,

> If the atonement be the form which the eternal life took in Christ, that eternal life which the Father has given to us in the Son, then, as the atonement is the development of the incarnation, so is Christianity the development of the atonement; and this is only what the words, "I am the vine, ye are the branches," express. (1873: 278)

Both authors that have been quoted center their understanding of theology as therapeutic in the person and work of Jesus Christ. The idea of atonement is a fruitful one for many Practical Theologians as we are about to see.

Within the last several decades, some work by Practical and Pastoral theologians has focused on the atonement seeking as they have done so to relate it to issues of health, therapy, and counseling. However, none has focused on the incarnation or the atonement as the solution to our existential problems. In the early 1960's three different attempts to mine the atonement for assistance in developing a pastoral theology of the atonement occurred. Daniel Day Williams, Paul Pruyser, and Don Browning all sought to rework the typical, historical, well-rehearsed categories of the atonement into something more acceptable for therapeutic work with patients.

The issue facing anyone is simply language, and the realities behind our language. Dogmatic categories say one thing, testifying to the realities about which they speak. Therapeutic categories do also. The rubber hits the road for the pastor in what language to use. Unfortunately, for these thinkers not only did they seek to replace terms, but also

to replace the concepts behind the terms used. All leaned towards a psychological attempt to interpret the atonement and in so doing put it to use constructively. Years later Brad Binau, a pastoral theologian and teacher, wrote a follow-up article to Pruyser's seminal work seeking to dialogue with him and to propose his own idea in response to that reading. Each of these arguments is at the same time both meritorious *and* wanting. As we shall see each proposal is weak precisely at that point where Andrew Purves suggests the incarnation and atonement most needs highlighted. In the midst of the interest on the part of Practical and Pastoral theologians at dialoguing with classical views of the atonement, John McLeod Campbell's constructive pastoral reworking of the doctrine of the atonement was completely ignored. In fact, I am not aware of any practical or pastoral theologians who have sought to explicate McLeod Campbell's view of the atonement and then utilize it as grist for the mill in their own pastoral work. This chapter's aim is to rectify that oversight.

First, what this chapter intends is to rehearse the various views of Williams, Browning, Pruyser, and Binau. Even though their attempts are ultimately problematic, each of them has offered an interesting and valuable argument. Second, we will explicate John McLeod Campbell's view. Even though he, and his view of the atonement, has been critiqued by a variety of different writers, ultimately what one finds as one reads their assessment, is a straw man bearing little in common with the individual or theory. Thirdly, we will seek to respond to some of the issues that the previous writers felt to be important in seeking to develop their alternative theories. In so doing, we will raise some issues of import for us in seeking to continue to develop a Trinitarian, Incarnational *Pastoral* Theology and McLeod Campbell's relevance for such.

6.4 Daniel Day Williams and the Atonement

First, let us look at Daniel Day Williams' view, which is very suggestive, and may be discovered in his still serviceable book The Minister and the Care of Souls (1961). Even though the book is more than fifty years old, Williams' writing retains a freshness and a clarity so that his insights are still germane today. He appeals, in the book, both to psychotherapy for insights and to theology for his vision.

Williams' view of atonement is ultimately based on the theme of "acceptance." For this acceptance to be effective, a personal relationship between pastor and parishioner is necessary for healing. Healing may take the form of a search for meaning, self-understanding, and for salvation. (1961: 52) Part of this engagement, on William's view, with the pastor is an earnest search for God. One of the ways in which the power of God becomes evident is through the personal relationships built between people. (1961: 53) The search for meaning must include ultimate questions. These questions, therefore, must include God. Interpreting our experience of life is *a constituent element in our experience*. (1961: 56)

Both psychotherapy and theology contribute to our understanding of ourselves *as* human beings. Yet, "if man is what the Christian faith believes him to be, then any account of personal growth and healing which leaves the divine reality unacknowledged is insufficient." (1961: 54) Daniel Day Williams goes on to say that, the question about

God and its introduction into the quest for personal healing is not arbitrary, but rather is the question that underlies every other question. (1961: 61) In this, he follows his Union Theological Seminary colleague Paul Tillich. Part of this search for meaning involves issues of salvation, which arise from the fact that the relationship between humans is never simply dyadic, but is in fact **triadic**. He writes, "There is a reality which stands between persons, and that reality …is the meaning of existence. It is what sets the bounds and establishes the possibilities of our being." (1961: 66)

This reality, this meaning of existence, is not merely a thing, but rather a third person, which is none other than Jesus Christ. That for which we search is *already* present here and now. He writes,

> …the objective reality which stands between persons is God made personal and available to us in Jesus Christ. What men seek is what can make life whole. It must be reality present to us as truth and as power. That is, what men are really searching for is the Christ, the personal presence of God in human life…[Furthermore] Christ is the person who discloses us to ourselves. On the other hand, he is the New Man, the one who opens the way to what we can become…It is Christ who is the Third Man in every human relationship. (1961: 66-67)

Christ is, for Williams, spiritually present between persons mediating and interpreting. Because Christ is present through this interaction, God's personal disclosure in our life establishes, as Calvin put it, knowledge of God, on the one hand, and knowledge of ourselves, on the other. Through this means, God calls us into fellowship and communion with him. God's call to us, in the meantime, is hampered by our own sin, which as Williams puts it, produces a distortion of what we know about ourselves and about God. This distortion, however, may be transcended, because Christ stands as

the mediator between others and us. Because this mediation is present, a new way is opened for us not only to have our minds restored, but also our whole selves. Indeed, we have the possibility and the freedom to become a new person. (1961: 68)

This new life through Christ is the discovery of ourselves as God intended us to be. Our lives are structured by the history of our personal relationships through which God's grace works. These relationships as grace are God's love in action. The doctrine of the atonement, as Williams has it, is synonymous with the transformation of humanity. Christ's death extends forgiveness that becomes redemptive for our lives. (1961: 68, 71)

Williams' purpose in part of the book regarding the atonement is whether some light may be shed through new perspectives in pastoral care. Williams' method relates psychological concepts of healing to ultimate affirmations of faith in God and his grace. In so doing, he places both alongside each other with an example of 'release from the burden of guilt.' (1961: 72) What we call sin is for the most part to be understood as symptoms of the fundamental disorder that lies deep in the spirit. Real guilt is the obverse side of the dignity of freedom. (1961: 74) The gospel is that there is a way beyond and through the bondage of the self. We can be restored to our rightful minds. (1961: 71) Grace does not come in its first occurrence as a summons to take heart. It does not come as a directive to gird up our ethical attributes. Rather grace comes as an invitation to come clean about our inability to release ourselves from our burden. It is a call to open ourselves to a love which is unconditional, which will always embrace us, and which is ours on the sole proviso that we are prepared to trust the God who so loves us. (1961: 75) To paraphrase Williams's colleague Paul Tillich it is accepting our acceptance.

Williams begins his thoughts about the atonement by narrowing his focus and specifically asserting that the atonement is about acceptance. The whole self is accepted. However, the whole self is in transition and is constantly undergoing growth. This growth is not easy, because to move from a known place to an unknown place is scary. We often fight stubbornly, misguidedly for homeostasis, which is for the status quo, no matter how bad a place this is. Here, no matter how unhealthy, is what I know. For growth to occur the nature of the interpersonal relationship between one person and another is vital. Identification and empathy by the pastor with the parishioner is important. The whole picture is, however, more than just the relationship of one person to another. The larger picture is of man's dependence on God who is his origin and his Lord. (1961: 86)

Williams states that the traditional dogmatic views of the atonement fail because they do not take into account a fully personal analysis of the meaning of forgiveness. (1961: 87) Words and concepts like ransom and punishment, moral influence and blame are not helpful. If we move backwards, as he counsels, to the New Testament view, we discover that the problem of our culpability is met by the personal experience of pardon. (1961: 88) The New Testament view, as he asserts, uses the language of personal relationship and self-identification. This view of the atonement comes rather from the discovery that God stands by us, in spite of our estrangement from him. It asserts that God remains with us in our need, at immense cost to himself. This is the soul of the New Testament declaration of revitalization, and surely, this is directly related to our feeling of acceptance. We are given to know that nothing in our brokenness destroys the possibility of being understood by another who cares. (1961: 89) Acceptance, to be understood,

however, is not simply a passive reception of the other. Acceptance and atonement is a reconstruction of the state of affairs into which we have fallen; thus, it is a breaking open both of our need and of our way to health. From this point of view, the meaning of the atoning work of God in Christ is never illustrated by the abacus of blame and wrongdoing as its principal theme. (1961: 90) The suffering of Jesus is not merely to be understood as the appeasement of a sadistic God (as in some earlier theories), it is rather the genuine revelation of God's determination to stand by us, his creatures, and offer a new life that we do not warrant. (1961: 90)

Acceptance, for Williams, is the key to the power of the atonement. Acceptance inspires us to take the necessary steps to change the self because it gives an assurance of a significant life no matter what evil or tragedy we face. It is the knowledge that we will not be let go which sustains our will to live. We will not be abandoned. Acceptance, as forgiveness, is the offer to stand by and to love no matter what happens. (1961: 91) To understand our acceptance and forgiveness, to receive God's unconditional approval, is always to risk moving into a new kind of life which begins strangely and wonderfully enough just where we discover God bearing with us in our present life of fear and distrust. (1961: 92) Psychological acceptance and the Gospel of forgiveness meet in the work of the Christian pastor. (1961: 92) As accepted by God in the beloved, we are objects of grace. (1961: 94)

Williams' book is a rare gem. Almost everyone will receive some benefit from its words. It is clear that it has been written by a wise teacher who has thought long and hard about its thesis. One difficulty that we will discover in all three of the authors is the extraction of the concept of atonement from its original cultic context, thus cutting away

at its Biblical basis. A Biblical view of the atonement is first about the restoration of the relationship between God and humankind. Then it is our restoring the relationship between one another (cf. Leviticus chap. 4, 5). Shorn of its roots in Scripture, it is not clear how any theology may focus on the atonement and still be an atonement *except* in name. In so doing, it becomes a faint proposal, a shadow of the original, watered down and weak. Williams' contribution, nonetheless, is worthwhile and deserves both a careful and thoughtful reading, but I am not fully convinced by his constructive proposal.

One aspect of the atonement that John McLeod Campbell suggested as necessary, to any robust theory, was the prospective aspect. The prospective aspect is future oriented. It is praxis, sanctification, and ethics based upon the objective fact of the atonement. This praxis is however wedded to Christ's ongoing life and praxis. If one aspect of the atonement is God's forgiving us through Jesus Christ's incarnate birth, life, ministry, miracles, suffering, death, and resurrection, that is, the whole of Christ's person, which McLeod Campbell calls the retrospective aspect, then another necessary aspect is future oriented, it is prospective. This other aspect is the prospective living out of what has been made of us **in** Christ. This is what God makes of us as we lean into the future, as his children, empowered by the Spirit, united *to* Christ. The Apostle Paul uses the preposition "**in"** something like 167 times in his letters. By this word, he means to convey a relationship and union unlike any other. All too often, atonement is considered merely as past tense. None of the authors surveyed mentions this important future aspect.

6.5 Paul Pruyser and the Atonement

Noted pastoral psychologist Paul Pruyser proposed a reworking of atonement theory beyond the traditional categories, which he believed tired and worn, and only partly accurate. He approached the problem as someone intensely interested as a counselor who was also an elder in the Presbyterian Church. His highly influential article published in 1964 *Anxiety, Guilt, Shame in the Atonement* was a serious attempt to correlate a theological doctrine of the atonement with real life issues in the lives of parishioners and counselees. Pruyser would have been the first to admit that the strength of his article was perhaps in its more accurate formulation of the problem or narrowing of the question than it was with any particular answer.

Pruyser suggests the atonement with all its rich and varied symbolism may assist those struggling with each of the emotions he lists—anxiety, guilt and shame. Pruyser, throughout the bulk of the essay, advocates a more flexible, enlightened approach to working with patients. This includes using the different images of the atonement known to historians, "To the psychologist of religion, these three main theories of atonement (Ransom, Satisfaction, and Moral Influence) constitute three types of thematic material, three thought structures of men pondering the divine intentions towards mankind, three fragments of religious ideation, three symbol systems." (Pruyser 1964: 16) As a clinician, Pruyser realized that the words patients use sometimes meant more than the

word itself. That is, there was not a strict correspondence between word and object, or sign and signified. (Maloney, Spilka 1991: 142) Pruyser writes,

The essential point in free association is that no single idea has a single meaning; that no single idea stands for anything in particular which is its sole referent. What free association yields, he suggests is a conglomerate of linkages that stands somewhere between the extreme concretism of a particular this-ness and the other extreme of syncretism, spanning the vaguest all-ness. Meanings thus obtained are patterns of relevancies and irrelevancies relating to a particular self. (Maloney, Spilka 1991: 142)

So on Pruyser's reading, the atonement theories themselves are not correspondent with the reality of the cross. These theories are merely suggestive of a somewhat murky underlying idea or reality. They are, in fact, more sweeping in the meanings they may elicit. Indeed, they may also tell us more about what is going on in someone's mind, than in the reality outside of someone's mental apparatus. Thus, the ransom theory—on Pruyser's reading—is a typical expression of conflict between the Ego and the Id. The satisfaction theory is modelled after conflicts between the Ego and Super-ego. (1964: 21) Pruyser's thesis is that each of the three atonement theories runs parallel to each of the major types of intra-psychic conflict situations characteristic of our lives. Thus, these three different theories of the atonement may each speak specifically to the different emotions of anxiety, guilt, and shame. They do so over the entire development of our humanity.

At different times, different theories of the atonement may suffice and be ameliorative for the patient. Pruyser indicates that the Ransom theory may assuage those troubled by anxiety, while the Satisfaction theory may assist those dealing with feelings

of guilt, and finally, the Moral Influence theory of the atonement may help those specifically dealing with shame. (Pruyser 1964: 17-21) He even suggests that the variations of the atonement theory be taught in succession during the different stages in our development, perhaps linking Erik Erikson's stages with a particular theory.

What is ultimately demanded according to Pruyser is a new and creative theologizing about the atonement that is enriched by psychological insights... (1964: 33) Once again, what Pruyser recommends may be questioned precisely because its lack of eternal and objective referent to reality. Pruyser's view regarding the patient's reality is perhaps accurate, but cut off as it is from its referent with God and the actuality of Christ's person and life begs the real question of whether this is really the atonement about which we are speaking. So too, with Pruyser's language of "symbol," what specific reality does this symbol represent? If a symbol refers to something, then what in particular, does Pruyser's cross embody? If it is representative for Pruyser, then of what? There is a pragmatic usage of the atonement here, which is opportunistic at best. Pruyser's attempt as a clinician and philosopher of religion is ultimately too imprecise for the Biblical scholar or the Pastoral Theologian. Therefore, what Pruyser has offered here is a valid inquiry with an imprecise answer.

6.6 Don Browning and the Atonement

The next contributor is Don Browning, whose reputation during and after his life as one of the premier Practical Theologians is well deserved. No one in the United States possesses the same kind of stature, even after his death in 2010, although there are some

that are coming increasingly close. The number of articles and books he wrote and published is overwhelming. Browning is clear, well read, brilliant and immensely frustrating (for me) no matter which book of his one reads. He is frustrating because of his anti-realist philosophical orientation, where human beings 'construct' their reality through their actions. Nevertheless, Practical theologian Andrew Roof of Luther Theological Seminary in Minnesota declares his contributions to the field of practical theology, "massive." (Roof 2014: 54) Roof is certainly right. A professor at the University of Chicago, Browning supervised roughly 80 Masters and Doctoral graduates at the University of Chicago Divinity School during his tenure there. (Hestenes 2012: 1) In grappling with his thought processes, one's appreciation (and learning) cannot but increase.

Don Browning's original contribution to this issue of atonement is his re-worked doctoral dissertation from the University of Chicago published and titled as Atonement and Psychotherapy (1964) which argues for a kind of correlative approach between psychology and theology regarding the atonement. He writes, "The purpose of this book is to test the possibility of making positive theological statements on the basis of insights derived from psychotherapy." (1966: 14) His exploration in the book is to test whether or not the generative aspects of psychotherapy may be used **to give rise to an analogy or model of the atonement** (my emphasis) that will be able to stand toe-to-toe with the normative theological models of Christendom's history. (1966: 23) Will the relative merits of psychotherapy be fecund enough to generate a dialogue which itself will promote a constructive model? Browning investigates the 'potency' of psychotherapy to produce a 'clarifying analogy' that will be robust enough to bear the serious theological

comparisons between it and other previous historic theories. In addition, Browning seeks to know what basis and adequacy such an analogy might have for comparison with other historical/ theoretical atonement theories. (1966: 23) Having stated his goal, Browning begins his discussion by revealing that which he understands the atonement to be. He writes, "I understand the doctrine of the atonement to deal with the meaning and place of Christ's death in the economy of salvation." (1966: 23)

Both psychology and theology offer theories both for human brokenness and subsequent healing. Browning intends, then, first to investigate three different historic theories of the atonement. Commonalities between the three historic theories will be outlined and used to mine psychology for appropriate analogies that can speak to that which the theological theories intended. Next, the purpose and goal of psychotherapy will be investigated and discussed. These important elements will be categorized, studied, and used to generate a psychologically based analogy of the atonement. The cross, the atonement, and the resurrection will be re-interpreted through the analogical lens that psychology will provide.

Each historic theory of the atonement has sought to meet certain criteria and also certain issues with its own heuristic offering. The proposed psychological theory will be used to see if it meets these issues appropriately. Does Browning's new model based on psychological categories meet the test? This is the thought experiment, which Browning seeks to engage in throughout the course of the book.

Interestingly, out of all the authors included here (with the exception of McLeod Campbell) Browning is the only one to realize that one of the issues in any atonement theory is the nature and character of God. Any atonement theory presupposes some kind

of doctrine of God, that is, a **"theology."** Browning writes, "I have come to agree with Aulén in his judgments about the *importance of the doctrine of God as a central issue for any theory of atonement*." (1966: 29) Browning realizes that the atonement is not just about Christ's person and work, but that this points beyond itself further into the very heart of God's purposes for humanity—which flow from God's will and character. That is, the atonement is not just concerned about Christology. Browning postulates,

> "In all cases that I know about, and specifically in the cases to be studied in this investigation, the significance and meaning of Christ's death is crucially determined by certain presuppositions or controlling ideas that is *appropriate and consistent with the nature of God*." (1966, 29-30) …That is *What is an adequate doctrine of God upon which a theory of the atonement can be based?* (1966: 30)

In his theological studies of the foundational historical documents and the theologians that wrote them Browning arrived at what he terms four principal characteristics that constitute, for him, the formal criteria for a doctrine of the atonement.

1. The sufficient reason for the atonement must rest in the nature of God. (1966: 89)
2. Atonement must come in such a way as not to jeopardize God's basic order and structure in the world. (1966: 90)
3. The event of Jesus Christ must add something new to effect man's redemption that is not otherwise available. (1966: 91)
4. The atonement of Jesus Christ effects real redemption. (1966: 92)

These four criteria guide him in his own constructive atonement work. Previous theological attempts, by others, at clarifying atonement theory are imperfect; however, they are close. Criticisms by Browning of previous theological atonement theories begin

with the early Church father Irenaeus and center on the defeat of sin and evil, leading to the decision on the part of man to actualize the freedom that has been given him in fact through the atonement. Switching to the medieval theologian Anselm from the early Church father Irenaeus, Browning asserts that what is unclear within Anselm's thought is how the objective fact of the removal of guilt before the eyes of God enables man to accept subjectively the fact that he is no longer guilty before God. (1966: 92) Browning questions how man's subjective response to God's enduring love, in these thinkers, frees him from (defeats) the organic forces of evil that imprison him. (1966: 93)

In his continuing thinking about the atonement, in response to both Irenaeus and Anselm Browning arrives at the common theme of acceptance. While different analogies have been utilized by theologians in the past culling from law, medicine, government, and ethics, no theory of the atonement has utilized psychological characteristics. In looking toward the psychotherapist's work, Browning focuses on his or her acceptance of the patient as an analogy he would like to pursue. Rather than judgment of the individual facing the therapist with his/her problems, the therapist instead offers acknowledgment and positive reception. The therapist's empathic acceptance announces, proclaims, and witnesses to the fact that the client sitting before him or her is truly acceptable, not only to him or to her as a therapist, but to some structure that transcends all finite referents, i.e., to the universe and whatever power that holds it together. In this sense, the therapist is representative of a larger acceptance. Similarly, the client does not come to feel that he is acceptable simply to the therapist, but agrees to the fact that he is acceptable in an ontological sense. (1966: 151) In receiving from the therapist the message, however

nonverbal that he or she is accepted and acceptable regardless, the patients begin to redefine themselves.

Empathic acceptance refers to the capacity of the therapist to enter into an active, but also passive relationship with the client. It is an active relationship in that it conveys a positive regard or caring for the feelings of the other. In a manner of speaking, the therapist represents others in his/her work with the patient. His or her representative work carries weight in the view of the patient. Yet it is a passive relationship in that it conveys this caring by receiving or feeling the feelings of the other as the other feels them. (1966: 175) The individual exhibiting empathic acceptance is not modified by any and all feelings that the other may have. There is no feeling that he does not relate to in the sense of receiving it, empathizing with it, and being internally qualified by it.

However, there is one sense in which the maximally empathic individual is not relative in the sense of being qualified or qualifiable. (1966: 176) An individual with maximum empathic acceptance would be unqualifiable in one respect—in his ability to remain supremely qualifiable. In the ideal case, there would be, according to Browning, nothing that others could do or say that would cause the individual to withdraw or put conditions on the capacity to accept or receive the other. (1966: 176)

It should be remembered that the therapist's acceptance witnesses to, and is grounded in a larger structure of justification…the therapist's empathetic acceptance is the condition or occasion providing the possibility upon which the client may come to accept his acceptance. (1966: 178) What would perfect righteousness mean within the framework of this eminent instance of empathetic acceptance? It would mean that it is the eternal law and obligation of this supreme individual perfectly to receive and care

empathetically for every particular thing. His righteousness would be found in his infinite capacity to relate adequately and equally to each creature in his manner. Whatever is meant by God's justice would be subsumed under the rubric of God's righteousness. God's righteousness provides a bedrock of justice in that it guarantees that all men will be equally and adequately loved, empathetically received, and positively regarded. This is the primary sense in which the word 'justice' is applied to God in Browning's study. (1966: 179) As the therapist is able to receive, accept and not judge others under his care, so too must this attribute be attributed in a greater way to God.

The understanding of human brokenness, as far as Browning is concerned, evolving from the social and psychotherapeutic sciences, has more in common with that view of the human condition associated with the *Christus Victor* image of the atonement than it does with those views of man connected with the Latin or Moral Influence theories. (1966: 181)

Atonement seeks to reconcile and to heal, but from what? This is particularly the question regarding psychology. Thus, for the theological views of the atonement the problem to be overcome is sin. Yet, for psychological theories of the atonement, Browning suggests sin is not the problem to be overcome, but rather 'incongruence.' (1966: 182) Two similarities between incongruence and sin, however, are immediately discernable. Both sin and incongruence entail an idolatrous overreliance upon finite values for one's justification and worth…absolutizing finite values through conditions of worth leads to estrangement. (1966: 182) Incongruence…reacts in a negative and hostile way even to unqualified empathetic acceptance. The 'no' conditions of complete acceptance contradict and judge the conditions of worth of the incongruent self. Sin, too,

reacts in a negative and hostile way, regardless of its outward manifestation, to a relationship of complete and unconditioned empathetic acceptance. (1966: 202) So, in the normative theological expressions of the atonement—sin is the issue that must be overcome. For Browning's psychological model, it is instead—incongruence.

Both distortion and denial are attempts to be rid of the threatening experience of accepting our acceptance (to steal a phrase from Paul Tillich). The ultimate implication of their intent is to be rid of the object that produces the threatening experience. With regard to the threat of God's relation, the ultimate intent of the sinner's hostility is to be rid of God, to reject God, just as the client may repeatedly attempt to reject the therapist. (1966: 203)

Browning discusses the inward change in a human being through this acceptance that offers the individual movement forward. However, there is a possibility of becoming stuck, so to speak. This is where the factor of guilt is important in the psychotherapeutic process. Here guilt emerges as an inhibitor to change rather than an objective fact that condemns the client (as in Anselm) even if he or she were to change. Psychotherapy [holds] that guilt is not held against the broken man. Guilt must not be compensated necessarily….the point is, the problem is not the *objective* fact of guilt so much as it is man's *subjective* bondage to guilt. For psychotherapy, it is man's subjective bondage to his own conditions of worth, which in turn judge him and make him feel guilty, which constitutes the major block to change. It is not so much the things, which the client has done, or not done, which are problematic, but rather the individual's perception of who they are or are not.

In turning from his creative analogical work with acceptance as a key to understanding the atonement, Browning turns to some important implications of using this as a model. As Browning indicates all atonement theories imply a 'theology,' that is a doctrine of God. God first and foremost has a character defined by unconditioned empathic acceptance…the concept of unconditional empathetic acceptance constitutes the primary sense in which God is love and the primary sense in which he is law. When God's empathetic love is viewed from the perspective of its adequacy and equal distribution, it is the primary meaning of God's righteousness and justice; when it is viewed from the standpoint of its self-consistency, it is the primary meaning of God's honor. The primary sense in which God is love and law must be kept separate from other ways of referring to God's law. The secondary sense in which God is law refers to the means-end structures of coercion designed to keep the human situation integrated so that his law and love in the primary sense can operate with enhanced effectiveness. (1966: 201)

So using acceptance as a way to understand God, Browning determines that,

1.) It is God's primordial nature to be related to the world in the sense of feeling its feeling…this means that God's basic essence is such that he would be empathically related without exception, i.e., without condition or qualification—to all other individuals. (1966: 193) For Browning this means that God empathizes with all.

2.) This primordial relationship would partake of the nature of rapport. …If God can feel the feelings of the world, there must be an interchange of patterned energy between God and the world. However, since the concept of rapport implies that the interchange of processes flows in both directions, it follows that each individual's feelings are felt completely and unambiguously by God; in turn, each individual at least in some limited (finitude) and distorted (sin) sense will feel the form of God's essence. It is possible for an individual to feel the form of God's love at the level of adverbial experiencing while failing

to acknowledge it at the accusative level. (1966: 194) When unconditioned empathic acceptance is abstracted and maximized into the principle of absolute relativity, it means that God is the ultimate object of the feelings of every finite individual…by receiving the feelings of the world, by being the final object of every change; God also actively conveys unconditioned care, concern, love, and interest in the world. It is precisely in his passivity that God also constitutes the most determinative active influence on the world. (1966: 195) God's empathy and reception of everyone's feelings in the world touches people whether they are aware of it or not.

3.) The concept of unconditioned empathic acceptance also has implications for an understanding of God as creator. …God's empathic acceptance is unconditioned, complete, and perfect, and he is preeminent among individuals in creating, forming, and shaping the world through the way in which he knows the world. (1966: 195)

4.) Whether empathic acceptance is seen from the perspective of creation or soteriology, it follows as an implication of this analogy when applied eminently to God that empathic acceptance should be the most pervasive datum impinging upon each individual's experiencing, and for this reason, the form of empathic acceptance should constitute the image of God in man. According to the concept of rapport, God's empathic acceptance is conveyed to man through an interchange of patterned and qualitied energy. (1966: 196) God's acceptance of us, in short, constitutes the image of God in us.

5.) Applying the therapeutic relation to God means that not even the fall of man can qualify God's capacity to be empathically accepting. Even man's fall into sin cannot qualify God's empathic acceptance. Even here, God empathically feels the depths of man's fallenness and still accepts. (1966: 195)

Browning's emphasis on God's empathetic acceptance of everything a person may feel raises the question about judgment, which earlier theological doctrines of the atonement sought to address in some way or other. Therefore, Browning asks the important question, "What does judgment mean within the context of this analogy?" His answer is as follows: Judgment occurs in any inter-human situation when there is a conflict and contradiction between experience and our conditions of worth…Law is a

structure of judgment that seems to have intractable and inescapable character to it. (1966: 198) There is a judgment in the therapeutic relationship itself…God's relation of unconditioned empathic acceptance is also a structure of judgment. The no 'conditions' of God's empathic acceptance contradict and, therefore, judge the sinful self's conditions of worth and acceptability. It is against the background of man's sin that God's love emerges as judgment and intractable law. Against the background of sin's conditions of worth, God's love operates as a plumb line that judges and exposes the uselessness of man's efforts to justify himself. (1966: 199) The law and judgment of the self and its conditions of worth are also a law and judgment that are being judged constantly in return for the incongruent person's own experience. In addition, God (as does the therapist), in his acceptance of that about the client which the client's conditions of worth will not accept, tends to intensify the internal conflict, judgment, and contradiction between the self and the experiencing of the total organism. (1966: 199)

What does this mean for the client who is struggling to move forward? Browning asserts that God's acceptance is predicated on a complete and absolute empathetic understanding of all our feelings, even our negative and hostile feelings toward him. It is because his acceptance endures unqualified even though he fully understands (fully feels), our hostility that we are 'persuaded' to come to trust him. It is the absolutely unconditional, intractable, enduring, unqualified character of God's passive reception of all of man's feelings, even his most hostile one's, that makes it possible for man to realize that there are no conditions placed on his worth. He is then free to feel and integrate those feelings into his wholeness that he was unable formerly to accept. (1966: 204)

The psychological analogy that Browning uses will only take us so far, a fact of which Browning is aware. At some point, in the author's judgment it must seek to be integrated with traditional language that comes from the Bible. The intention, at this point in Browning's book, is to interpret the cross in the light of God's empathic acceptance of our negative feelings and the resurrection in light of his unconditioned durability to accept these feelings. The ultimate objective of sin's hostility is to negate empathetic acceptance as a threat to its conditions of worth. The 'death' of one offering such a relationship is the logical end of these negative feelings. In view of this, the cross represents God's capacity to feel fully the depths of sin's hostility—humankind's collective wish to negate him and the relationship he offers. It is the point at which acceptance reaches its greatest power. At the same time, the resurrection indicates that there is one sense in which God cannot be qualified or conditioned—in his capacity to feel these feelings. No matter what humanity's weakness, God will accept us even in our contrariness and desire not to be accepted. God loves and we may reject God's love, but God will not cease loving us. The resurrection, then, points to the absoluteness of God's relativity, i.e., of God's empathic feeling. The cross points to the relativity of God's absoluteness. This absolute relativity, this unqualified qualifiability is the very structure of love. Love is unqualified sensitivity when sensitivity is thought to mean empathy. Without these two aspects of God's active-passive relation to the world, the way in which God overcomes the brokenness of the world would be difficult to conceive. It is in this never-ending relationship that God lives justification into the world. He shows forth this justifying influence through the intractable caring for the feelings of the world—even those feelings which the world cannot itself accept. (1966: 205) Here, Browning is

trying to meld psychological language and categories onto traditional theological concepts. Both the cross and resurrection testify to God's acceptance even of those who do not want to be accepted.

It is God's cross-resurrection activity that overcomes the supra-individual structures of bondage (principalities and powers) which intersect, support, and form a continuity with the self's conditions of worth. However, God's victory over the self's conditions is a victory that intimately involves the personal cooperation of the self itself. The self is bound, unfortunately, to these conditions of worth; its bondage is a perceptual bondage. The self believes that it is precisely these conditions that it must maintain, in order to be justified, found acceptable and worthwhile, to others and to God—hence the bondage. By remaining absolutely unwavering in his acceptance, God helps the self to come to learn that there are no conditions prerequisite to God's justifying love. This means that the supra-individual structures of evil are defeated, but not entirely without cooperation from the self. (1966: 206) God's acceptance must include us. The principalities and powers (the self's conditions of worth) are directly behind the self's hostility towards God's intractable love. This freely given love contradicts these conditions of worth, and they, in turn, defend themselves with hostile rejection of this love. God makes this hostile defense useless and of no avail by accepting it. By still enduring, God demonstrates to men and women his ultimate acceptability in spite of these powers and their conditions. (1966: 206)

As these powers begin to lose their grip, the energy that supports a person's conditions of worth is 'released' and made available once again to the more fundamental fulfillment of humanity's basic nature. Creation is fulfilled. Now people are free to grow

according to the direction the image of God in man would take him or her…God's atoning love continues, anyway, as an automatic continuation of God's basic nature, operating now, however, against the background of sin. What appeared as God's creative caring and fellowship with the world before the fall now appears as God's graceful caring and fellowship. In both instances, whether it appeared as creation or grace, it was God's unconditioned empathy and acceptance.

Grace is in no way a contingent element in the nature of God. Grace is God's creative feeling of our feeling enduring as absolute and unconditioned even after the fall. This also gives us our ultimate clue about the nature of forgiveness. Forgiveness is the continuation of God's unconditioned empathic acceptance in spite of man's rejection of it. Forgiveness is the nature of grace. It is continuous with God's creative fellowship. Yet it is this same forgiveness, and grace, that constitutes God's judgment in its primary sense. Since God's empathic acceptance has no conditions attached to it, the very absence of conditions contradicts and judges sin's conditions of worth and acceptability. The same forgiveness, and grace, of God constitute the primary sense in which the world is measured and found wanting. (1966: 207)

There are two reasons why empathic acceptance is not arbitrary as a general atonement process. First, for empathic acceptance to be effective, it must be fundamental to the character of the therapist. It cannot be a temporary, occasional, contingent mode of operation. Therefore, if this concept is to be applied analogically to God, it similarly must be a fundamental, noncontingent, enduring aspect of the Divine's character. Second, since empathy seems to involve a real interrelation of processes, its generalization must extend the onto-epistemological principles that it implies…the

therapist's acceptance implies and participates in a larger structure of acceptance to which the smaller structure witnesses and is, to some extent, analogical. (1966: 207)

Here Browning is still trying to meld traditional narrative categories with psychology. Thus, he turns to the historical figure of Jesus Christ as the unambiguous manifestation of God's unconditioned empathic acceptance at the level of finite beings, but he is not the exclusive means of this love…the form and pattern of the events of Jesus Christ's life constitute a symbolization of the form and pattern of the essence of God. In Jesus, this essence of God's fundamental character of non-judgmental acceptance is expressed noetically and manifested personally and dynamically. (1966: 210)

The church's grip upon the death and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth represents a basic intuition into the structure and efficacy of acceptance as it exists eminently and maximally in God. The meaning of Christ's death must be seen in the context of the total ministry of Christ. In the light of this total ministry, Jesus' death results from an intensification of hostility produced when persons are confronted by a relationship of unconditioned acceptance that necessarily contradicts and judges conditions. The death of Jesus Christ represents God's full and complete empathic expression of the genuineness of his forgiveness. Only the extremities of death can represent appropriately the extent to which God is qualified by our enmity. The extremities of this one man's death both symbolize and manifest God's eternal suffering before the onslaughts of sin. (1966: 211) In seeking to tie in the therapist's representative work with the person and work of Jesus, Browning states that the therapist performs a kind of Christological function, limited and ambiguous in a small way. It is possible, then, that an analysis of

the character of the therapist can offer a model that may aid in the interpretation of the person of Jesus Christ. (1966: 211)

Jesus is the Christ by virtue of his capacity to organize his self-concept around this original possibility of the created order. Jesus Christ completely and unambiguously recapitulates his person and work while also conforming his self-concept to—the most original possibility of created existence. In this way, Jesus Christ becomes the Second Adam. He possesses the integrity of the original person, but in addition possesses a completely and unambiguously mature self-concept conforming to that original vicarious actuality which intersects and undergirds all finite reality. (1966: 213)

Don Browning has given the interested reader much to think about in this book. He certainly indicates in this writing the vibrant mind that would produce so many thought provoking treatises in the future. That there are similarities, for Browning, between psychology and religion in both their thought structures, ultimate concerns and so on, is undeniable. In this book, Browning almost succeeds in suggesting a new paradigm for atonement theory. However, one could argue that he is so caught up in his psychological model that he does not quite know what to do with the Trinity. God is mentioned. Nevertheless, it is a strange sort of Unitarian monist God that Browning projects from his analogy. Jesus is mentioned, but in a somewhat also ran, last minute addition kind of way. There is no mention of the Spirit that I could detect, leading to, at the very best, a Binitarian kind of divinity, in which it is not entirely clear, how God and Jesus relate. Regardless of the criticisms leveled here, Browning's work is creative, insightful, inspiring, and brilliant. It is clear in working through Browning's various

books, articles, and writings that as one does one is in the hands of a master. Browning is deserving of respectful criticism, absolutely, but dismissal in disagreement, never.

6.7 Brad Binau and the Atonement

Next, Brad Binau's article from roughly ten years ago titled, *When Shame is the Question How does the Atonement Answer* (2002) argues for the correlation between atonement doctrine and responses to the issue of shame in people's lives. He cites Paul Pruyser, Pamela Dickey Young, and Douglas John Hall as among those who call for "an enhanced ability to appropriate the meaning of God's atoning work" while engaged in "ongoing reflection on the nature of the human condition." (2002: 89) He notes,

> One can quickly identify at least a half dozen ways of understanding the atonement, each framing human salvation in terms of different presuppositions about the human condition. I know of no approach to the atonement, however, that seeks to frame the doctrine as a response to human shame. (2002: 89)

Taking his cue from Paul Pruyser, Binau seeks to bring the atonement and shame into critical conversation. In so doing he hopes to frame a suitable outcome that speaks both to doctrines of salvation and to our felt needs. In order to do this, an adequate understanding of the person *as* person will be important. In addition, a necessity is not relying too strongly on objective theories of the atonement that may overemphasize *God's work* in the atonement. Objective theories minimize the human person and their response. Neither is relying on subjective theories of the atonement that rely on *our work*

in the atonement, thus minimizing God's work. In so doing, subjective theories focus on human beings.

The specific dilemma Binau seeks to address with regard to people is the issue of shame. He suggests this emotion has not been adequately dealt with specifically with the atonement in mind. He writes,

> ***The problem:*** Those reflecting on the atonement do not seem to be considering the implications of shame; those reflecting on shame do not seem to be considering its implications for the atonement. It would be helpful to introduce these people to one another! And therein lies ***the opportunity:*** to bring together the insights of each group in order to suggest a new understanding of the atonement that can respond to shame in a meaningful way. (2002: 90)

To discuss shame adequately, Binau posits, it will be necessary to reflect upon the human person "essentially," "existentially," and with a definite "*telos*" in mind. This "*telos*" or goal Binau suggests is best captured by Irenaeus' view of the atonement as a "recapitulation" of the human race in and through Christ. Irenaeus believed that Christ took a new road in the atonement, and in so doing, brings us along. Our direction is changed. (2002: 90-91)

To speak of the human person 'essentially' is to speak of the grammar of our connectedness. To be a human being is to be in relationship, notes Binau. (2002: 90) Given our connectedness with one another, something like Irenaeus' view of recapitulation is possible. Existentially, humanity's defining characteristic, for Binau, is on the one hand relationality and, on the other hand the sense of shame. He acknowledges recent work and suggests that, "shame is one of the defining characteristics of the human condition in our day and age." (2002: 90) Now, what is shame? For

Binau, shame is the experience of being flawed, sullied, or diminished such that the more intense the experience the greater the fear that others, including God, will abandon us. (2002: 93) Shame is also a "psychological correlate to the theological category of sin." (2002: 91) He writes, "Theologically, of course, *sin* is the fundamental characteristic of our existence." (2002: 92) It is, he continues, "… (Sin), arguably, is the most basic possible description of the human condition." (2002: 93) He prefers, however, rather than to merely talk about sin as badness, to argue instead for the concept of shame as an experiential correlate for human beings. (2002: 92) Further, he notes, "The experience of Sin is the disruption of our relationships with God, self and others." (2002: 97) Shame (as sin) is distinct from guilt, with which it is sometimes mistakenly associated. Guilt is related to a fear of punishment. Shame is related to a fear of abandonment. Guilt is about wrong action. Shame, rather, is about the person who acts. Guilt is about wrongdoing, while shame is about feeling wrong. (2002: 94)

Between the essential nature of human beings and our existential condition, lies a third category, which Binau argues is the atonement. In turning to the atonement, Binau notes that he is seeking for, "a language of atonement that utilizes the grammar of connectedness." (2002: 107) We are who we are because of our relationship with others. Part of who we are, for Binau, as human beings is the possibility of our feeling shame. Shame is about relationship. That is, it is a relational concept. Linked to our relatedness and shame for Binau is the atonement. Binau writes, "Shame *is* the experience *par excellence* of being torn from relationship and having all of our inadequacies exposed." (2002: 90)

Binau's solution to the issue of shame is to be found in Irenaeus' view of atonement as *anakephalaiosis*, that is recapitulation, which "is the most helpful way of understanding the atonement for *us*." (2002: 103) Gustav Aulén termed this the dramatic theory of the atonement. Binau writes,

> Irenaeus organized his understanding of the atonement around the concept of "recapitulation," from the Greek ἀνακεφαλαιόω, found in Ephesians 1.8-10. Guided also by Paul's thinking in I Corinthians 15.22, Irenaeus understood Christ to have entered the human situation as the new Adam, going over the same ground as the old Adam, but in a way that through perfect obedience leads to a different outcome. (2002: 99)

In using Irenaeus' view of the atonement, however, Binau wants to conceive recapitulation more expansively that the early Church father did. Recapitulation, for Binau does more than achieve atonement—recapitulation *is* atonement. Stating this as Binau does is his desire to say more than that Jesus makes atonement for us, but "rather that Jesus atones us." (2002: 103) Binau comes close to stating a vicarious view of atonement, but ultimately struggles over the human response to God's grace.

As compelling as Irenaeus' view of the atonement is for Binau he recognizes two deficiencies. His view does not handle the theodicy question robustly enough for Binau. Next, Irenaeus portrays God's power as univocal and singular, meaning that it occurs with or without our input or participation. The imagery Irenaeus uses is of victory in battle. It is not clear for Binau, how this metaphor of the Victorious Sovereign God may assist those dealing with shame. (2002: 100)

In light of his argument regarding the relationality of human beings with one another and with God, Binau states that a theory of the atonement that will assist therapeutically must be relational in nature. He then suggests that the atonement be

considered as "at-one-ment." Behind the history of the word, lies Mary Grey's suggestion, which Binau finds appealing. Grey suggests the recovery of at-one-ment imagery in relationship with the fundamental drive to unity and wholeness. (2002: 101) Binau highlights Daniel Day Williams' observation that, "In interpreting the 'how' of redemption, the question has too rarely been asked, "What is the meaning of atonement as love doing its distinctive work?" (Williams 1981: 176) The desire for Binau is to arrive at an atonement theory that offers integrity to human beings struggling exactly with that. The atonement, in addition, must involve a process that moves towards wholeness in relation. (2002: 101) Ultimately, Binau argues that Irenaeus' view of the atonement is the most helpful theory, if one accepts the premise that shame is the defining characteristic of the human condition in our day and age.

Receiving Don Browning's suggestion that a psychotherapeutic understanding of the atonement is possible if someone arises within our social environment that places no conditions on our acceptance Binau concludes,

A therapist (or friend) can never embrace us with *complete* unconditionality since he or she can never experience *all* the hindrances to relationality that we have experienced. In other words, they cannot fully know the depths of our shame. Only the one who died shamed and forsaken on the cross, yet who was raised and declared worthy by God, the one who relentlessly befriends by recapitulating our experience can offer such an embrace and fully atone us. (2002: 108)

We next turn to John McLeod Campbell.

6.8 John McLeod Campbell and the Nature of the Atonement

Ernest Bruder, a student of Harry Stack Sullivan, notes that mental illness is a religious problem. He suggests that it is like a fever, which is an attempt on the part of the personality at cure…it is vitally involved with such ultimate's as meaning, value, destiny, purpose, truth, reality, God, the immortal soul and salvation. (1963: 28)

Is there an atonement theory, which adequately clarifies what 'love doing its work' might look like? The typology of atonement theories, presented to us by Gustav Aulen, according to Brad Binau does not answer this issue. Daniel Day Williams' remark about the relationship between love and the atonement offers us the ability to introduce John McLeod Campbell and his theory of the atonement, which therapeutically commends itself to those struggling with the emotions of self-assessment previously mentioned in the dissertation's three preceding chapters.

If we take William's statement seriously regarding the necessity of love then McLeod Campbell suggests an appropriate response. In short, it is an appropriate response to all three issues of self-assessment because in those three different 'places' or 'states' or 'feelings' we are not alone. Christ enters into each of those difficulties so that as we struggle with them and the implications we have someone with us. Christ enters into the far country with us, so that just like the prodigal as we feel estranged and unrelated to God, we have someone present reminding us that what **seems** to be the case is not **in fact** the case.

We are not orphans. We have not been abandoned. God, the Father of our spirits, has taken great measures so that we are not cut-off from the land of the living, by sending his Son, our brother, into our condition and in love and because of love saving, redeeming, changing, purifying us, while also giving us the resources—with him—to return to the waiting Father. If Ernest Bruder (1963) is right and we are to seek out the lonely, frightened, confused and bewildered—then the question must be asked, 'What will we tell them?' 'What will we tell them about themselves? God? Others? Life? The following explication will clarify.

Eugene Garrett Bewkes, one of McLeod Campbell's first interpreters wrote in 1937 that he was, "one of the greatest spiritual minds of the Nineteenth Century." (1937: 1) Indeed, he is universally regarded as the leading constructive Scottish theologian of the Nineteenth century. James Denney, himself one of Scotland's premier thinkers once noted that,

> "Of all the books that have ever been written on the atonement, as God's way of reconciling man to himself, McLeod Campbell's is probably that which is most completely inspired by the truth with which it deals. There is a reconciling power of Christ in it to which no tormented conscience can be insensible. The originality of it is spiritual as well as intellectual, and no one who has ever felt its power will cease to put it into a class by itself." (Denney 1918: 120)

I have found it helpful in my research, whenever working on the thought of an individual, to have a picture of them near me. Today we are surrounded by paparazzi, and pictures abound on the internet. However, the world of the nineteenth century was a different matter altogether. Photography was in its infancy. Paintings as portraits were

for the rich. There is, however, a somewhat revealing etching (using a process called stippling) in the British National Portrait Gallery in London, England of John McLeod Campbell when he was well into his life. The portrait appeared posthumously and was (which was published in 1877) done by Sir Charles Jeans. It made its first appearance in his Letters (Memorials) edited by his son. There is no explanation given why a picture of Campbell was made.

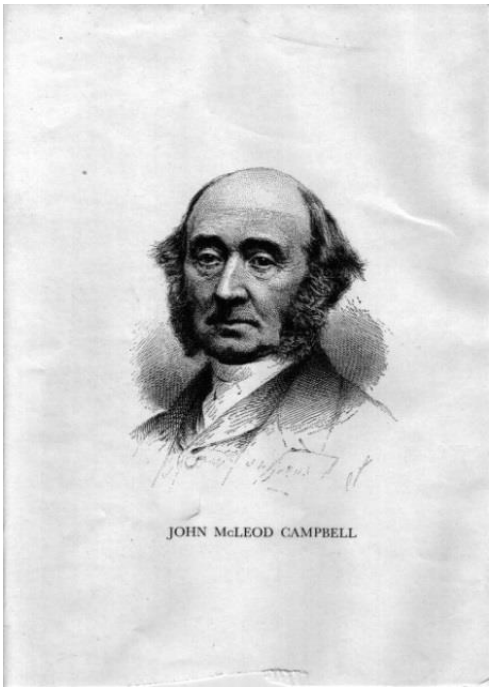
Jeans shows an older middle-aged minister, balding but with the long sideburns of the era, perhaps weary, and worn from the religious battles earlier in his life. Maybe these have stayed with him—or perhaps his demeanor comes from laboring for almost twenty years as a 'nobody' in a large building converted into a chapel on Blackfriar Street in downtown Glasgow. It could be because one of his sons died—a son named for his dear friend Thomas Erskine of Linlathen. Alternatively, it might be because he married for love—and in so doing disregarded the tight bounds of social class. Consequently, he was snubbed for years by some of his family, two sisters, who refused to speak to him. Mary, his beloved wife, was from a lower economic stratum and many felt that it would not be a good match.

Whatever the case may be, as one looks closer one sees someone without specific religious affiliation (he appears to not wear a clerical collar), forgotten by most, reviled by some, yet justly celebrated by others. Banished by his denomination after five years in ministry, he nonetheless continued to press forward in his theological and pastoral thinking. Perhaps this engraving is from the period when he had been granted an honorary Doctor of Divinity by the University of Glasgow and he felt the gravity of the

occasion. He had not turned in an official thesis, yet was still honored with the degree because of his literary output.

The church, out of which he was cast, has now in the person of one of its higher institutions of learning, a university—one of the four original (what?) in Great Britain, bestowed an honorary doctorate (Doctor Divinitatis) upon him because of his contributions to church, people, and society. If one looks at the picture for some time, one senses its neutral emotional affect, but profound feeling nonetheless. What does it really tell us, other than physical likeness, of McLeod Campbell? It is, upon closer examination, hard to discern much of Campbell's personality in this portrait. There are to be sure, lines produced by age on his face. There is no other clue to his personality. Perhaps, reproducing it below will indicate what I mean. It appeared, I suspect, for the first time in almost one-hundred years, in University of St. Andrew's Professor Edgar Dickie's edited version (Fourth edition) of On the Nature of the Atonement, published by James Clarke and Company in Britain in 1956 exactly one hundred years after his treatise on this doctrine was published for the first time.

6.8.1 Illustration



Often criticized, mostly misunderstood, and casually dismissed all too often—McLeod Campbell's treatise on the atonement aptly characterizes Donald Capps's appropriate statement about how theology should work, "We turn to theology not as an academic science, but rather as a source of therapeutic wisdom." (1993: 84) McLeod Campbell had spent more than twenty-five years puzzling over the issue of the atonement. In writing as he did, he proposed his therapeutic pastoral theology as medicine for sick and hurting souls. As we have proceeded, we have sought to indicate the relevance of McLeod Campbell for pastoral theology/ practical theology.

Scottish theologian H. R. Mackintosh, of the University of Edinburgh at the turn of the twentieth century, noted that McLeod Campbell's work was one of the few great theological treatises, which also had a devotional quality to it. (1923: 80) The question has been raised in the literature 'how is the atonement the answer?' to an individual's crisis or crises. The question has also been broached by those interested in the atonement 'from what are we saved and to what purpose?' McLeod Campbell would have responded by saying that reconciliation is always important; indeed, it is fundamental—whether between two people, between a person and God, or even within people themselves. He would also highlight the place love ought to have in the doctrine. For McLeod Campbell, also crucial is the doctrine of God we hold and how that doctrine improves or even corrects other less accurate suppositions.

Don Browning suggests an obligational level for dealing with ethics in his Practical Theology. It is not clear in Browning's proposal how the metaphorical level and the obligational level are to interact. Is there to be influence and if so in what direction? Is the metaphorical level to be guided by the obligational level or vice versa? As a theological liberal, Browning emphasizes theological ethics, or the obligational level, almost to the exclusion of the metaphorical level. In doing this, he betrays his education and training. His use of H. Richard Niebuhr's categories for God as creator, governor, and redeemer betray a liberal skepticism of the actuality of our knowledge of God. On Browning's view, we may know God only metaphorically. In this view, one believes that God *is like*…, there is an unequal comparison between whatever image we desire to use and God. However, in McLeod Campbell's view, God **is** Father; first God is the Father of Jesus Christ, God's Incarnate Son. Thus, the Father-Son relationship is

primary. Only, then, derivatively and by the grace of adoption is God **our** Father. As Jesus invited us to say when we address God in prayer, "Abba." (Daddy)

John McLeod Campbell dealt with this tendency during his ministry more than one-hundred years prior to Browning's proposal. At the conclusion of his treatise on the atonement, he discussed theological ethics, but did so using the unwieldy phrase 'on the tendency to resolve religion into love of man to man.' (1873: 331) McLeod Campbell's characterization of the era in which he ministered was that it sought a better ethics, to the exclusion of a more accurate theology. The impetus towards relating to one another in a gentler, more sincere way was on the rise, conversely faith in God as Father was on the wane.

Theological liberalism was on the rise in England and the European continent. The question of McLeod Campbell's knowledge of and about Friedrich Schleiermacher has been raised, but answered inconclusively. While McLeod Campbell had read a biography of him, I can find no reference outside of that biography that he was familiar with Schleiermacher's work at all. McLeod Campbell did not speak or read German and so unless Schleiermacher had been translated into English at that date, and I do not believe the first English translation came until much later, McLeod Campbell would have had no way of reading him. Schleiermacher's Kantian roots, in addition, would have clashed with McLeod Campbell's philosophical realism. Theological ethics for McLeod Campbell was always a corollary to theology proper. The imperative command always follows the indicatives of grace. The prior commandment is always to love God with heart, soul, and mind. The secondary commandment, consequently, is to love neighbour, what McLeod Campbell terms 'love of man for man.' This follows, however, behind

God's prior gracious action in Jesus Christ. The purpose of the atonement in McLeod Campbell's understanding, is paraphrased beautifully by James Denney as follows,

> "But now, … vicariousness is seen to be only another name for love ; under the influence of love men make the case of others their own ; and even if we speak of Christ as our substitute, it is because love has impelled Him to make our situation His. Side by side with the altered emphasis at this point comes a new sense that what Christ does for us must be more definitely related to what He produces in us. His identification of Himself with us must have as its aim and issue an identification on our part of ourselves with Him. The vocabulary of imputation, if not displaced by that of identification, is interpreted through it. There may be a tendency to ignore limits and distinctions, but there is a genuine desire to secure a true and real union between Christ and those who are His. His work is to save men from their sins, not to save them from the experience of being saved, which only comes in proportion as they become one with Him. If He is not really changing us into His own likeness, and enabling us to enter into the experiences in which sin involved Him, He is not reconciling us to God, and our sins are not forgiven. This is maintained even while it is maintained at the same time that Christ does something for us which we could never have done for ourselves, and enables us to do in union with Himself what we could never do alone; and if our union with Him is His work, His position as Saviour is unimpaired. (1918: 118-119)

The point here, which Denney seeks to highlight, is the vicarious and representative nature of the atonement in both the person and work of Christ. There is also an important sense of our connection to Christ, which in the old theologies was called our "mystical union with Christ." This is the language of the New Testament where Paul uses the phrase "in Christ" repeatedly throughout his letters. Christ is in us. We are in Christ. The gospel writer John spoke of this intimacy and connection using the imagery of a vine and its branches. (John 15) While there is the idea of connection in McLeod Campbell between Christ and his people, there is also the idea that we are to learn to reproduce his faith and trust in God as we use him as a guide in our living.

While often accused of simply modifying the "Moral influence" theory proposed by Abelard, (where Christ's sacrificial death inspires a response in us) McLeod Campbell does nothing of the kind given the connection between the Son of God and humanity, both physically and spiritually.

In addition to the clarification of the person and work of Christ in the atonement Paul Pruyser also suggests that, "I daresay that the idea of God must be therapeutic and that the imagery and language in which he is to be pondered, worshipped, and proclaimed must be a therapeutic imagery and language." In keeping with this, McLeod Campbell did not believe one could engage in theological ethics without clarity in one's knowledge of and understanding of God's nature and character.

To seek to define theological ethics by the 'good,' is to settle for an impoverished anthropological definition of the 'good' separate from God. Goodness in this view is but a "passing self originated phase of a perishing mind." (1873: 331) Goodness as goodness is subject to passing emphases, cultural changes, historical relativism, and simply subjectivity and can be changed at whim. A proper theology, however, will understand that God is intimately concerned with our well-being and us—as beloved children. God, in this view, is not known as some impersonal universal law, but rather as the Scripture testifies to us, "as love." With God's assistance and aid, we may develop that life of love in us, which is nothing less than the divine life working in us. The "knowledge of God as the Father of our spirits is the first and highest knowledge for man," notes McLeod Campbell. Everything else follows from this truth. Thus,

> Could men attain to a perfect brotherhood in relation to each other, while putting from them their high birthright as God's offspring, what remained

> to them of the privilege of existence would be small indeed in comparison with that which was lost. Low conceptions of salvation, which have been possible only when man's root relation to God as the Father of spirits was left out of account, and God has been thought of only as a sovereign Lord and righteous Judge, have hindered occupation of men's spirits with the life of sonship which we have in Christ, as being the highest aspect of our existence. (1873: 332)

McLeod Campbell would have charged Browning with a 'low conception of salvation.' Even if human beings were able to iron out their differences, and to live together harmoniously, this would fall far short of what God in Christ accomplished for them. The highest gift which human beings have been given is to be made God's offspring.

When this filial determination, on God's part for us, is abandoned, what one is left with is a lower conceptualization of salvation. This kind of conceptualization is of a legal nature. We are declared this or that, because of what Christ has procured through his death. Imputation here is key, not a moral and spiritual change in a person. The highest form of existence, however, is the 'life of sonship.' To understand properly both the incarnation of Jesus Christ and the atonement in both of its dual dimensions is to realize that Christianity itself is "a life of sonship in the fellowship of the life of the Son of God." (1873: 332) Instead, what has been the case is that of a legalism or theological ethics where law is placed on a higher status than relationship. What we are left with on this account is *'the ought,'* without the **'is.'**

Christianity, however, in McLeod Campbell's view is not reduced simply to what we must do, but rather the relationship we have in Christ and thus as such with Christ in his Sonship as the Son of God. Some, it is true, would look at the relationship of a father

and his child and transfer that model to our relationship with God. In so doing, they would call this an anthropomorphic form of religious instinct. Some who have been abused by fathers in the past would be particularly troubled by this. In order to surmount this, philosophy must be consulted. To focus on theological ethics is not progress, however, but rather a fearful departure from the witness and teachings of Jesus Christ. McLeod Campbell writes, "Our highest relation that in which we stand to the Father of our spirits, can no more pass away in a philosophy, and from a life of love become a form of thought, than any other relation of which love is the essence." (1873: 333)

McLeod Campbell, in his doctrine of atonement, desired to free people from their wrongheaded conceptions of the person and work of Jesus Christ. He also wanted to free them from behaviors based on faulty paradigms. In seeking to re-frame their ways of thinking, he also sought to heal what Seward Hiltner termed "dated emotions." In Hiltner's book Self-Understanding (1951), Hiltner discussed emotions that once served a useful purpose, but now no longer do so, as dated. They give evidence of being the wisdom of the unconscious. They are the result of a "reaction-tendency which produces a pattern. Hiltner writes, "(dated emotions) …are patterns of acting and feeling which appear in the face of some real threat, and which enabled persons to go right on functioning because of their effective power of compensation." (1951: 46)

However, if the precipitating cause for compensation changes, then they become unhelpful. Merely understanding this, alone and unaided, will not cure us. Hiltner acknowledges, "We cannot lift ourselves by our own bootstraps." (1951: 49) While containing some positive aspects, dated emotions are signals of distress.

The incarnational emphasis, seen in Scripture, illustrated in the Gospel narratives, felt from Paul's letters, that McLeod Campbell understood to be at the very heart of the gospel, is the change in perspective, frame of reference, repentant thinking, perception, which allows us to see things differently. We are allowed not only to view God more accurately, but also ourselves. What we think of ourselves is certainly important, but it may not have any basis or warrant in reality. What happens in Jesus Christ between the Son of God, the second person of the Trinity, true God of God, light of light, begotten and not made, in union with humanity through the power and majesty of the Holy Spirit has world-shattering implications and results. In so doing, it mirrors the Father-Son relationship in eternity. It also has very personal results. There is no going back. We have been claimed. Campbell saw this all too clearly, like a doctor who had just discovered a cure to an irrepressible disease and wanted with rejoicing to pass this news on to all who would hear and understand. Like a doctor who earnestly desired that, all would become inoculated against the fear and misery, sloth and indolence in which they presently found themselves. They were, like Don Quixote, fighting against imaginary windmills. Alternatively, to use Hiltner's apt phrase 'dated emotions.' Ernest Bruder puts it well when he notes that people need a pastor who can communicate successfully and meaningfully to them, that 'come what may,' *they* can **never** be separated from God's care, compassion, and concern (as it is manifest in Jesus Christ). (1963: 50)

So, to someone struggling with a lack of assurance, McLeod Campbell would respond that they have, in Jesus Christ, a Father who loves them, and the world, enough that he sent his only begotten Son here in the midst of our own personal hells to bring us back into his beauty, glory, wonder, and love. We may feel as if we are orphans, but that

is an ephemeral feeling with no basis in reality. We are claimed, and have been claimed. The question is not what God has done, will do, might do, is thinking about doing, the question is an **epistemological** one—do we comprehend this? This is where reframing comes in. McLeod Campbell's earnest desire for us in ministry was to show people their beauty as God's beloved children. Their lack of assurance then is simply an emotion of self-assessment based on faulty premises. It is misinformation. The gospel is the clue to their deepest struggle.

For someone struggling with anxiety, McLeod Campbell would respond that human parents most often want what is best for their children. If we human parents, imperfect as we are, seek what is best for our children, how much more so will God the Father of our spirits. Even if our parents did not, tragically so, God the Father of our spirits does, so much that in love he works in us for good. In psychodynamic counseling, we rely on transference to assist in healing and restoration of people. We count on it. It is part of the dynamic. Could there be transference in the spiritual realm? May we not regard transference here in the spiritual sphere as fundamental also? If God is a person, indeed the personalizing person, then may he be used in transference? Nothing may separate us from God's love in Jesus Christ. Education then is the key. All things must fit together in life for my salvation. While we work out our salvation with fear and trembling, Christ is there with us, in us, beside us, in spite of us, encouraging us, carrying us, spurring us on, so that as Calvin would say even though in our journey we may falter and lose ground, we will also inexorably move forward. We may feel the dizziness of our existence, but we are not alone. Christ has the Spirit for us. The Spirit comes to

comfort and to lead into the truth. It is the minister's purpose to assist in that. We offer ourselves, and all that we are, in that relationship to aid in transformation.

For those struggling with shame, McLeod Campbell would say that Christ became shame for us, entering into our experience and feeling of shame so that we are not alone in the darkness. This was the whole point of the cross. Christ died in shame, taking our shame upon himself and onto himself. This is the wonder of the *mirifica commutatio*. Christ takes our place. Christ is God-with-us, is he not? **Emmanuel!** This relation between Christ and us is primary, fundamental and can never be severed. We may wonder about love, but He is love and He has claimed us as his own. We are infinitely worthy, because he has declared us to be so. He, in his life and ministry, shows us just how valued and valuable we are to the Father of our spirits. The epistemological relevance here is that it is not up to the pastor and the pastor alone in ministering, for Christ is also a participant in our care of others. The Spirit is present bringing us into the truth. He will lead us into the truth. He will teach us. When someone wonders what the truth of their existence is—we may point to Him who is truth incarnate. Truth is here described in very personal, living, dynamic reality, translated into deeply interpersonal terms. (Bruder 1963: 66) Indeed, Christ is the one ministering and caring for the other to whom we impart ourselves warts and all, and our wisdom, however imperfect, and we are *the participants* in **his** ongoing ministry. Christ's work is always primary. Ours is always derivative and secondary. As McLeod Campbell notes, Christ intercedes for us and prays for us continually because he is the primary minister, our Great High Priest, living eternally in the Holy of Holies, God's very presence, in and with the Father of our spirits' life and existence.

McLeod Campbell's sincere desire was to show his people that in Jesus Christ their old selves had vanished and that they were a new people beloved by God; as Jesus said to Zacheus, "Today, salvation has come to his house." (Luke 19:1-10) Indeed, the God whom they presently feared as untrustworthy and as unreliable was to be known completely and wholly as a loving father. The peoples' view of God was misinformed. In place of this understanding, McLeod Campbell suggested to them through preaching, teaching, and pastoral care that there was a more accurate conception of God. This God was to be trusted and loved as just what God *was* namely a loving and caring 'Abba' Father. Indeed, Jesus Christ had come as the incarnate Son and crucified God to show that the Father's heart beat strongly and passionately with love and devotion, tenderness and compassion for his people. Campbell's heartfelt hope and earnest longing was for his parishioners to know and to feel that this moment, indeed each moment that they lived, was a fragment of the time of God's favour, a brief portion of the day of salvation, indeed, their *day of salvation*. So, like an athletic trainer applying a needed prescription of physical therapy to the muscles of their souls, he labored to help them see straighter, because perception is always partial, selective, clouded. They had been inwardly focused on their emotions of how they felt towards God. Instead, McLeod Campbell offered them a new perspective, one that included perceiving how God felt about them. Thus, Macleod Campbell's sincere intent "was to alter their perceptions, their vision, their perspective. In so doing, he suggested to them that God's love is unconditional, meaning it is irrespective of who we are and what we are. Precisely put, he lifted up their thoughts to consider God's point-of-view in Jesus Christ. In offering them this perspective, he indicated to them what God desired for human beings now and in the future. This seeing

and perceiving differently enabled living to be more fruitful in that it allowed flourishing. This different kind of living occurred even in difficult, hard times.

Premier Old Testament scholar Walter Brueggemann, from Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, Georgia applies the following interpretive grid to the Psalms and to life. In his book, The Spirituality of the Psalms (2002) Brueggemann classifies the Psalms using three different categories. There are, first, Psalms of orientation. There are, secondly, Psalms of disorientation. There are, finally, Psalms of reorientation. Each of the types of Psalms bears witness to the varieties of experience in a person's life. As Brueggemann points out, there are varying seasons in life. There are not only the different eras of existence, childhood, adolescence, marriage, parenthood, retirement, but interwoven in and around these different epochs—there are good times and bad. There are "satisfied seasons of well-being" which evoke gratitude for "the constancy of blessing." (2002: 8) These good seasons culminate? in Psalms of orientation. The attitude here is that all seems right with the world. This is where the world seems to make sense. Life seems to be regulated with changes occurring in an expected fashion.

There are also occasions when human life seems not to make sense. It is as if the ordered regularity of the world breaks down into chaos. Human life also consists in "anguished seasons of hurt, alienation, suffering, and death." The difficulties in which we find ourselves may evoke within us "rage, resentment, self-pity, and hatred." (2002: 8) From these emotions come the Psalms of disorientation. To be oriented in life is to know who one is; it is to know where one is in the world. To be oriented is to know what is going on in one's world. When this certainty collapses, disorientation occurs. Life spins out of one's control.

However, this is not the last word. Human life consists "in turns of surprise" "when joy breaks through despair" and we are "overwhelmed with God's new gifts." This is a fresh intrusion, which realigns reality in new ways. (2002: 9) From this conversion and alteration, come the Psalms of new orientation. As Brueggemann notes, the life of faith, which is articulated in the Psalms is focused on two different moves. The first move is that from a "settled orientation into a season of disorientation." This arises through the dismantling of the old world and the unsettling placement of a not quite yet new world. Here, one sees through a glass darkly. In this situation "[T]the movement of dismantling includes a rush of negativities, including rage, resentment, guilt, shame, isolation, despair, hatred, and hostility. (2002: 10) The Psalmist erupts in complaint and lament. This was not how it was supposed to be.

However, human life is not simply the articulation of the place in which we find ourselves. It is also a movement, of living, from one state of affairs to another, wavering and being transformed, finding ourselves startled by a new situation we did not expect, resistant—in different ways—to that new place, clinging desperately to the old situation. (2002: 9) As Brueggemann suggests, the life of faith expressed in the Psalms is focused on the *two decisive moves of faith* that are always in motion, by which we are regularly astonished, and against which we regularly resist. (2002: 9) We do not like change.

The other move we make is a move *from a context of disorientation to a new orientation*, surprised by a new gift from God, a new coherence is made present to us just when we thought all was lost. This move entails a departure from the "pit" of chaos just when we had suspected we would never escape. It is a departure inexplicable to us, to be credited only to the intervention of God. This move of departure to new life includes a

rush of positive responses, including delight, amazement, wonder, awe, gratitude, and thanksgiving. We see this resurrection of sorts in the Psalms in the form of songs of thanksgiving and declarative hymns that tell a tale of a decisive time, an inversion, a reversal of fortune, rescue, deliverance, saving, liberation, healing.

6.8.2 *A Vignette about Sally*

I am no longer surprised by how many individuals in the life of the church struggle with knowing and understanding the depth of God's love for them in Jesus Christ, although I guess I should be. Sally was an elderly Caucasian woman, who sang in the choir, served in various capacities in the church, and ran a farm in the country. Though the farm was more of a hobby, than an occupation, since she was retired from the military—she determined that it should be the best in the area. Constantly playing with different kinds of grasses, which when cut became hay to feed her cows with even in the winter, she wanted to have the best cattle she could. I suspect that having the best farm on the road was to assuage her lack of assurance. Her commitment was to the "American dream" success, adjustment, pleasure, satisfaction, and security, all of which, supposedly, would assure [her] of maturity [and happiness]. (Loomis 1960: 4) Church, in addition, required activity, fearful activity, because one hoped that having more checkmarks on the positive side of the chart, than the negative might make a difference.

Prickly, and easily offended, she later admitted to me that she lived in fear of God's displeasure. Her business at church was a fallible attempt at pushing back her sense of the lack of assurance. Though there were undoubtedly other psychodynamic issues at stake, as her pastor this was the issue that presented itself to me most readily.

As I worked with Sally through preaching, teaching, and pastoral care, she gradually began to view her life *sub species aeternitas*. As she did so, her demeanor began to change, and Sally developed what in the New Testament is termed 'confidence' and the 'sureness of God's love for her in Jesus Christ.' She gained *parrhesia*. As one psychotherapist put it, we have perhaps what others do not possess, "When one dares to trust the Gospel to the extent that one descends into the hell which life often is, one cannot escape finding his way to God himself." (Bruder 1963: 59)

6.8.3 Biblical Background to McLeod Campbell's interpretation

McLeod Campbell, moving from humanity's plight to divine solution, bases part of his particular understanding of the atonement on the story of Phineas in Numbers 25 and, in addition, the purpose of the Father-Son relationship for humanity. The Israelites sin by intermarrying with unbelievers, something that God had forbidden them to do. God declares to the Israelites that he will not abide this immorality and defiance of his will. Phineas, son of Eleazar, through his zeal for God's honor, glory, and name procures atonement, thus saving the people from God's displeasure. The plague, which had debilitated the tribes, ceases. Phineas kills two particularly egregious offenders; however, atonement is elicited not by the two malefactor's death. Rather, atonement here as it is noted in Scripture, occurs through Phineas's zeal for God and God's will that establish peace for the Israelites. God announces that Phineas' zeal for his glory and name has elicited peace for Phineas and his descendants. In Numbers 25: 10-13 we read, "The Lord said to Moses, [11] "Phinehas son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, the priest, has

turned my anger away from the Israelites. Since he was as zealous for my honor among them as I am, I did not put an end to them in my zeal. [12] Therefore tell him I am making my covenant of peace with him. [13] He and his descendants will have a covenant of a lasting priesthood, because he was zealous for the honor of his God and made atonement for the Israelites." (NIV)

The atonement procured and enacted by Christ's person and work bequeaths to us eternal life, which is that divine life gifted to us precisely by Christ himself. This gift is peace. This act and gift is the atonement for our sin. Our connection to Christ's life is not arbitrary, but rather natural—as a response to his initiative. He lives in us. The life we live is by Christ's faith supporting and upholding our fragile belief. Atonement as incarnation and crucifixion, death and resurrection should be viewed as all of one piece, as the illustration and purpose of divine love. The point of this is God's beneficent will for humanity.

According to McLeod Campbell, the atonement *as* atonement has two different aspects to it. The first feature of the atonement is the **retrospective aspect.** This aspect involves the forgiveness of our sins—retroactively. The second feature is the **prospective aspect**. From this perspective, Christ comes to humanity *as man* to deal with us *as God*. At the same time, Christ comes to us as man to deal with God on our behalf. This is where the two natures, but one person, of Christ come into play. Throughout his life, before others he witnesses to the Father, while also dealing mightily with our carnal and hostile mind; here the reality of sin is steadily contemplated. This is not easy, because the charge of guilt is weighed, for there is the constant pressure of our sin and misery upon his soul and mind. It is ugly- revolting. Despite this heavy burden,

part of Christ's ministry is in accepting this difficulty and pain, and in turn—even in our sinful state—focusing our hearts, minds, and souls toward God. There is not only oneness of mind, and being, with God, but also oneness of mind, and being, with his fellow humans. There is **a two-way mediation**, here, that is vitally important. McLeod Campbell notes,

The atonement considered in its retrospective aspects is:

—I. Christ's dealing with men on the part of God. It was in our Lord the natural outcoming of the life of love—of love to the Father and of love to us—to show us the Father, to vindicate the Father's name, to witness for the excellence of that will of God against which we were rebelling, to witness for the trustworthiness of that Father's heart in which we were refusing to put confidence, to witness for the unchanging character of that love in which there was hope for us, though we had destroyed ourselves. (1873: 113)

However, at the same time,

> II. But Christ's honouring the Father in the sight of men, which was His dealing with men on the part of God, is only one aspect of His mediatorial work. We have to consider also His dealing with God on behalf of men. … That oneness of mind with the Father, which towards man took the form of condemnation of sin, would in the Son's dealing with the Father in relation to our sins, take the form of a perfect confession of our sins. This confession, as to its own nature, must have been *a perfect Amen in humanity to the judgment of God on the sin of man*. Such an Amen was due in the truth of things. He who was the Truth could not be in humanity and not utter it,—and it was necessarily a first step in dealing with the Father on our behalf. He who would intercede for us must begin with confessing our sins. (1873: 118)

As God, Christ condemns sin in our flesh, *as* man, Christ accepts God's just judgment and utters 'Amen' in response with a perfect, righteous holy sorrow. In responding to God's just judgment with an adequate and holy repentance and doing so

vicariously on humanity's behalf he absorbs the Father's just condemnation and wrath at such sin. Christ's response was perfect sorrow and perfect contrition. By such a perfect response of 'Amen' to his Father's just judgment on humanity's behalf and for their sake, the wrath of God is met, rightly and appropriately and answered perfectly. This 'Amen' accords with divine justice in a way that satisfies it completely. This is so much deeper an atonement than a mere penal theory of substitutionary death. What McLeod Campbell is desirous of explicating is the entirety of Christ birth, life, work, miracles, and teaching, ministry, representing and living, which ultimately reached its zenith in his suffering, crucifixion, and death on a cross. Christ atones for us through his life simply by **being**.

Because Christ is of one heart and mind with humanity, he is able to accept the truth of the awfulness of sin. He enters into its depths, through a complete understanding and comprehension of how diseased and malformed we are—and instead of being overwhelmed and driven mad, he lifts up and recognizes the plague which troubles us, placing it in God's view.

In our place, he accepts God's just and necessary judgment and assessment of humanity's sin and testifies to the truthfulness of our sin through saying: "Amen." His whole life may be viewed as his statement to God, "Your evaluation, Father, of all of humanity is appropriate, sad, but correct." In so doing, he receives the full apprehension and realization of both our sin and God's wrath. A lesser person would be driven insane. From the depths of his divine humanity, he offers God—a perfect response—and in so doing absorbs God's displeasure. He acknowledges humanity's sin and need for atonement. This was, for McLeod Campbell, **a perfect vicarious response**, and thus—**a perfect vicarious repentance**. As God in the flesh, Jesus Christ offers to God perfect

contrition, a faultless sorrow, and in so doing satisfies divine justice by meeting appropriately God's just and objective response to universal human sin.

Let us look more closely at McLeod Campbell's provocative view. In turning to the atonement as forgiveness of sins, McLeod Campbell embarks on a highly original, but Biblically based view of the atonement inspired by a question found in Jonathan Edwards' treatise on sin. It must be stated firstly, that, Jesus Christ deals as mediator with man as God and with God as man. What this means for McLeod Campbell is that Christ's work in the atonement, initially, has a retrospective aspect to it. Retrospective, in that, in Christ's person and work, human beings are forgiven their sins. As Christ ministers to human beings on God's behalf, he witnesses to human beings about the Father's excellence of character, nature, and ministry. One of the aspects of the power of this ministry is the personal perfection that we see illustrated in Christ's life. He is perfect in his love to God and he is perfect in his love to his fellow human beings.

Christ ministers the things of God to man, but does so as **mediator.** He also ministers the things of man to God, once again as **mediator.** This perfection came under severe pressure and stress when Christ experienced the enmity of the carnal mind against God within humanity. He takes our uncertainty of God's love, our anxiety about life, and our shame into himself, deals with it constructively and then presents it back to us healed, cleansed, purified, and answered, while at the same time giving it to God on our behalf. Yet, even so, he was a living epistle, and successfully so, of the grace of God. Whatever difficulty and sorrow he may have felt by faithfully confessing the Father's name in this sinful world, there was also a deeper joy in his oneness of mind with the Father.

Regardless of the joy and peace, which he felt in his oneness of mind and will with the Father, he was also a man of sorrows, in that he dealt with the constant pressure of our sin and misery weighing on his soul and spirit. As God in our nature, he could not but be suffering in his flesh, our flesh representatively. He experiences all of our issues concurrently. He feels our sin, all of our sin, enmity, evil and wrath—the entirety of humanity's *skubala* (refuse, crap, feces) as Paul noted and deals with it nonetheless. As such, he is the Second Adam. In bearing such sin successfully, insofar as he continued even under great pressure to do the Father's will and to vindicate the Father's name while he condemned human sin in his body as the actual meeting of eternal love with the enmity of the carnal mind, he came to humanity in the Father's name. It was God's will for Christ to give a full perfect development and manifestation of self-sacrificing love illustrated in his person. Christ was, and is, and will always be love incarnate.

We may observe Christ's honoring of the Father, and the effect it had, when we compare it with the Biblical record of the atonement that Phineas procured through his absolute zeal for God. If we take Scripture seriously, we shall have no problem understanding how much greater Christ's zeal for his Father's name effects a peace with God—than that of Phineas. His life takes on a new significance, as does his destruction of the Temple seen in the light of Phineas' zeal. Through his perfect sympathy with the Father's condemnation of sin, Christ procures peace, and the perfect vindication of the unselfish and righteous character of him who is love incarnate as it was presented to human beings in the life of Christ *as* our peace. Because Christ was of the same mind as God, indeed so intimately interwoven were the two minds that we may say nonetheless

that there was a oneness of mind, thus his acceptance of God's just judgment of our sin in himself issues forth in a vicarious confession on humanity's behalf.

Here McLeod Campbell builds upon Jonathan Edwards' contention that there were two ways to deal effectively with sin. The first way was that sin must be punished with an **infinite punishment.** The frame of mind of the one being punished is inconsequential. Insofar as God's majesty is despised by sinners and sin, sin must be punished infinitely. What matters is the punishment. Here God's justice and judgment are met. God's majesty has been stained infinitely by our sin. This was the majority view of Christendom at least since Anselm, and Edward's certainly held this theory. There was also, according to Edwards, the *possibility* that an equivalent sorrow and repentance could satisfy such besmirched majesty. In this view, death is less important as(than?) atonement. What is crucial is the vicarious nature of the repentance, not just as a one-off act or feeling, but as a life-long ministry. In its classical sense, repentance can mean a change in direction, not just a change of mind, or a sorrow and grief. McLeod Campbell notes that the Mediator had the two alternatives open to His choice,—either to endure for sinners an equivalent punishment to the guilt and shame from the sin culminating in death, or to experience in reference to their sin, and present to God on their behalf, an adequate sorrow, and repentance—an adequate *life*. The emotional content here is crucial. Either of these courses was regarded by Edwards as equally securing the vindication of the majesty and justice of God in pardoning sin. It may be noted that McLeod Campbell knew the Church fathers and he was close in spirit to Irenaeus here. He, however, powerfully expands on Irenaeus' theory.

Edwards chose the former Anselmian theory as the more adequate conception. McLeod Campbell, however, calls the latter possibility as the higher and more excellent way of atoning for sin. Edwards assumed that Christ had come to bear humanity's punishment for sin and to work out a righteousness that could be legally imputed to human beings. Edwards believed, by contrast, that it was impossible for an equal atoning repentance to occur. For McLeod Campbell, however, in contrast, Christ's incarnate being alone makes possible his repentant contrition on our behalf. Christ, as the Son of God, bears our sin in himself carrying it into the Father's presence. He responds, in God's presence, with an appropriate confession of sin's evil and of the appropriateness of God's righteous wrath against sin in his incarnate person, life, and ministry. Christ feels the sorrow we ought to feel because of our sin, but does not as what holiness and love must feel in the presence of sin, as a result, he does so in our place because we are unable (This sentence is clumsy and needs revision). He repents by living differently than we. Christ assumes our place. Christ assumes God's place. As such, he is the perfect God-man and thus, mediator.

Simply assuming that God punishes sin does not require much spiritual apprehension. To require the death of Christ regardless of his mental outlook or emotional frame of mind is the more simplistic of the two options. Faith that our sins truly grieve God, and that Christ atones for them through his repentance and confession of God's justice is the weightier belief. Penal suffering as weighed against the eternal suffering of the righteous and holy Son of God in the flesh who experienced our sinfulness, sloth, and misery, even evil—becomes easily understood to require much less sympathy, than McLeod Campbell's alternate. McLeod Campbell writes,

> And with this distinction, how much light enters the mind! We are now able to realise that the suffering we contemplate is divine, while it is human; and that God is revealed *in it* and not *merely in connexion with it;* God's righteousness and condemnation of sin, being in the suffering, and not merely what demands it,—God's love also being in the suffering, and not merely what submits to it. Christ's suffering being thus to us a form which the divine life in Christ took in connexion with the circumstances in which he was placed, and not a penal infliction, coming on Him as from without, such words as, "He made His soul an offering for sin"—"He put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself,"—"By Himself He purged our sins," grow full of light; and the connexion between *what He is* who makes atonement, and the atonement which He makes, reveals itself in a far other way than as men have spoken of the divinity of the Saviour, regarding it either as a strength to endure infinite penal suffering, or a dignity to give adequacy of value to any measure of penal suffering however small. Not in these ways, but in a far other way, is the person of Christ brought before us now as fixing attention upon the divine mind in humanity as that which alone could suffer, and which did suffer sufferings of a nature and virtue to purge our sins. By the *word of His power all else* was accomplished, by *himself He purged our sins,—by the virtue that is in what He is;* and thus is the atonement not only what was rendered possible by the incarnation, but itself a development of the incarnation. (1873: 123)

McLeod Campbell presupposes an integrally intimate relationship between the Father and the Son. God is active, willing, and present in all aspects of the atonement. To limit God's part to just wrath is to miss the point. Sadly, this is what much theology does. John McLeod Campbell paraphrases the German reformer Martin Luther approvingly when he notes that in Jesus Christ, as the divine and human meet in the incarnation, there is opposition between both.

However, the human opposition and evil must bow in its sin to the divine and holy righteousness present and opposing it. Whenever Jesus touched the sinful, the sick, and the demon-possessed, they were healed. When Jesus touched the lepers, they too

were healed. Christ did not become leprous through his contact with them, quite the opposite. To imagine anything less of our corporate humanity within the person of Christ himself is sheer folly and ignorance. The divine righteousness must cleanse, heal, purify, and restore the sinful humanity with which it is now in conjunction. The divine must triumph. The sinful humanity must fall and be defeated. It must be redeemed, reconciled, healed, cleansed, purified, and restored. When Christ touched the leprous man, the leprosy was healed, when he touched the blind, they saw, when he touched the dead, they lived. Even with all of this, Christ's intercession is required because even our heartiest confession and earnest penitence falls short—we want to think rightly, we want to act rightly, but sadly do not. McLeod Campbell quotes American evangelist George Whitefield approvingly, "our repentance needs to be repented of, and our very tears to be washed in the blood of Christ." (1873: 125)

If I may make a personal observation here, racism in the United States continues to be a distinct problem. Crimes/acts against Civil Rights, have occurred and are occurring beginning with Martin Luther King's historic speech on the Washington Mall in 1963, but the systemic issues still yield problems with more and more white police officers killing black African-Americans. Unfortunately many of these incidents have been taped on cell phones and been shared on the internet. What is lacking in some of the cases, though, is the larger context. This has issued in a movement in the United States called "Black Lives Matter." There is a potent frustration, and rightly, so, on the part of African Americans which has resulted in the formation of this movement.

However, the problem goes much deeper. This is not at heart a white issue. This is not a black issue. This is a human issue. Blame may be laid at the doors of both sides.

As a police chaplain for ten years, I can see both sides of the issue. Police officers are afraid. White Police Officers are afraid. Black Police Officers are afraid. Asians and Hispanics are afraid. African Americans are afraid. White Americans are afraid. The treatment, in the author's judgment, is re-framing outlooks, assumptions, viewpoints, personal histories with the gospel of grace. This will require much work. It means overturning reigning assumptions. It means actually speaking to one another, instead of just protesting or yelling. This sounds naïve, I know. There is fault on both sides. Concrete steps to lower tensions must be taken in the meantime. Communication and transparency is a must. The gospel is, however, strangely enough, about conversion. A young woman is quoted by Ernest Bruder in his book Ministering to Deeply Troubled People (1963). She writes, "When you *know* that God is for you, no matter how discouraging the situation—you are lifted above it." (62) Speaking as a pastor, this requires a complete re-education in assumptions, beliefs, outlooks, attitudes, and behavior. This observation coalesces with the statement of a couple in my last church that lost their son to a sudden illness. They were stunned at his death. In the course of their grieving, they remarked to me that it was the knowledge of God's love for them that pulled them through.

This Christology of McLeod Campbell's answers one of the issues involved, because Christ has assumed **our** humanity, each race of our humanity, all of our humanity—so **in Christ** there is neither Jew nor Gentile, Greek nor barbarian, white or black, Asian, Hispanic, Muslim, homosexual, transvestite and so on. There are only humans. Humans, who, because of Christ's person and work, are supposed to be related by the Spirit as one family unit, but sadly are not. Once again, note the epistemological

issue here. Christ does more than just reveal how kind and compassionate God is and that our sins are forgiven. Christ reveals specifically that he is the Son who reveals the Father, that we may have the deepest insight into the Father's purpose, will, and desire for us (and neighbour). Sin, as disbelief, by contrast, in McLeod Campbell's view makes us orphans. Sin makes us godless, literally *without* God. We wander in the far country. However, the grace of God in Christ is at once the remission of our sin, past and present, and the gift of eternal life—restoring our orphan spirits to their Father and to the Father of spirits his lost children.

Christ vicariously assumes our nature and our place before God as man and in our humanity becomes for us the One Man capable of adequately repenting of sin and of meeting the judgment, horror, travesty, and evil of sin appropriately through his acknowledgment of it. He comprehends truly its horror. In short, he absorbs the holy wrath due humanity in himself by absorbing God's justice and judgment with his own perfect, holy, acceptable confession of God's rightness in judgment and holy contrition responding as the God-man in such a way that sin was overcome, atoned for, and cleansed.

He accepts God's just judgment on man's sin and responds with faith, hope, and love. Where our spirit is willing, but flesh weak—Christ's is neither. The sinless repents of the sin of the sinful and is able to do so because he has taken our nature and become in us what he already is from eternity the beloved Son of the Father, while also being our beloved brother and in so doing loves God as he ought, while also loving neighbour as commanded. As regards our separation from God, McLeod Campbell understood that God himself bridged over the gulf, which separated what sin had transformed us into, and

what it was with the divine desire of love that we should become. Having dealt with the retrospective aspect of the atonement and hermeneutics of the forgiveness of our sin, McLeod Campbell now moves to the prospective aspect of the atonement. The atonement is misunderstood if it is just viewed as the forgiveness of sins. Unfortunately, much theology simply assumes this is the case.

That Christ intercedes for us indicates that he does not just do so with regard to the forgiveness of sins, but also that he does so with our future benefit in mind. The Atonement is not just to be regarded as light condemning the darkness, but is also the intended light of life for us beyond our initial forgiveness.

> "The moral and spiritual excellence of the work of Christ… is only to be truly and fully seen in its relation to the result which it has contemplated, viz. our participation in eternal life—or, in other words, that the justification of God, in "redeeming," as He has done, "us who were under the law," is only clearly apprehended in the light of the divine purpose, "that we should receive the adoption of sons." (1873: 132)

Christ's work is both moral and spiritual in that it accomplishes what God, the Father of our spirits purposed. It promotes our participation in eternal life, the life of the Triune God of love and grace. Christ's work also secures adoption in the family of God.

McLeod Campbell's deepest conviction is that the forgiveness of sin is seen in its true congruence with the glory of God, only when the person and work of Christ, through which we have "the remission of sins that are past," is contemplated in its *direct* relation to "the gift of eternal life." (1873: 133) We must understand that the righteousness of God mediated to humanity through the person and work of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, as man, is itself a gift. All that Christ is by nature; we share by participation and partake of such as Christ is ours. Therapeutic healing for those struggling with the issues of self-

assessment is not limited to correction of their self-assessment, it moves beyond that into discipleship. We are to become salt, light, lamps and so on in our communities.

The gift of divine righteousness includes all such spiritual benefits such as holiness, sanctification and a participation in the mind and life of Christ, such as righteousness, truth, love, indeed all the unsearchable riches of Christ are ours, which is what Scripture indicated when it stated that Christ was made by God to us (something missing here) wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.

As such, a transformation within us prepares us for eternal life and salvation as gifted to us in Christ. To view Christ from the standpoint of his life among us is to understand the great evil of humanity's condition. It is also to see the great capacity of good in humanity as illustrated by the Son of God, Jesus Christ. Christ reveals an inestimable preciousness in human beings, for which we must search, because it is not easily seen, but not hidden from God's sight.

My neighbour is not just my neighbor; he or she is 'beloved of God.' Christ reveals the Father, but also reveals human beings made in the image of God. It is only in our relationship to God that we may perceive any capacity for good in humanity. There is a correspondence in the relationship between the righteousness of Christ and the righteousness inherent in humanity, but only relatively. In truth, such inherent sanctity was hidden by sin. Yet, it is also the case that this righteousness and sanctity, indeed the possibility for good only occurs as our humanity is indwelt by the Son of God.

Apart from the righteousness of Christ in humanity, there is no promise for us apart from the Son of God's ministry to us and in us, by having over our flesh the ability and right to impart eternal life. God reveals himself as Father in revealing his purposes

for human beings in the life of sonship so that we may participate in knowledge and enjoyment of the Father, and that we may inherit the Father as the Father, through fellowship in and through the life of sonship. Christ, as the Second Adam, is a quickening spirit and represents humanity as its head. There is thus a relationship between the Son of God and the sons of men. Not just a physical-biological relationship, but also a relationship consummated by the Spirit. The atonement is not an external relationship according to legalities, but rather the atonement is our identification with the Christ who confesses sin and by this confession expiates them. Christ's righteousness in humanity clothes us with its own power, efficacy, and interest before God's throne. Christ's divine righteousness as the Son of God presents to the Father his glory and its preciousness over all humanity

Christ in the atonement makes his soul an offering for sin. He knew that the love in him was truly a light condemning darkness while overcoming it. Christ knew that humanity was not completely lost, but that there was hope in his sacrifice. As such, Christ is the Captain of our salvation manifesting the life of sonship at tremendous cost to himself, even declaring the Father's name in life and in death with the same love for us that the Father possessed for him. Outside of Christ, we do not and cannot know God. Apart from Christ, we cannot know ourselves. There is, thus, a two-fold discovery of God and man in Christ, in which are hid for us all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

As children of the living God, the Father of our spirits, we are to receive his words that declare the point of our purpose in living, which is to be guided by the law of the Spirit of the life that is in Christ. To be God's children, is wealth untold, riches

beyond our imagining, infinite treasure—because it and it alone enjoys the Father as our Father, making us heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. We think by observing people around us that we are viewing humanity, the truth of humanity, but in reality, we are only observing humanity in its perversion while we live the life of self, enmity, and putting ourselves first. To be a human being is to have the same mind in us which was in Christ Jesus, to be human is to offer ourselves as Christ did, doing so through the eternal Spirit that offers us without any spot to God. It is difficult for us to believe, on the one hand that God is fully revealed in Christ, and on the other hand, it is just as difficult for us to believe that humanity exists in Christ. God's manifestation of love to us as it is revealed in Christ, and by Christ, means that our greatest desire is fulfilled in the person of Christ himself and it is at that point, where it alone may be satisfied.

There is a distinct difference between coming to God in the spirit of sonship as a beloved child and coming to God with merely a legal confidence. Because of our connection with Christ, and? God the Father our spirit is pleased with us, just as he is well pleased with his Son. What Christ desires, in the perfection of his humanity, mostly for us it is the fellowship he has with the Father in his humanity. This union and oneness of fellowship and purpose is his longing that we might abide in the Father's love, as he does. Christ atones for sin, not only by confessing humanity's sin and accepting God's just judgment, but also by presenting himself in his own righteousness to God as ours. As one who mediates all that we are to God and all that God is to us, Christ intercedes on our behalf by praying for us. In doing so, he pleads his own merits for us. These merits delight the Father who desires their reproduction in us. His faith, hope and love towards the Father on our behalf is met by the Father's own approval and love for us, in Christ—

even in our sin and misery. His confession on our behalf and his intercession for us harmonize with one another.

To contemplate the life of Christ as the revelation of the Father by the Son is to understand the love, which God has for human beings, it is also to understand God's will for human beings which includes, but is not limited to, the gift of eternal life. This revelation is nothing other than the knowledge that salvation is the gift of participating in the relationship that the Father and Son share. Christ's life on earth shines with the light of eternal life. In thinking about his life and ministry, we must realize that he bears our sins and miseries in his heart in God's presence. He shares our need with his Father, interceding for us, because of his compassionate love for human beings, indeed, he shares all his emotions, hopes, dreams, sorrows, heartache with the Father, and as he does so he lifts us up before the Father. Who but Christ could do this?

Christ's atonement is his incarnate baptism and suffering throughout his whole life, while nonetheless dwelling and residing perfectly in the Father's heart. The Father hears him always. His whole life from start to finish is accepted by the Father and acknowledged to be in keeping with the Father's purpose and will. In so doing, he offers the perfect ministry as only the Beloved Son could do, both in relation to men and in relation to his Father. Christ declares the Father's name to us perfectly in so doing.

Jesus Christ, through the eternal Spirit offered himself without reservation to God, and did so as the pure, holy, faithful, obedient, righteous, perfect Son of the Father, who is the ultimate ground, in God, for our peace. Our confession of sin has as its ground and foundation, Christ's mediatorial intercession and confession on our behalf in the Father's presence. It is only as it participates in Christ's ongoing confession, intercession, and

ministry for us that it has any effect. Just as Christ trusted his Father implicitly even giving up his life, so we too are to have that trust and devotion, by participating in Christ's faith and belief.

What God has accepted for us in Christ, is also what God has first given us in Christ. A welcome part of this gift is the ability to confess our sins by saying, 'Amen' to Christ's confession for them. We are allowed to do this through the Spirit's presence and ministry. Participating in Christ's confession of sin is the beginning of a new life for us in which we are able to share in the mind of Christ. We may look backward with his mind upon our old life. We may look forward and feel the life of holiness near us. Holiness, truth, righteousness and love must first dawn in us as confession of sin. Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for everyone.

God delights in righteousness and purposes in Christ to impart it to human beings. The feeling of confidence that we feel towards the Father, which we revere in receiving Christ as our life, is the only confidence towards God that can meet alike the desires of the divine will towards us and the need that we have in our spirits as God's offspring. The Father draws us to Christ, testifying to our spirits that he has given us eternal life in and through his Son. The good, which our participation in Christ affords us, is the worship in spirit and truth, which the Father desires from us. Worship is also sonship, the proper response of the heart of the child, through the Son, to the Father. Disqualification for worship is not just the mere fact of sin or guilt, but rather the carnal mind which feels enmity towards God.

Christ's sacrifice may be understood best by the phrase, "Lo, I come to do your will, O God." Christ's great purpose is that we may be sanctified through the offering of

his body, his blood shed for the remission of sins. In participating in Christ's confession of sin, we discover a living way to God. The Spirit of God ministers so that we may adopt Christ's confession of sin as our very own. The atonement is due to the fatherly heart of God. Christ's confession of sin meets the demand of divine righteousness. The substance of that confession of Christ's is filial in nature. Power is found to accomplish the fulfilment of the righteousness of the law in us through the law of the spirit of life, which we receive from Christ. The law, then, becomes less of a taskmaster, substitute parent, mirror in which we see all that we have violated. Instead, it becomes etched on our hearts—as a guiding principle, as a North Star, as a compass, which shows us liberty of ways and means to fulfill God's filial purposes for us. We see the Father's heart encompassed around us in law, but in a law, which has our best interests at heart.

The New Testament testifies in its unbroken testimony of the relationship between the Father and of the great love he has in his beloved Son, who receives his blessing at the beginning of his ministry and throughout, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." It also testifies of the beloved Son's response in hearing his Father's voice, abiding in the Father's love, existing, and ministering in the strength of the life, which is from first to last obedient because of the Father's favour. Christ abides in the Father's love. Because of this certainty, he is able to drink the cup of suffering given him to drink. He is, thus, able to utter 'Father, into your hands I commend my spirit."

All his work is done with the acknowledgment by and strength from his Father, his life—peace, joy, ability, faith. He is able to carry out his Father's will, even the desertion on the cross carrying and bearing the weight of the burden of humanity's sin.

He knows that the Father is with him, regardless. He knew his suffering was felt by his Father. Whatever pain and struggle he felt, the Father experienced also. As he ministered in the depths of his being, our sin was separated from us. As he interceded for his people, his brothers and sisters by saying, 'Father, forgive them for they do not know what they are doing.' He did so in the assurance that his Father's response would be merciful. Thus, there is the whole span of the atonement a unity, harmony, and divine simplicity. (1873: 276)

McLeod Campbell anticipated our response as disciples to be both a reproduction of the ministry of Christ in the atonement, and, a participation in his relationship with the Father. Each small branch, each leafy twig sprouting from a tree, with its fruit-blossomed or ripened fruit indicates what it was as a single stem. Yet, its potential is magnificent, for observable is its beauty and usefulness already visible in it. All are connected, the richness of the leaves, its blossoms, and the fruit which belongs to the beginning of its life as a plant. This reproduction, however, of the original stem flowing from the branches now are not individual, self-reliant plants. They draw, their life from the ground, they draw nourishment and sustenance from it. As the Evangelist John notes, "Christ is the vine; we are the branches." We do not depreciate the blossoming tree, by noting that it begins with a single stem. In the same way, it is not a depreciation of the atonement of Christ to say that eternal life, which glorifies God in his redemption for humanity in the person and work of Christ on this world, is to be seen in the frame of one man, Jesus Christ, God with us. Christ dying and rising again will bear much fruit, through his disciples.

As we participate in him, we participate in everything he offers to us. We are integrally related to him, through the sharing of his humanity and through the intimate and mystical union which binds us together in the power of the Holy Spirit. Thus, to conceive of the atonement is not to make too much of our dependence on Christ, indeed the relation of the branch to the vine adequately represents that dependent relationship adequately. (1873: 284)

Part of this connectedness between Christ and ourselves enables us, in spirit and in truth, to participate in his confession of our sin, and to meet his mind towards the inhumanity and illness, which is sin, that we are enabled by faith in the pardon and liberty of sonship. As this occurs, we are empowered to give ourselves fully in reproducing the atonement in ourselves, with the Spirit's help. We have a clearer glimpse of the excellence of Christ's expiatory confession of our sins, and of the righteousness of God in accepting it on our behalf, to the end that we might thus share in it. Each time we pray, whether in lisp, cry, gasp, or with sighs to deep for words, the cry 'Abba, Father' that utterance is quickened in us by the revelation of the Father by the Son. It is granted to us with peculiar insight in the experience of the fulfilment of the divine counsel. We are granted the vision of the kingdom's excellence ordained in the hands of the Mediator, in which eternal life in the Son is the Father's free gift of grace to us. (1873: 289)

The vertical aspect in Christ's ministry, for lack of a better word, the God-ward feature of the eternal life given to us in Christ, also possesses a horizontal aspect of Christ's ministry to his fellow man, the human-ward feature of Christ's ministry. In reflecting upon the eternal life observed in Christ, which is the atonement, one must also note the outpouring of love. This outpouring of love is sonship towards God and

goodwill towards man. All that has been presented to our faith as entering into the work of Christ has been noted to be equally called for by love to God and love to man, this is an obedient, life-long expiatory self-sacrifice which was a total life dedicated and devoted equally to God and man. McLeod Campbell writes,

> The eternal life being unchanging in its nature, it follows, as urged above, that what it was in Christ as an atonement, it will be in us as salvation. Therefore Christ, as the Lord of our spirits and our life, *devotes us to God* and *devotes us to men* in the *fellowship of His self-sacrifice*. (1873: 317)

In looking at Christ, we may see the whole movement of salvation in both of its parts, the first our relationship with God, the second, our relationship with men and women. This is one grace. Connected intimately to the truth of the gospel that if we do not love our brother or sister who is in plain sight, how can it be said that we love God, who is invisible. As Christ reaches out in love to us, we have this certain fellowship with him, which yields God to have a preciousness to us and also our neighbour. This was the case for Christ and it is to be the case for us. McLeod Campbell is clear here in what this means, "If we refuse to be 'in Christ' the brothers of men and women, we cannot be 'in Christ' the sons of God." (1873: 318) Difficult, but faithful and true discipleship, the kind of discipleship in which we die to self so that we may live to Christ, is to be found in the teaching 'if you do not forgive men or women their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your debts.' As Christ died yielding his life up to God in faithfulness and service, and if we would live in fellowship with him we must crucify ourselves in order that as we live to God we shall also live to each other.

Growth requires that self-change, indeed, that we may have to die, even if most unwilling. It may seek to buttress itself through relationships with others, which unfortunately may yield a certain superficial sense of fellowship and communion with others. This may occur without touching the self's life at its core. We may not then, marvel at Christ's call for us to deny ourselves and to take up our cross, just as he did. We may only be able to focus on the sacrifice, which seems arduous and difficult. However, there is exceeding gain through our dying to self. Gain, in that we will regard ourselves differently, as well as our fellow human beings. We will see them as those for whom Christ lived, suffered, and died. Indeed, Christ's love for them will be manifest in how we relate to them. We may falter and fail, and our efforts may only appear as grapes from the land of promise tasted in the wilderness. The promise is hard, indeed to believe. Christianity is about the maturation into a fuller, deeper, great nature more in keeping with the Father's purpose for us as children. Instead, all too often, what takes its place as Christianity is comfort and satisfaction now in who we are, and whose we are.

These are rather to be seen, as divine threads leading us out of the labyrinth of our former, outward lives. In order that we might meet the One who is our life, the Lord of our spirits, who came to us not to be ministered to, but rather to minister to us, and to exchange his life as a ransom for our lives. If we are to know him truthfully, we must learn the life of self-sacrifice. This peculiar life of service will have its sorrows, to be sure, but it will also have its happiness and joys. (1873: 319)

McLeod Campbell's purpose was an eminently practical one. He sought to illustrate the "spiritual constitution" of reality. (1873: 329) By God's grace in Jesus Christ, we have a place within this universe as children of the Father of our spirits.

Conformation to such a reality allows us to partake in the great salvation given to us. Our sanction to God's conciliatory act in Jesus Christ with our own response of "Amen" to Christ's "Amen" is an appropriate response to Christ's call to 'Seek first the kingdom of God and its righteousness.' The continuation of this call is 'and all these things shall be added unto you.' For McLeod Campbell this includes the assurance, the *parrhesia*, promised by the New Testament writers.

Inquiry into discipleship and the truth of its faithfulness is solemn inquiry, responsible and weighty. Questions arise in the conscience, 'What am I to think?' 'What am I to believe?' but these give way to the critical question of 'Who and what am I called to be?' McLeod Campbell asserts that, "…*this* is the solemnity; *this* is the importance that belongs to the question of the nature of the atonement." (1873: 330)

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Praxis of a Trinitarian, Incarnational Practical Theology

Conclusion

> *One day Abba Arsenius consulted an old Egyptian monk about his own thoughts. Someone noticed this and said to him, 'Abba Arsenius how is it that you with such a good Latin and Greek education ask this peasant about your thoughts?' He replied, 'I have indeed been taught Latin and Greek, but I do not know even the alphabet of this peasant.'* (Ward 1975, 2003: 11)

> Ἀλλήλων τὰ βάρη βαστάζετε καὶ οὕτως ἀναπληρώσετε τὸν νόμον τοῦ Χριστοῦ. (Galatians 6.2 Nestle Aland[28])

7.0 Interpretations, Findings, Conclusion, and Recommendation

Following the recommendation of the Whiteheads, we have **attended** in the previous chapters to three debilitating emotions of self-assessment—a lack of assurance, anxiety and shame. Covering quite a bit of ground following our attending to these difficulties, we have also asserted some provisional possibilities. We have weighed the evidence, sought assistance from the Christian tradition—particularly as that

may be discovered in the work of John McLeod Campbell. We considered his work for its salutary and therapeutic strength. We reflected on personal experience, sought out the relevant information from the social sciences, particularly psychology, and made tentative connections between all the sources of information. Now, in this concluding chapter we need to address the issue of **action**. What decision or decisions seem appropriate in the light of the previous work?

It must be stated quite clearly that even the decision in how to respond and the action or actions which need to be taken are also provisional, because of the very nature of our method. Each person is unique. Beyond establishing rapport or bridge building a variety of tactics, exist. An approach, which works with one person, may be disastrous for another. As we mentioned there is by necessity a continuous feedback loop of sorts in which evidence and the response or responses are always needed to be re-addressed and corrections needing to be made. The process must be open-ended. Pastoral care, discipling, and spiritual direction as aspects of Pastoral Theology are always a work in progress. Adaptation to new learnings and varied situations must be continuous.

We have indicated in this study three issues, which we sought to care for solicitously. They were a lack of assurance, anxiety, and shame. We addressed the issue of a lack of assurance and indicated it was the very real belief that God did not love an individual. Indeed, some might believe God is angry with them. We questioned the doctrine of God, which this entailed. The author then suggested a re-working of how we understand God. We asked if there could be a more accurate view of God's nature and

character as love, which would influence a diminishment of this feeling of lack of assurance? In this issue, we proposed that Christ is seen to be the image of this invisible God and the mediator who affects reconciliation and adoption—or as we put it, at-one-ment. The issue of a lack of assurance calls for clarification in our theological understanding of God. In addition, we mentioned that Christ reveals the nature and character of God for us. There is no hidden God beyond Jesus, to put it in a manner of speaking, because to see Jesus is to see the Father.

Next, we covered the issue of anxiety. We oscillated between philosophy, psychology and theology as sources for understanding this problem. We reached the conclusion that anxiety was the inchoate fear of an unknown dread. Simply put, it fears the unknown. Then we proposed that a more accurate understanding of God, God's nature and character, his purposes and will could help. We covered a variety of views about anxiety from philosophy, psychology and theology. In addition, we sought guidance from McLeod Campbell as a provisional resource in this regard. Then, we tackled the deeper issue of shame. We covered shame from a variety of perspectives. Next, we observed how difficult and pervasive this feeling of self- assessment was to handle pastorally. We proposed solicitous care as one method of treatment. This solicitous care sought to build bridges between the Minister and the congregation member. Another method was also to focus our attention upon the nature and character of God. God's purposes for us require explication, reflection, and appropriation.

Ultimately, we sought to explicate these three emotions from a variety of perspectives while relating all of them to the person and work of Jesus Christ. These feelings or emotions we indicated may be viewed at their core as the defect of feeling

loved. This deficit may be inculcated through a variety of means. We argued that this deficit of love was first, a lack in understanding of God's love, and second, a view that one believes that others do not and cannot love them. We suggested that insight into the human condition, particularly the conditions marked by these three issues, necessarily requires a basic comprehension into the "inexhaustible depths of the idea of God." (Tillich 1984: 145) We much focus our attention on God. Tillich is surely right. To reflect upon ourselves is to by necessity to struggle with the person(s), nature and character of God. To reflect for any time on God demands recognition of what God has done in creation, providence and the incarnation among human beings and for human beings. As Calvin put it knowledge of God and knowledge of self relate inextricably, but which is first is unknown. For McLeod Campbell it is the same. Alienation and estrangement within ourselves, from ourselves, and subsequently, also from the world, occur in these three ways of viewing ourselves and then the world—a lack of assurance, anxiety and shame, each requires a pastoral response. This impetus drove McLeod Campbell. We have suggested a particular pastoral response, knowing that this requires continued reflection and action. Wayne Oates suggests the same kind of orientation in his richly rewarding book Christ and Selfhood when he notes that for the Christian the decisive factor in the determination of our identity is Jesus Christ. (1961: 21) To reflect on Jesus actively is, however, by contemplation to move beyond him to the God he called and claimed as Father. This was the first proposal for action we offered. In relation to our study, McLeod Campbell notes that,

> This is the testimony of God concerning his Son, 'that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.' To receive this testimony, and be taught of God, is spiritually to apprehend eternal life, as manifested in

> the Son of God, and given to us in him. The practical demand which in this light is felt to press upon us is, that we welcome this life to be our life; the trust in Christ called for is, that we feed on him as the bread of life; for trust in food is to use it as food, expecting to be nourished by it. Spiritual, doubtless, and as spiritual, to be only spiritually discerned, is this way of salvation; but exceedingly simple in the conception of it. The eternal life lived by our Lord as the Son of man, is apprehended as the gift of God to man—to us, therefore our proper life given to us that we may live it. (1851: 76)

God's gift of the Son to us in Jesus Christ, in human form, as human, *as* man is a living bequest from God to us and as McLeod Campbell puts it "our proper life." God's message to us is the testimony about his Son's birth, ministry, life, death and resurrection, which is of monumental import to us. He is life and he shares that with us. It is the revelation about the basic reality of the world. Understanding this, comprehending this requires an epistemological conversion—a moment or moments of insight. This transforming moment illuminates some facets of reality, while inviting further investigation into others. We are invited by McLeod Campbell to "welcome this life to be our life." That is, we are to apprehend Christ's life and action *as* our life and action.

What has been presented in this thesis is a philosophy for a Practical Theology or a Pastoral Theology aimed specifically at encouraging people struggling with the lack of feelings of love, feelings, which about which they may not even be conscious. This philosophy is a shepherding orientation of solicitous care. This attitude towards the individual struggling with these difficulties of a lack of assurance, anxiety and shame is one opportunity for praxis. The question, which the Pastor has to deal with, in ministering to people, is the very real question of how they see themselves. This view

may have no connection to reality. It is, nonetheless, real to them. This provides us, as Pastors, with the opportunity of providing them with an alternative perspective, **God's perspective**. We understand God's perspective because we look to Jesus Christ who is God's message and answer to our deepest questions. Writing to those struggling with their Christianity, and specifically their view of themselves, John McLeod Campbell writes,

> "When, then, another life, the life of Christ, is revealed to us in the Spirit as the Father's gift to us in the Son, and we receive it to be our life, feeding upon Christ,--the favour of God resting on this life, and now upon us in our choosing this life, is testified also in the conscience, just as the divine displeasure formerly was; and neither is now, any more than formerly as to the conviction of sin, the conviction that we are righteous in God's sight, a doctrinal inference from the statements of Scripture; the immediate and direct result of seeing ourselves in the light of truth. As the divine testimony within…is now for us, 'the Spirit bearing witness with our spirits that we are the sons (and daughters) of God.'" (1851:)

What McLeod Campbell suggests here is an alternative view to how we see ourselves. The issue with which ministers struggle is the question of our goal in ministering to people. To what are we aiming? What is our image, the image we have in mind towards which we are orienting ourselves? Is it our image? Is it God's image? Paul Tillich, in reflecting upon Eric Fromm's work, says that for Fromm, "mental health—is the ability to love and to create, the liberation of the ties to clan and soil, the development of objectivity and reason." (1984: 97) The capability of loving and creating is important. Questions immediately arise, however. What kind of love is this? What kind of creating is assumed? By contrast, the goal for this particular Practical Theology or Pastoral Theology is roughly similar. However, it is far greater than this suggestion by Fromm, indeed our proposal it is claimed is more robust than simply the ability to love and the

ability to be creative. Once again, what kind of love about which are we speaking? What kind of creativity is on view here? Glorifying God through sharing the burdens of others in my judgment is deeper and richer than what Fromm suggests the goal of human life is to be. Enjoying God in our loving neighbor is also weightier.

Pastoral work, however, is not psychoanalysis or psychotherapy. Though it may use insights derived from these fields, pastoral work is different. This issue is the methodological question around which the author has been circling during the entire work on this dissertation. It includes fellowship, preaching, encouragement, and coaching, teaching and solicitous care. John Swinton observes,

> Underpinning everything we do, see, and understand is a particular theory of knowledge: an *epistemology*. Our epistemology offers us a framework within which we can assess what is knowledge and what is not accepted as knowledge. (2007: 159)

The author would agree with Swinton, but I would not limit the subject merely to epistemology. This ought not to be limited to how we know and what we know—or even the ways in which we know. What the author showed early on in the dissertation is that we have to do here not merely with epistemology—a theory of knowledge, but also **ontology**. That is, we must question the doctrine of reality, which we claim exists. We predicated reality's existence and being on the person and work of Jesus Christ, taking our approach from Athanasius of Alexandria. This leads to an alternative view. What is the overall orientation, which will guide the Practical Theological practitioner? In addition, what might the details, the nuts-and-bolts be of this philosophy of solicitous care? So what might this look like in the parish? We sought to answer this question.

At the same time we have shown that the question of the relationship between the work and ministry of Christ must not be separated from the person—either the person struggling with the presenting problem or the person in ministry. Nor finally can it be divorced from the person of Christ himself. Christ changes reality. Our reality, if one begins with us, and in an even greater fashion, objective universal reality. This is the over-arching philosophy or meta-theology, if you will, which will guide the various aspects of ministry to and with people in the parish. It guides our preaching. It guides our conversation. It guides our prayers. It guides our being *as* ministers. Objectively speaking, Christ is the way, the truth and the life. Christ not only comes to us, 'in the beginning was the Word,' writes the evangelist John, with all that his statement implies. Christ also returns to the Father from us, in his resurrection and ascension, with all that we are. Indeed, he returns with our very humanness. John McLeod Campbell observes that in our lives we re-present Christ to the Father in our living. He writes in Christ the Bread of Life,

> …there is a continual living presentation of Christ to the Father—a continual drawing upon the delight of the Father in the Son—the outgoing of confidence that, whatever is asked in Christ's name—in the light of his name—in the faith of the Father's acknowledgment of that name—will be received. The praises rendered—the desires cherished—the prayers offered—are all within the circle of the life of Christ, and ascend with the assurance of partaking in the favour which pertains to that life. (1851: 94)

In our life, work and ministry we not only participate in Christ's life and work, but we are re-presenting Christ himself in ourselves, through ourselves, by the Spirit, to the Father. Not everything we do, obviously, is pleasing to God, nor is everything we offer Christ in the Spirit. This is the case when we sin. There is a sense that when we seek to live godly

lives we really do re-present Christ to the Father. In our living lives characterized by enjoying and glorifying God, Christ takes what is ours, cleanses it, and presents it to God. This is particularly the case through the self-giving *agapic* love about which Paul writes so eloquently. We, in fact, really do present Christ to the Father in our thoughts and actions. In addition, Christ presents himself to the Father on our behalf. We must remember that Christ himself cleanses our offering. Our lives should strive to think on and act on these things, the good, and the true the beautiful. Paul puts it this way, 'whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.' (Phil. 4.8) Contemplating on these things in relation to existence and praxis is an additional opportunity for praxis.

Years ago in his Old Testament Theology class at Columbia Theological Seminary (Fall 1992) a student asked Walter Brueggemann, the teacher, and nationally known Old Testament scholar, about how to proceed in the field of Old Testament studies if one wanted to make than one's vocation. The idea which was raised in class by that student was 'what does it take,' or 'what would it take,' in order to be successful in that particular academic discipline. Brueggemann paused for a moment, interrupted his train of thought, and said that he was of the opinion, if pressed, that making connections between the particular Biblical discipline of Old Testament studies and other disciplines was the approach to take. 'Read widely,' he advised. 'Read beyond this particular discipline,' he continued. Then he noted, "Seek to make connections between sources, ideas, disciplines and so on." He granted that finding one's voice was difficult, because

young scholars are trying to find their way while seeking acceptance into the guild. Developing an expertise, publishing in peer-reviewed journals is important, he admonished. He suggested that in addition to this necessary growth, also needed by individuals was a familiarity with and an almost equal competence in outside fields or disciplines in order to make appropriate connections, connections and then proposals which can speak to today's issues. Brueggemann was well known at Columbia Seminary for making connections between disciplines, irritating purists to no end. Brueggemann was recognized for doing just this at Columbia Theological Seminary and has continued this practice into what is a very busy retirement. This has not set well with some colleagues who complained about his making connections among the disciplines. He was conversant as it became evident in his lectures and writings, with psychological theory, economic theory, sociological theory, hermeneutical theory, liberation theology and of course, Old Testament Biblical Studies.[15] I have never forgotten Brueggemann's admonition from that class almost thirty years ago, and am convinced that Practical Theology must make the same kind of connections between the various disciplines with one another and itself and then with our common society today. Of particular importance to me personally is the relationship between revelation, investigation and experience. Also important is deriving 'the ought' from the 'is' which is a classical conundrum. This 'connectionalism' to take a word from Presbyterian polity has been one main theme of this dissertation.

[15] One may see and hear him make a similar remark in an interview at Georgetown University at a conference on the Prophetic Imagination. Cf. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wf4i9La7UTw (accessed September 27, 2017).

The immediate initiative for this study was the pastoral and theological work of John McLeod Campbell from the nineteenth century. McLeod Campbell's work paralleled in some regards my own learnings in the parish. The author began reading him in the mid 1990's on the3 advice of a fellow minister. I noticed increasingly the anxiousness of many people regarding their salvation, in understanding God's nature and character, and in the future of one following death. Worries abounded. Some of this occurs necessarily in a land populated by Southern Baptists. Some of it is a theological holdover when conversion experience was important. This issue kept popping up.

At the same time, once one has concluded six or seven months of sermons and made the appropriate visits right out of seminary, perhaps the realization occurs that everything, or just about everything, one learned in seminary has been exhausted. The well is empty and one discovers that it is difficult to draw water. Karl Barth is surely right here. Mounting the steps to the pulpit fifty times a year, once every seven days, presents one with the issue of what to say. Speaking that which is textually, Biblically responsible, theologically articulate, and pastorally cogent and coherent forces one – drives one – to immense reading and reflection. There are also numerous conversations, which turn into unofficial educational opportunities and counseling proposals. What does one say to hurting parishioners? On the other hand is the very real lived experience *of* **ministry**. Personal experience becomes one of our greatest teachers. Collating this information, making connections, and listening to experience are not easy. Nor for that matter, is translating the content of the gospel for one's congregation.

We also raised the idea of the nature and character of God. Is the individual's concept of God accurate? Is it beneficial? What is the idea of God, the idea that people

have who come to us in distress? We saw that this bedeviled people in the past and still bedevils people today. Paul Tillich observes, "A presupposition for any answer to the question of healing in the sense of salvation is a reformulation of the idea of God." (1984: 145) Part of the Pastor's ministry is clarifying and educating individuals about the correct view of God, while also disabusing them of incorrect views. As was noted, incorrect views are necessarily related to the three emotions of self-description we mentioned. McLeod Campbell articulates in his writings a Trinitarian view of God, based upon his reading of Scripture that has its basis in the Reformed confessions, the early Church fathers, which the author has found to be refreshing and invigorating. It is theologically acute, therapeutic and presented in the common language of the nineteenth century. McLeod Campbell centers his understanding of reality itself on the depth and power of the Father—Son relationship mediated by the Holy Spirit within the Triune life. This relationship takes precedence. That Triune life, however, has made necessary connections, has interacted with our lives, in a universally-cosmically altering way. Because Jesus is, reality is now changed. He also suggests a participatory view of the Christian life, one centered in Jesus Christ, which the author has also found reassuring and inspirational. McLeod Campbell writes,

> ""The faith,' it is said, 'which saves also sanctifies.' It produces not peace and confidence alone, but also holiness. Not merely is the work of Christ trusted in: his example is also followed. Not only is forgiveness of sin received through his blood, but deliverance from the power of sin by the Spirit is also God's gift to us in him…" (1851: 75)

To live, as Paul, puts it in alignment with Christ, so that where the one begins and the other life ends, is an open question capable of or requiring adjudication, is to live a

different kind of life. It is a life characterized by not only peace, confidence, holiness, but also *parrhesia*. This parrhesia is the confidence and freedom of the children of God in God's presence. Living, in McLeod Campbell's view is no longer a burden. It is not something, which we in addition have to navigate on our own. For that matter neither is ministry. Having this provisional 'theology,' which of course is always under assessment and reformation, the author at the same time reflected upon pastoral issues and what kind of connections that could be made between a Trinitarian-Incarnational Theology and some of the real issues which people struggle with presenting themselves in ministry.

On the one hand the genesis of this study was the question of people's experiences of a lack of assurance of God’s love, the feeling of anxiety, and the emotional self-evaluation of shame—all of which may be reduced to a rotten core centering on the issue of love and its lack. Am I loved? Am I worthy of being loved? What if I have warts and am ugly (metaphorically speaking), can God still love me? What place do I have in the church if I am not perfect? What does the future hold if I am not among God's favorites? How does one become a favorite of God anyway? What is the purpose of this life? Is life what culture and society tell me it ought to be? These are just some of the questions driving people with whom the author has ministered over the course of his work. At the same time as these questions arose in ministry, the therapeutic resources of theology were searched for a suitable response. Repeatedly John McLeod Campbell reasserted himself in importance. The salutary utility of Scottish theologian John McLeod Campbell’s pastoral theology was also consulted indeed could not be avoided, in a dialectic conversation between psychology, experience, science and theology. The challenge was melding these two disparate realms, one, the existential

quandary with which humans may struggle, and two, the overarching issue of the search for love, into a workable and functional whole. How might this struggle, it was wondered, speak to developing a Practical or Pastoral Theology? Along with the earlier challenge came the theological emphasis seen in McLeod Campbell, himself, of the Trinity and the Incarnation. If this is a given in the discipline then one must deal with this reality and truth appropriately. Another discipline searched through was psychology. If psychology makes necessary connections within people lives, what is one to do with this information? What resources does psychology possess, which may assist? What connections may be made between theology, ministry, the social sciences and personal experience? Furthermore, how do the twin doctrines of Trinity and Incarnation interact and positively ameliorate the other negative debilitating issues previously mentioned? From these issues there followed the interaction of John McLeod Campbell's work with the struggles of people today concerning God's love, anxiety and shame. The goal of the study was to arrive at a suitable or practicable Pastoral Theology regarding these three intertwined dilemmas, which is the result of the ongoing conversation and dialogue. Always in front of the subject was the Whiteheads' suggestion about attending, asserting, and action.

In Chapter 1, we raised the issue of upon what question(s), experience(s) and information a Pastoral Theology/ Practical Theology might be based. This was the ontological question. It was asked and based in its questioning on the person and work of Jesus Christ. One's view of Christ influences one's movement in any direction. This is clear from the history of theology. We settled on the validity of experience with the priority of revelation. There followed an attempted definition of this particular way of

‘doing’ theology. The basic orientation was discussed and a proposal was offered. This proposal emphasized the critically realistic dialectical nature of Pastoral or Practical Theology with equal emphasis upon the analytical and judicious correlation between realms of information, reason, and experience.

Thus, we arrived at the following definition: Pastoral or Practical Theology is focused on the caring, helping, healing, and sustaining aspects of ministry as indications toward one aspect of the inquiry, that is, how the practice of the care of souls informs the therapy, assistance, ministry of souls. Then also asked is what may be learned initially from these acts and from the issues presented. In addition, the reality of the hermeneutically circular nature of this particular inquiry into truth and practice that is thinking about living and the living out of the Christian faith, never cease. There is an ongoing movement, dynamic and energetic between our Christian faith and the adjudication of our behavior (which is variously understood as ethics, sanctification, action). It is ongoing.

Fundamental, to this at the same time is the emphasis of the **theological character of the discipline.** Both the starting point and the preliminary conclusion or thesis, because of this foundation, is ‘theologically oriented.’ To depart from this character is to diminish the field. From this issues the broader implications for theology as a whole. Pastoral Theology and Practical Theology are open to the use of gains from disparate disciplines including those of the personality sciences and related fields. Practical Theology or Pastoral Theology seeks connections between real life and doctrine, between prayer and people, and in one's orientation in ministry to people. This is particularly important to people dealing with a lack of assurance, anxiety, and shame.

The author used James and Evelyn Whitehead's Practical Theological Method in responding to the presenting issues of the emotions of lack of assurance, anxiety and shame. In developing a Practical Theology of solicitous care for people, we leaned upon their recommendation to pursue a particular method. It may be seen that the Whitehead's also value the importance of connections between sources and disciplines. Their process, James and Evelyn Whiteheads', involved a retrieval of the Christian Tradition–critically correlated–with the gains from the Social Sciences. Introduced to this beginning resource and added to the mix was the personal experience of the individual with the presenting problem. In addition, the experience and wisdom of the individual of the caregiver sought out for help is also a valuable resource. These three disparate sources of clues and hints are then correlated, critically, into an informed and informal proposal. The Whiteheads termed this first aspect **'attending'** to the problem.

A question about living is broached from one person to another and these three different sources are used to assist in the formulation of a proposed answer. The question with regard to our study might be centered on a lack of assurance; "Preacher, what is gonna happen to me when I die?" It might center on an anxiety regarding an issue in the person's life; "Preacher, why can I not feel at ease about …" Or, it might involve an issue of dysfunctional behavior in church, which seems to suggest an individual struggling with shame, without even being aware of it. A particular orientation, in response to the specific issue, arises. One might say that a tentative proposal is articulated being based upon the resources researched in response to attending to the individual and the issue. The goal here is understanding. Paul Tournier writes, "No one can develop freely in this world and find a full life without feeling understood by at least one person." (1986: 29)

The Whiteheads called this intermediate aspect **'assertion.'** Chris R. Schlauch in his book Faithful Companioning quotes Quentin Hand, who says, "Pastoral Counseling is the practice of theology. For the practice of theology requires both knowing theology and doing theology." (1995: 27) Where Hand uses the phrase 'pastoral counseling', I would substitute ministry. Finally, the Whitehead's last aspect of care was the proposal for action in the life of the individual. The term used by the Whiteheads for this was **'assisting (action).'** Paul Holmer, a teacher at Yale for four decades, notes that, "The whole thrust of theology has to be in the direction not of just finding something out–for that is only at the beginning–but rather of becoming something more worthy and justified." (Holmer 1978: 28, quoted in Schlauch 1995: 39) Theology is informed by praxis, but in turn informs praxis. The three phases of care are thus:

a.) *Attending*, b.) *Assertion*, and lastly, c.) *Assisting*.

Within this energetic and ongoing process of ministry, the importance of listening cannot be overstated. While sermons might be preached, fellowship at meals engaged in, Bible studies taught, committee work participated in with the struggling parishioner; these occasions by themselves are not therapeutic in and of themselves. Listening is a powerful modality, which the minister possesses. It is, perhaps, the most important modality of tending to the troubled soul. Karl Menninger writes, "Listening is one of the most important tools which the psychiatrist possesses." (1963: 349) The author agrees, but would substitute the word 'psychiatrist' with minister or caregiver. In the author's

experience, most if not all people long to tell their life's story to someone and have it understood, validated, and accepted. (Hart 1980: 1) To be able to reveal one's self to another, warts and all, to an important someone who is not judgmental, but compassionate is to find something worth more than treasure. Friendship readily springs to mind. To be heard—genuinely heard, is to be given a great and lasting gift. Listening is without a doubt an act of love. Paul Tournier writes,

> "In order to really understand, we need to listen, not to reply. We need to listen long and attentively. In order to help anybody to open his heart, we have to give him time, asking only a few questions, as carefully as possible, in order to help him better explain his experience. Above all we must not give the impression that we know better than he does what he must do. Otherwise we force him to withdraw. Too much criticism will also achieve the same result, so fragile are his inner sensitivities." (1986: 25)

The author would argue that an essential part of ministry is listening. Listening to another, carefully, attentively and with a determined effort at hearing and understanding is perhaps the most important aspect in a pastor's arsenal of tools. As listening proceeds, one will gradually begin to reveal more and more about themselves to the listener.

Following our retrieval of the Whiteheads' methodology, we noted that a particular kind of love must be at the center of Practical Theology. That which surrounds, feeds and informs attending, assertion, and assisting is **love**. This is a particular kind of love. We are not suggesting a maudlin, run-of-the-mill kind of disposition towards individuals, a generic acceptance, which sees all with a 'hail fellow heartily met' attitude, but the kind of self-giving love (*agape*) suggested by the Apostle Paul. Turning the cheek, going the extra mile, giving in the Spirit of Christ without blurring necessary and important boundaries is what I suspect the Apostle Paul had in

mind. This attitude towards another, the Apostle Paul suggested was, 'the greatest spiritual gift.' (1 Cor. 13) It is a willingness to enter into another's fears, hopes, dreams and darkness and to accompany them forward. One may see this illustrated in the movie "What Dreams May Come.[16]" In the movie, Robin Williams portrays Chris Nielson. Annabella Sciorra portrays his wife Annie. Because of overwhelming tragedy, Chris finds her in a hell of her own making. She has committed suicide. Her afterlife may be compared, somewhat to purgatory. This is existence is derived from and created by the tendency of the person who is in pain to create a nightmare afterlife. This is a world or reality of sorts based on an individual's agony. Chris decides literally to go to hell in order to bring her out of her own nightmarish purgatory where she relives continually her sorrow. Chris discovers that Annie's version of hell is their house in which both lived when they were alive. It is a gray-damaged, horrifically twisted and warped imitation. Annie does not know why she is there. She only suffers. She is visibly overwhelmed by her surroundings. Christ must make a decision. Will he leave her? How can he save her? Can he save her? What can be done? Chris makes the decision to stay there with her. This is love. In an act of self-less giving, Chris takes on her nightmare as his own. This amazingly frees her. We are asked to do something similar with our parishioners. No quite on the same level, but we are asked to make their situations our own. We are called to journey with them. This love is willing to put up with all of the issues, which drive people to acting out in hateful or unhelpful ways in congregations. We cannot manufacture this love on our own. We do not possess the power or the necessary resources. Our love for another has its indispensable origin and its power in the love of God for people in Jesus Christ. God **loves**. God *is* love. The Father loves the Son in the

[16] http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0120889/ (accessed October 3, 2017)

power of the Spirit. The Son loves the Father in return in the same Spirit's power. Their love reaches out into our lives mediated by the incarnation and the Spirit. That same love lifts us up into a love beyond our comprehension or understanding, but which is nonetheless empowering and enlivening. To see this and to experience it changes all things—in some ways, it is to make all things new. Our love for others, correspondingly, is a participation in that intra-Trinitarian love. We participate in this through the ministry of the Spirit. We love because we have first been loved. We love because God first loves. Any Practical Theology that does not have this as its motivation and foundation is to be rejected and reworked.

In his book, The Vital Balance Karl Menninger notes that as he matured in his understanding of psychotherapy, after decades of practice he came to believe in what he calls a simple truth. It is the lack of love, which debilitates people. It is the gift of love, correspondingly, which assists them in getting better. He writes, "It is this intangible thing, love, love in many forms, which enters into every therapeutic relationship." (1963: 365) He notes that it may be the caregiver, which is the carrier or vessel through which love is shared with another. That is, we become a conduit of sorts. Love is an "element which binds and heals, which comforts and restores, which works what we have to call–for now miracles." (1963: 365) As my children learned to ride a bike, it was not my specific instructions, which was the key to their success. The author believes, instead, that it was the encouragement and attitude of support, which gave them the ability to fall repeatedly, while still getting up to try again. Issuing verbal support with cheering success repaid dividends. Love offers the opportunity for maturation and growth, even while failing. Failure is a necessary part of the process. Enthusiasm, encouragement and

love (agape) allowed maturation and flourishing to take place among people; not all people, but some—enough to matter. Love is the decision to respect one another, to see in them someone for whom Christ was born, Christ lived and ministered, and for whom Christ ultimately died. Love offers a person who has come for help the environment in which one may feel safe. It is to provide a foundation, upon which they feel safe enough to try different things. It is to risk the possibility of failure. However, ultimately there is also opportunity for success. The Apostle Paul notes, "Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things." (1 Cor. 13:4-7)

Paul Tillich, one of the greats of twentieth century theology, noted in a talk in the early 1960's to Social Workers that Social Workers as they interact with and minister to people do so because of a desire to assist and help. Indeed, the impetus for this work is nothing other than, "the love,' says Tillich, 'whose name in Greek is *agape* and in Latin *caritas* - the love which descends to misery and ugliness and guilt in order to elevate. This love is critical as well as accepting, and it is able to transform what it loves." (1984: 181) This love, which seeks to elevate, whether it does so as social worker, or friend, or minister does not have its origin in us, but rather in the Triune God of love and grace whose own goal is to transform that which God loves. Hippocrates once noted that, "For where there is love of man, there is also love of the art. For some patients, though conscious that their condition is perilous, recover their health simply through their contentment with the goodness of the physician."[17] (Jones 1957: 319) By this he meant

[17] ἔνιοι γὰρ νοσέοντες ᾠσθημένοι τὸ περὶ ἑωυτοὺς πάθος μὴ εὖν ἐν ἀσφαλείῃ, καὶ τῇ τοῦ ἰητροῦ ἐπιεικείῃ εὐδοκέουσι, μεταλλάσσοντες ἐς ὑγιείην (Hippocrates Collected Works W.H.S. Jones, ed., Harvard Univ. Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1957, 319)

that our attention towards the other may assist not through any particular modality or therapy, but simply because we "care." The author would substitute the word 'love' here.

We also highlighted the contextual nature of Practical Theology and the need for translation. Words carry a particular freight when used. Context is important and naturally varies according to locale. The language we use must be flexible. It must also be true to the gospel. As we continued to think about methodology, we also noted that the Whiteheads' proposal did not include learning, feedback, and adaptation to their recommended course of action. Following the assisting phase, there was no further aspect of care. A particular trouble is diagnosed and then the solution is given. As it stood, their proposal for action, we decided, was too application oriented. In some regards, their methodology is similar to Eduard Thurneysen's preaching pastoral care approach. The caregiver offers a solution to the problem presented in this model to the individual seeking assistance. Then, the individual is to do what has been proposed. As we developed the thesis, we noted that the Whiteheads' method needed reworking. What if this suggestion, does not work? What, then? In our proposal, we determined that Practical Theology was focused on theology *and* praxis. Within practice and action, however, we noted the issue of an incipient theology. This initial 'theology' may or may not be accurate or beneficial. Practical Theology is reflection on the **continuing** care of people. This calls for the development of relationship following what Paul Tournier terms "personal contact." (1965: 128)

Furthermore, care is about how theology speaks to and influences this concern and is in turn informed from this care of people. There is a necessary circle of attending to 'the living human document' to use a term coined by Anton Boisen. In a sense, it may

be said that we are one source for them, with Christ, with them, in their lives. Our assistance to them is, we noted, a 'participation' in Christ's on-going ministry to them and in their lives. This occurs through the alignment and connection of the Holy Spirit. We also have the opportunity to learn from them. How do their insights and experiences coalesce with ours? What does their experience teach us?

We also questioned the methodological presuppositions of much Practical Theology. We specifically highlighted Seward Hiltner's American approach, deciding it was too 'operationalist' in exercise. Following a rehearsal of much of Practical Theology's history, we made a suggestion that living to God was the most beneficial way of understanding this discipline. Living to God offers a particular orientation. It offers a particular kind of praxis.

We also argued against a dualist framework. We noted that Jesus Christ has overcome, in himself, the *chorismos* (**χωρισμός**) projected by much of the ancient world as the demarcation between the sacred and secular. We also argued against a mythological projection for theology. This mythological orientation is the foundation for much modern theology. We further noted that critical realism was the most philosophically satisfying epistemology. We did this basing our remarks on the work of Athanasius of Alexandria and other early Church fathers. We highlighted the relational aspect in the constitution of persons. We are our relationships. In addition, we suggested the framework of piety for the Practical Theologian. We spoke about paradigms and our need to shift ours in care. Furthermore, the paradigms of those for whom we care also need transformation.

We spoke about repentant thinking and the conversion necessary in healing. Regardless of the struggle of the individual there is required a different way of thinking. We called for a transforming moment with regard to a lack of assurance, anxiety, and shame all of which may be successfully and helpfully related to the three categories that Wayne Oates suggests of the three interior conflicts, which need to be assuaged for our true identity in Christ to come to the fore, condemnation, meaninglessness, and death. Examining these more closely we see that they are related to questions of identity, vocation, and status vis-à-vis God and Christ. (1961: 37) We reflected upon the relationship between theology and praxis. We began with Aristotle in questioning the relationship between theology and praxis and ended with Karl Marx. A different way of understanding the relationship between theology and praxis was the concept of grace and the response of gratitude. We questioned Don Browning's method and its presuppositions. Browning was said to be the benchmark by which Practical Theologies must measure themselves. After the exegesis of his proposal, we ultimately decided to go in a different direction. One issue, which stood out, is the liberal theological bias out of which he worked. We argued against his use of the social construction of reality. We termed the result of this construction simply 'the-state-of-play.' By the 'state-of-play,' we meant that truth is always up for negotiation and revision.

As the thesis unfolded, we have seen that a lack of assurance is the feeling that God does not love one. We delved into the background of this theological and practical issue. We questioned the doctrine of God this lack of assurance entailed. Examining the doctrine of predestination, we noted the weakness of the particularistic doctrine of double predestination. Schleiermacher in his book titled Christian Caring (1988: 90) notes that,

"Doubts about divine grace are the most perplexing with which to deal." Centering the issue in terms of Jesus Christ, we saw that a lack of assurance might be ameliorated by the change of paradigms. An appropriate understanding of God is crucial. We saw that one of the concerns was the doctrine of God presupposed by this problem. We aimed, after a fashion, to develop a pastoral doctrine of the Trinity. Using John McLeod Campbell's Practical Theology based as it was on the Trinity and Incarnation we translated his aretegenic and therapeutic work to our present day concerns. We suggested this retrieval of McLeod Campbell's work inform the presenting issues.

We reflected upon anxiety, from both a theological perspective and a psychological perspective. We concluded that in some regards anxiety and a lack of assurance are different sides of the same coin. Both are experienced as a sense of dread. Once again, the question is who is Jesus Christ, what is the gospel, who is God and what does this make of us? Next, we covered the modern dilemma of shame. We observed in covering this modern problem that it stems from an incorrect view of one's self. We began with Freud, in our investigation of shame, and ended with Leon Wurmser. Ultimately, we decided that it is caused by a deficit of love. Indeed, we saw that a lack of love might be at the root of all three ailments. We highlighted the importance of relationship in the praxis of care of people. This praxis of relationship has its correspondence and orientation in the relationship that exists within the Triune God of love and grace. As we share in that relationship by the Spirit, we are enabled to minister to others and to assist them in their own fellowship with God.

We also reflected upon the concept of atonement. Atonement is concerned about overcoming an improper relationship with God and with one another. We surveyed a few

authors, but concluded that John McLeod Campbell's holistic view of the atonement, with adjustments was the most suitable. We also noted that one of the issues in being informed by McLeod Campbell's views was the necessity for translation into an idiom understandable by people. We highlighted that a Practical Theology informed by McLeod Campbell aims for the flourishing of people. Wayne Oates suggests that each of us interprets the events and historical happenings with the individuals with which we have encountered deciding the meaning and ordering the focus in a particular way. (1961: 242) Flourishing is inspired by the altering of such a narrative, such an ontology of the world, replacing it with a more suitable one. Such a flourishing may be assisted through appropriate programs in the church. Preaching, teaching and pastoral care are also avenues through which flourishing may also be inculcated. Modeling on the part of the minister is also informative. We also pointed out that one important aspect of McLeod Campbell's work was its future orientation. This viewpoint was called the 'prospective' aspect of the atonement. The prospective aspect of the atonement is centered on 'living' into the light of what God has re-oriented us towards in Jesus Christ.

This is where ethics and spirituality meet discipleship. We discussed the relationship between the indicatives of grace and love and the imperatives of response. Grace issues in gratitude. We highlighted McLeod Campbell's emphasis on Christ's orientation of seeking to do God's will throughout his life. Suggested along this line of thought, was that this orientation was a useful one for our own lives of discipleship. We also discussed McLeod Campbell's proposal that the life of a disciple was, in the words of the Westminster Shorter Catechism (1647) "to glorify and enjoy God forever." By this, he understood that our lives were to praise God, even in the minutest detail. This is

no more an obligation, than my taking care of my elderly parents. My father has dementia, my mother macular degeneration and corneal dystrophy. They often need my assistance. They live nearby and so I am often picking up milk, medicines and the like from the store and delivering it to them. This activity does not arise out of an obligation. It arises out of gratitude. Secondly, he understood that the life of discipleship was to receive its orientation from our enjoyment of who God is as Father, Son and Spirit, and what God is doing currently in our lives for our edification and growth. To know our place in the world and that it is through the initiative of the Father in the sending of the Son and the ongoing work of the Spirit is not only to enlighten us to the truth, but also to continue to mold us and mature us changes our perception of life.

7.1 A Trinitarian Incarnational Praxis of Prospective Participation

Once we come to the realization that we are loved by God in Christ and that it is not all up to us, but that Christ is in us the hope and power of glory, the question is then begged. What next? How does one live? One aspect of ministry to people involves our awareness of what God in Christ has done in their lives. We are aware of it even if they are not. We are also looking for clues and hints towards understanding what God will do in their lives. Ministry as the author understands it does not proceed forward with the assumption that God has not been active in their lives. God has *not* been absent. Instead, ministry is about the discernment of what God is doing in another's life and how one may align one's self with God's ongoing praxis in the lives of people. There is an element here of discipling and spiritual direction. Heije Faber and

Ebel van der Schoot in their book The Art of Pastoral Conversation (1965: 115) note that, "In all pastoral conversation the primary aim of the pastor is to help the other person see his life in God's light." Indeed, ministry (or Pastoral Care), as Carroll Wise points out, is "the art of communicating the inner meaning of the gospel to persons at the point of their need." (1966: 8) All too often, this aspect is downplayed. One might ask what the inner meaning of the gospel is. What is the gospel itself? What is the person's need? What steps may be done to lessen their concern? While it is true that the individual who comes seeking assistance must journey from one place to another, they do not go alone. They may need the space for a transformative moment to use Jim Loder's apt phrase. God comes with them and to them in the Spirit of Jesus Christ into and in the study of the minister and then goes with them in Jesus Christ by the power of the Spirit as they leave. As Thomas Erskine of Linlathen understood it, part of our Christianity is about education. Ministry is fellowship with another as they journey. God's action, however, in our lives, inspires our response and movement forward. Here, alignment is a key.

As John McLeod Campbell has taught us, in Christ we are reconciled to the Father by the Spirit, and invited to live henceforth as God's beloved children. To be called a child of God, not in some generic, bland descriptive way, but in a particular, specific way is to begin to have our framework re-worked. To approach the Christian life as an orphan in need of adoption is a far different starting point than beginning the Christian life knowing that God has claimed one in Christ regardless of one's difficulties, failures, and sin. Christ is aware of all this and more as he atones for it on our behalf. This may not be compatible with common sense. Nor may it be compatible with culture's

perception regarding beauty, persona, look, and achievement. This is why the term grace is used. C. F. D. Moule puts the same idea this way,

> "The Holy Spirit within us puts into action, and sometimes into words, what it means to be a Christian. The Spirit, that is to say, reproduces in Christians the relation of Christ to God as Son to Father. That means that the Spirit is a revolutionary force. The character of Christ is the character of renewed humanity—humanity turned away from self and back to God.; and to be under the power of his Spirit causes just a such a turning or revolution in each Christian's character." (1978: 29)

We always are in process, our identity, our character, our behavior, our thinking. One aspect of the gospel is that God is already at work in our lives, and the presenting problem, which causes the conundrum of how to act or respond, is but one part of that work and ministry. It might be an opportunity for maturation. Thus, our presenting problems of a lack of assurance, anxiety and shame may be the opportunity for additional growth, particularly in a new direction. Rather than negatives, we might view them from the perspective as opportunities.

The ministry of the pastor is to align one's self with the ongoing ministry and praxis of God in the life of this individual, so closely, that a 'participation' in God's ongoing work in their life by the Spirit occurs. Because of this truth about participation, Trinitarian theology has weighty consequences for our existence. (Zizioulas 2012) Ministry, in this view, is ultimately participation in God's ministry—that is, the Father's ministry and therapy through the Son, Jesus Christ, by the power and presence of the Holy Spirit. Regarding participation, John Milbank in Radical Orthodoxy notes,

> "The central theological framework of radical orthodoxy is ‘participation’ as developed by Plato and reworked by Christianity, because any alternative configuration perforce reserves a territory independent of God.

> The latter can lead only to nihilism (though in different guises). Participation, however, refuses any reserve of created territory, while allowing finite things their own integrity. Underpinning the present essays, therefore, is the idea that every discipline must be framed by a theological perspective; otherwise these disciplines will define a zone apart from God, grounded literally in nothing." (1999: 3)

There is not space here to rehearse the problems with Milbank's overly Platonic version of participation, even reworked as it is. Instead, the author simply wants to highlight the New Testament word "koinonia" (κοινωνία) as one way of understanding participation. In so doing the author desires to move away from a Platonic understanding of participation as "methexis" (μέθεξις) where things participate and thus receive their reality from their greater, truer ideal forms found across the *chorismos* (χωρισμός the boundary between the sacred and the secular, or the world of appearances from the world of the absolute). Koinonia as it is used here is the sense of communion, alignment, correspondence, and fellowship. Koinonia, participation, is brought about by the ministry of the Holy Spirit. It is not a state, but rather an act, an event. It is a relationship.

As we have seen reconciliation with God, the atonement, is to be perceived as that action by which God in Christ has bridged over the separation that existed between the illness of our sin and what God desired of us, in love, of what we should grow to be. Just as a severe illness affects our ability to interact with others, so too does sin upset relationship. Ministry to people is not just the objective declaration of their relationship to God through Christ by the Spirit, but also the hope of the growth that may occur. As Eugene Petersen puts it, "The gift of God is consistent and the need of the person constant." (1980: 14) As we have seen this growth requires a change in perspective.

This is more than simply ethics. It is more than the Law of God. It is more than simply behavior. We have, in a previous chapter, reflected upon Scottish theologian John McLeod Campbell's understanding of our reconciliation with God through the vicarious person and ministry of Jesus Christ. Following our recognition of what God in Christ has done for us, the natural question becomes what is next.

McLeod Campbell is a natural resource for the individual interested in Practical Theology, because his understanding of the atonement has two aspects. As we have seen, McLeod Campbell understood the atonement to have a retrospective aspect. Christ died for our sins. In and through his person and work we are forgiven of our sin and reconciled with the God, whom Christ knew as 'Father.' As Jesus himself said, "It is finished." Through this ministry, God is known as our 'Father.' For McLeod Campbell there was an additional aspect. This was the prospective aspect. This aspect involves what we do next, following our forgiveness. We are reconciled to God. We have fellowship. Through Christ's person and work, we have been adopted as God's children. We are now joint heirs with Christ. God is seen and understood to be our Father. Christ is our brother. Everything that Christ is and has becomes ours through the great exchange, except what properly belongs to him as the Son. That, which is ours, becomes his. What is next? Practical theologians would understand McLeod Campbell's prospective aspect to be about praxis. This aspect is the living out of this new reality. This is where repentant thinking comes into play.

Let me speak personally for a moment. At the age of three months, I was adopted in Montreal, Quebec, Canada. My birth parents were from New Brunswick. They were young. They talked of marriage, but decided against it. My birth mother traveled from

New Brunswick to Montreal, Quebec to a home for unwed mothers. In September of 1964, she gave birth to me. I was roughly 4-5 lbs. in weight. I was cared for by a foster nurse and gained weight. My parents were called in December when I was healthy enough to be adopted. They had been trying to have children for almost a decade when they received the call from the adoption agency. The first year was a provisional time-period overseen by the courts and the adoption agency to make sure all would be well. When my adoption one year later finished its provisional aspect, the courts ruled I now was the legally adopted child of my parents. My name was officially changed on my birth certificate from (David Charles [last name unknown]) one name, the name I was given at birth, to the name my adoptive parents desired me to have—John David White. My identity, in important ways, changed following that decree. This was an objective pronouncement. I was no longer an orphan with one name, but now belonged to two beautiful, wonderful, giving people with *a* different name. I now had a family. My existence it may be said was radically altered. My reality changed as did theirs. The last fifty-three years has been the working out for me of what that change in identity will look like. By the way I might mention that I was not told of my adoption until after my son Cameron was born, our first child, when I was thirty-one.[18] This revelation came from out of the blue. It inspired a soul searching. It gave forth to contemplation. It made me question reality. Finally, it put the question to me what kind of child will I be? Will I make my parents proud? Will I respond in gratitude for all they have given me? I was in November 1965 bequeathed to my parents with the name John David White. What next? Who is John David White? What will he be like? How will he act? Who will he

[18] I must mention that Cameron has read the dissertation completely suggesting better sentences, tighter syntax, and improved grammar—for which his father will remain forever grateful!

become? This is but a poor illustration of the greater question following what God has made of us in Christ. This has occurred objectively. How do we, the question may be justifiably asked, live now in the light of this new reality? This is our subjective response. What ought we to do? Who will we be?

So, to say to someone that you are loved infinitely by God, for God so loved the world is perhaps the greatest news one could share. It is gospel news. Peter, the Apostle, in his first letter to his congregants, notes that God in Christ has "called us out of darkness into his wonderful light." (1 Peter 2:9) How do we live, thus, in the light? What behaviors are good? What should be avoided? The Westminster Shorter Catechism sought to respond to just this issue with its first question. It asks, "What is the chief end of man (humanity)?" The answer is, "to glorify God and enjoy him forever." As McLeod Campbell understood it, the prospective aspect of the atonement and of our lives is about doing just this—glorifying and enjoying God—in our lives every day.

The feelings of a lack of assurance, anxiety and shame, which are all emotions of self-assessment, have one thing in common. There is a deficit of love. This commonality is the lack or scarcity of love, either experienced now, or in the past, which creates a void in the formation and shaping of one's identity. To lack assurance is to question God's attitude towards one. To be anxious, is to always worry the other shoe will drop. To live with shame is to believe that one is not loved and could never be loved. There is, in this feeling of 'unloveableness,' whether by God or another something important which is missing in the life of an individual. Each emotion of self-assessment affects how one views one's self. It also affects how we view others. To struggle with one of the three emotions (or more) influences shapes one's image of one's self which raises all kinds of

questions. Our identity may be thus compromised. Erik Erikson has this to say about identity,

> "Within historical actuality it is the sum of all images, ideas and forces which—roughly speaking—make a person (and a people) feel more 'like themselves' and act more 'like themselves,' –which means in historical terms: like what they have come to consider their historical selves. By the same token, identity confusion defines what will make individuals and peoples feel that they are betraying their core and losing their grip on 'their' times." (Erikson 1964: 204)

This is a beautifully nuanced definition, but the author takes issue with this perspective precisely because it is incomplete. The origin of the definition begins with self and ends with self. It is ultimately anthropological in nature. Identity, as the New Testament suggests, is about what God has made of us in Christ. Identity, then, is not just how we regard ourselves, as in a mirror, but how God regards us. The Apostle Paul writes, "The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children." (Romans 8:6 NIV) At its heart, the gospel is about the radical renovation of one's identity through grace. The Apostle Paul writes, "If anyone is in Christ, behold he or she is a new creation." Peter, the Apostle, writes, "You are a select people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light." (1 Peter 2.9 NIV) Our identity, as Peter the Apostle, understands it, yields to action. Gratitude is to follow grace. Or in the words of the Westminster Shorter Catechism 'glorifying and enjoying God.'

We are God's and thus the praxis of our lives is to be praise in response to what God has done. Or, as we noted earlier, to "glorify God and enjoy God." Karl Marx, in a memorable statement, from his "Theses on Feuerbach" argues, "…we are, in practice, to

prove the truth." (Bernstein 1971: 11) Though this may not be what Marx had in mind, by this the author understands that we are to 'illustrate' the truth of what God has made of us in Jesus Christ. He is the way, the truth and the life. All too often there is a disconnect between who God understands us to be in Christ and who we believe we are. Therefore, as we minister to people who struggle, part of our work is to assist them in choosing how they will live. The assertion of the Gospel yields to praxis. This requires intuition and discernment, questioning and love. The Apostle Paul writes,

> "Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. [8]And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross." (Philippians 2:5-8 ESV)

We are to have the mind of Christ that is the attitude and point of view of the Son of God who behaved, from this perspective, in a manner, which was pleasing to God. Calvin, in the Geneva Catechism (Q. 7) notes that our lives are to be lived placing, "our whole confidence in him. To study to serve him during our whole life by obeying his will. To call upon God in all our necessities, seeking salvation and every good thing that may be desired in him. And, lastly, we are to acknowledge God both with heart and lips, as the sole Author of all blessings." This is our prospective praxis of glorifying and enjoying God.

7.2 A Trinitarian Incarnational Praxis of Presence

British New Testament scholar C. F. D. Moule once observed that in thinking about the Apostle Paul's convictions, one was led to the belief that the Christian is presented with the opportunity of truly knowing Jesus Christ fully, vividly and distinctly as completely personal. We may have a relationship with him. He is, as such, to use T. F. Torrance's telling phrase the personalizing person. Christ is the area or the space (or to use a scientific term: field) in which the Christian's life is lived. One may also observe this outlook in the theologian Hilary of Poitiers. Christians are incorporated, by grace, into Christ. Christ lives and inhabits this field with us. His presence, realized in us, is still personal and individual. His infinity aligned with our finite-ness. He shares himself with people. The Christian community then is "a harmoniously coordinated living organism like a body." Paul thinks of Christ as the living body of which Christians are the limbs." (1977: 95) In some ways, it is necessary to be familiar with Plato when speaking about participation, but as we noted the concept of incorporation and participation has its origins, at least for the Apostles, in the celebration of Yom Kippur. The Great High Priest represents, incorporates, and participates in a two-way relationship between God and the people. Moule continues with "his (Christ's) is the inclusive personality." (1977: 95) Christ's presence is ubiquitous and that life in which we live, move and have our being. He reproduces himself in us, 'growing' himself you could say, into his very own likeness and even towards the infinite and so never surpassed scope of his eternal relation with the Father.[19]

(http://rowanwilliams.archbishopofcanterbury.org/articles.php/1345/sermon-for-the-life-and-work-of-the-revd-prof-cfd-moule accessed June 5, 2017)

[19] I'm relying here on Rowan Williams remarks (his ideas, words and concepts) on the occasion of CFD Moule's eulogy. I've, however, adapted and added my own ideas within.

Our living then is but a participation in his life. We have fellowship with the Father through him. We enjoy fellowship with the Spirit who leads us into the truth because of him. The Spirit inculcates the reality of Christ within us. One cannot, I assert, (I'm following Rowan Williams here) understand anything about the New Testament unless we begin from the premise, the uncompromising and unqualified insistence that nothing may be understood about the Biblical text without its rootedness and contact with the Christ to whom it witnesses. Not memory or inspiration, but close personal, intimate contact. This of course leads to the necessity of metanoia, which is the change and transformation of our thinking and acting.

(http://rowanwilliams.archbishopofcanterbury.org/articles.php/1345/sermon-for-the-life-and-work-of-the-revd-prof-cfd-moule accessed June 5, 2017)

This praxis of presence plays into our concept of ministry. John Douglas Hall shares a Zen tale in the frontispiece at the beginning of his book God and Human Suffering: An Exercise in the Theology of the Cross (1986: 11). He writes,

> Soyen Saku walked past a house where he heard much crying because the master of the house lay dead. He entered, being well known in the locality, sat down and cried with them. Said one of those present, "Master, how can you cry? Surely you are beyond such things!" Soyen Shaku answered gently, "It is this which puts me beyond such things."

The author first saw this statement when in seminary. It has been at the forefront of his work as a minister for the last thirty years. Saku was a Buddhist monk and teacher who

came to the U. S. at the turn of the twentieth century to introduce Buddhism to Americans. His actions here are focused not on what he did, but rather on who he was. He was simply present with those who were grieving. The question put to him by one of his disciples is priceless. How can you be like them? How can you express emotion? What are you doing? Saku's ministry to the people in the house was simply one of presence. We often confuse ministry with simply doing. Indeed, in the Southern part of the USA the minister is often called "preacher." My wife was not amused in our first church in the country among farms and cows to be called by the members of the congregation "Mrs. Preacher Lady!" Saku, here, reminds us that ministry is not so much about doing as it is about being, that it is, to put it simply, about presence.

Steve Nolan suggests that ministry is about three forms of presence. First, is, what he terms 'evocative presence.' This is the evocation of images and fantasies through transference from patient, parishioner to chaplain, or pastor. This transference can be either positive or negative. Regardless, transference occurs. Second, is, 'accompanying presence.' This is the ability and praxis of being with someone regardless. This does not mean an attempt to manipulate, or coerce. It simply means 'being-with-someone.' Presence. In addition, finally, third is, "comforting presence." (Nolan 2011: 124-127) This last phrase originates from the Latin word *confortare* and has the sense of 'help' 'reinforce' 'comfort' 'console' 'fortify' or 'strengthen.' (Webster's 1976: 454) It is related to the Greek word παρακαλέω, which can mean "to call to one's side or called alongside of." (Thayer's 1889: 482) The Greek word also has the sense of providing aid or comfort.

The author has, above his desk, a picture of Matthias Grunewald's Isenheim Altarpiece. This is the image, which Barth made famous in his *Church Dogmatics* in the discussion of Scripture. Rather than Scripture, the author wants to highlight that ministry, in regards to presence, has much the same emphasis as Grunewald's figure of John the Baptist holding a Bible and pointing with his right hand to the crucified Christ. Though we are present with our parishioners, there stands a greater presence, the Presence of Jesus Christ. Ministry as the author understands it, particularly a ministry of presence is our witness to and highlighting Jesus Christ, crucified, resurrected and ascended. We are present, but our presence points to another, greater Presence. Joel Jueckstock, and Kyle Vlach note,

> "Effective pastoral care requires that the caregiver recognize not *only* the priority of divine agency but also one's own agency, seeking to align oneself with God's work. The task of reimagining a ministry of active presence is not necessarily concerned with the "what" of incarnational ministry but with the "how," specifically the ways in which the pastor's agency can be best aligned with God." (Jueckstock, Vlack 2015: 32)

7.3 A Trinitarian Incarnational Praxis of Prayer

In Chapter 6, we discussed the atonement. We looked at the kind of language one might conceivably use. We also examined John McLeod Campbell's understanding of the atonement. McLeod Campbell's view necessarily encompasses the whole of Practical Theology or Pastoral Theology. The issue that we raised regarding this, however, was the nature of the language that we might use. Are specific words and concepts interchangeable? Here we are back to the argument between Karl Barth and Paul Tillich. Barth sought to use language steeped in the Bible and in the history of the discipline of

Theology. Because Tillich disagreed with Barth, he sought to alter his language away from standard terms substituting instead terms from philosophy. The author believes that some terms and concepts merely have to be learned and assimilated. When one learns a new game, there are terms and concepts, which necessarily come along with it. In order to understand and appreciate the game one must learn both the words and the concepts to which the words point. In the game of chess, for example, there are concrete and non-negotiable terms, which one must just learn. A King is a king. A Bishop is a bishop. There are to be sure different words in different languages for the pieces and their movements, but the concepts are the same. In American Football, there are terms that one must just learn. Some of the terms are Clipping, Spearing, Face-masking, Holding, P-A-T, Offense, Defense, and so on. Having said this it is my contention that you must begin where the individual is.

We then discussed the background to the English word atonement. It meant 'at-one-ment.' Atonement is making two different people one in outlook, purpose, and being. It is reconciliation. From this, we raised the issue of atonement and pastoral concerns. Paul Pruyser's article on the atonement invited its readers to substitute words and concepts for particular Christian language in order to facilitate therapy more readily. He then suggested using each different perspective on the atonement depending on the particular therapeutic issue presenting itself. We decided that Pruyser's question was valid, but his answer wanting. Don Browning's approach was discussed next. He argues for a correlative conversation between psychology and theology. His goal was to see if psychological concepts could give rise to a model of the atonement, different from the classical models. Browning rightly hones in on the importance of the nature and

character of God with regard to any doctrine of the atonement. Browning characterizes four different assertions regarding the atonement. Number 2 is, "Atonement must come in such a way as not to jeopardize God's basic order and structure in the world." (1966: 90) As we have shown, in Jesus Christ reality and the basic order of the world has been altered for the better. Any assertion about the atonement must begin with this premise. Behold, there is a new creation. However, in spite of the flaw in Browning's findings, we recognized the importance of the questions he asked and the answers, which he proposed.

The Pastor's outlook regarding the atonement and in particular the person and work of Christ is fundamental in ministry. How we view the atonement influences how we proceed in ministry to people. If we view the atonement as conditional, and predicated on election (predestination) and thus, on a particular view of God, then we will proceed differently. We most likely will focus on conversion. The individual's in our congregation will need to show evidence of God's favorable attitude to them. How this affects the issues of a lack of assurance, anxiety and shame has been noted. In addition, this view of God is truncated and incorrect. It is also unpastoral.

If we have an alternate view of God and of God's relationship to humanity as a whole, particularly as this is revealed in the person and work of Christ, then our pastoral framework is different. One particular way this difference is revealed is in the prayer or prayers offered by the Minister during worship, home and hospital visitation, during Bible-study, indeed on every occasion prayer is warranted. If we understand God's nature to be kind, loving and merciful – 'Fatherly' – this is far different from a God capricious and unpredictable. Once again, Jesus is not only our model for prayer. He is our model for prayers *as* referent, content, and style; he is also the chief pray-er, as our

great High Priest where he lives eternally in the presence of the Father to intercede specifically for us. Our prayers then are a participation in Christ's continual prayers. Prayers proceed to God, not under our own power, even though we may pray them earnestly, but rather are shepherded by Jesus Christ who truly prays appropriately. As McLeod Campbell argued our prayers, our worship, our living is the eternal life ascending from us to the Father through the Son. As we worship, pray, live, speak and so on it is the Son honoring the Father. It is our lives lived in the spirit of sonship. This spirit of sonship is characterized by gratitude to God. Freedom, confidence and the recognition and acknowledgment of what God has done for us, in us and through us is the very nature of life. (1851: 93)

Having said this we need to be reminded that Christ as our great High Priest ministers the things we humans offer, prayers, worship, our whole lives, to God as our mediator. At the same time, he stands in God's place, mediating all the gifts of God, which God gives graciously, to us. There is a two-way ministry that occurs in Jesus' person simply because of whom he is. This theology, this Practical Theology then may issue in prayer to God on behalf of our congregation members and also the people of the community in which we live (and others). This may happen not because we have to pray, but because in gratitude we are allowed to communicate with God. Prayer, we must be reminded, is a dialogue with God in which God's communication with us takes priority. To speak to God and to hear God's speaking to us suggests a reciprocity and a dialogue between as Martin Buber put it—an I and a Thou. In prayer, we respond to God for what God has first done in our lives and in the lives of humanity in and through Jesus Christ. God speaks to us in a Word, which is so joyously overwhelming, so stupendous and all-

embracing that it is contemporaneous. There is no past tense to this Word. This Word speaks through all times as a present reality. As we mature in our lives of communication with God, we come to realize that our childish babbling is only an answer to God's communication to us. God speaks first. We respond. Everything which we might say to God is always a response to God's prior reaching out to us in communication and in revelation—manifesting himself to us in his mighty acts and Word. Because of these things, we have access to God. Through these things, we have fellowship and communion with the Father, through the Son, in the Spirit. We have been permitted, by grace, through Christ to glimpse God's inner nature, to ascend into it, to reach into the inner core of eternal truth and to rejoice in God's fatherly heart. We are bathed by this grace and mercy, this light, which is how Hans Urs von Balthasar puts it, which comes to us from the Father through the Son in the Spirit. (1955: 15) Through this insight, by the Spirit, we come to know that prayer is not only a conversation, but also a relationship between parent and child. We are privileged to be listeners. The important thing is to learn how to respond to God's initiative in grace through Christ to this truth imparted from God. Christ is truth, revealed to us and opened up to us for our sake. The truth is not in us, unfortunately. We know this and so seek truth in our innermost being. God's Word in Jesus Christ is the Father's invitation to be with him in this truth, by this way, so that we may have abundant life. As Hans Urs von Balthasar puts it "We are in danger of drowning on the open sea, and God's word is the rope ladder thrown down to us so that we can walk along it to the Father's throne." (1955: 15) It is the lighthouse light, which shines in the darkest storm to guide the weary and wayward sea-going vessel. It casts a nightlight on the softer issues of our lives that trouble us, while encouraging us not to

grow faint or weary. Finally, God's Word is Incarnate, it is himself, Jesus Christ—vital and salvifically energizing—the only Begotten Son, of the same nature as God himself, sent into the world to bring back the erring child, the world itself, to him. God commends Christ to us in all his glory when he says to us "This is my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased—listen to him!" (Matthew 17:5) Stressed and agitated by living we look for succor. We, however, fail to look in the right place for him who is our greatest medicine, as Augustine called Christ, casting about for other salves and pills that promise much, but deliver little. To look to Jesus Christ is to seek to discover God's inexhaustible Word, sufficient for every age and for everyone. As we seek to live in this light, we must listen repeatedly for God's Word, which addresses us in a new way daily—speaking to us personally, individually, specifically.

This will not be easy, but our conversation with God and our facility in listening to God will necessarily mature in content and substance as we mature as Christians. There is grace here to be discovered. It will require effort. It is found by deep thought. That this development may take a lifetime may be seen in the volume titled The Desert Fathers: Sayings of the Early Christian Monks (2003: 130)

> The brethren also asked Abba Agathon "Amongst all good works, which is the virtue which requires the greatest effort?" He answered "Forgive me, but I think there is no labour greater than that of prayer to God. For every time a man wants to pray, his enemies, the demons, want to prevent him. For they know that it is only by turning him from prayer that they can hinder his journey. What ever good work a man undertakes, if he perseveres in it, he will attain rest. But prayer is warfare to the last breath. That is the great struggle."

It is not just prayer that is a struggle throughout our life. Health is also a struggle. So too is glorifying God and enjoying him forever—the attempt can last a lifetime.

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