

Glory and Ecclesial Growth in Karl Barth's *Church Dogmatics*

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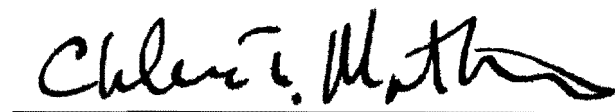
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ABSTRACT:

This study identifies the doctrine of glory as a means by which Karl Barth accounts for the attractive power of divine activity, especially in relationship to the Christian community. For Barth, the Christian community is drawn into its own growth - defined as numerical increase and the expansion of the church's worship - because God invests God's *triune* glory in Jesus Christ, in the Christian community, and in the entirety of creation. I argue this thesis through an analysis of Karl Barth's magnum opus, the *Church Dogmatics*. First, the dissertation considers Barth's doctrine of glory within his doctrine of God, analyzing the basic categories Barth delineates in his doctrine of glory. My analysis of Barth's doctrine of God illustrates that his doctrine of glory acts as a substructure after its introduction in II/1 of the *Church Dogmatics*. I argue that Barth's doctrine of election utilizes the concepts of glory in order to make sense of how Jesus Christ initiates and participates in the divine decision to create, restore and perfect the creation. Second, the dissertation considers how the doctrine of glory establishes a substructure in Barth's doctrine of reconciliation. Just as in Barth's doctrine of election, the substructure of glory allows Barth to account for the attractive and enabling power of the resurrection in and through the Christian community's activity, especially its growth. I conclude that this study challenges interpretations which detect an opposition between ontology and revelation in Barth's work. I also conclude that this study warrants reconsiderations of Barth's theology of the Holy Spirit and his status as a liturgical theologian.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgments	vii
Introduction	1
Chapter	
1. No Cowering Down: Glory in Barth's Doctrine of God	24
<i>Part One: Divine Glory in Church Dogmatics II/1</i>	26
Purposes of Barth's Doctrine of Glory	
Locating the Doctrine of Glory within Barth's Ontology in II/1	
Defining Glory Again	
Glorification as Attractive Gift	
Glorification as Ecclesial Growth	
<i>Part Two: Glory in Barth's Doctrine of Election</i>	60
The Importance of Election in Barth's Theology	
Guiding Questions	
Actors and Movement of Election	
Answering Our Questions	
2. Festal Attire: Ecclesial Growth in Barth's Doctrine of Reconciliation	102
<i>Part One: Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, Glory and the Church</i>	106
<i>Part Two: The Growth of the Christian Community</i>	116
God's Joy, Ephesians 4 and the Ecclesiology of IV/2	
The Church's Being is its Visibility	
The Church Grows	

The Church Fulfills its Creaturely Calling and Resists Sloth

The Church Worships

3. New Beginnings: The Resurrection and God's Glory **180**
in *Church Dogmatics* IV/1

Introduction to Chapters 3, 4 and 5 180

Introduction to Chapter 3: The Question of the Resurrection in IV/1 182

Part One: The Wilderness Temptations, Gethsemane and the Priestly Work of Jesus Christ 187

Barth's Thesis and Approach to the Judged Judge

Gethsemane: Jesus Christ's Obedience and the Father's Good-Pleasure

Excursus on Jesus Christ's Sacrifice:
The Temptations of Prayer

Part Two: The Verdict of the Father: The Father Shares His Joy in Jesus Christ's Self-Offering 206

Schleiermacher and Barth on the Resurrection

Resurrection, Glory and the Sharing of Divine Joy

Resurrection as the Beginning of a
New Time for the Church

4. Triune Transition: The Resurrection and God's Glory **238**
in *Church Dogmatics* IV/2

Part One: Forming Divine and Human Essence in the Incarnation 241

Thesis, Claims and Ground Rules
in 'The Homecoming of the Son of Man'

The Form of the Divine Essence in Jesus Christ

The Form of the Human Essence in Jesus Christ

Part Two: Resurrection, the Spirit and God's Triune Form 268

The Spirit as the Power of the Resurrection

The Pitfalls

The Holy Spirit as the power of the resurrected Lord

The Holy Spirit as the Spirit of Christ and the Spirit of God

Christ and the Spirit, the Spirit and Christ

The Holy Spirit: History in Partnership,
Triune Distance-Crossing and Glorification

Should We Wonder Where the Spirit Went?

**5. The Eloquent Telos: The Resurrection, the Church's
Mission and God's Glory in *Church Dogmatics* IV/3** 308

Part One: Jesus Christ, Mediator of Glory 312

Glory Incarnate: Why Jesus Christ is "The Light of Life"
and the Creation is "The Theatre of God's Glory"

Jesus is Victor: Why Jesus Christ's Glory is a Drama

The Promise of the Spirit and the Glory
of the Christian Community

Glory as the Theme of the Resurrection

Resurrection as the Actualization
of God's Binding to Creation

Why not more? Why not now? Glorious Grace
as Restraining God's Future

Part Two: Glory and the Missional Church 363

The Church within the Mission of the Trinity

The Church as the Visibility of the Triune God's eccentricity

Worship as the Core Form of Visibility

Formed in Worship, Forming the World in Witness

Conclusion	390
Bibliography	414

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Introduction

The Question and the Import

This dissertation considers the intersection of two questions. Barth claimed that the “absolutely sovereign grasping of human beings by God” is not “an act of force,” but instead “means attraction and activity in relation to the . . . direction received from the One who gives and requires his freedom.”¹ How can such a claim be warranted? How is God the sovereign Lord of the encounter with the Christian church in a non-violent way? Can God’s activity be “like a tornado” and yet not reduce human beings to puppets or chess pieces or pieces of sanctified shrapnel?² This study queries how Barth sustains such a claim in his doctrine of God and doctrine of reconciliation within the *Church Dogmatics*.

Although I will mention in a moment why this bears answering within the field of Barth scholarship, broader considerations apply. This question carries import because anyone who has spent a week teaching Christian theology to undergraduates will realize that late moderns often narrate a relationship with God in terms of their own ability to recognize and cooperate with God’s being and act. For many late moderns, perhaps especially in terms of their theological descriptions of how the divine relates to human activity, “to be free and to exercise our inherent freedom” requires that “we be autonomous, total initiators of our own actions.”³ Perhaps God in Christ can approach human beings with an offer of involvement in God’s reconciling activity, but surely God always allows human beings the freedom to absolutely reject involvement in God’s

¹ CD IV/3.2, 447. Translation modified.

² Ibid.

³ David Burrell, *Faith and Freedom* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2004), 175.

reconciling activity. Surely everything just comes down to faith, no? This “moral ontology”⁴ or “moral order”⁵ has various forms of life. It can be an impetus to courageous piety. It can be a depressive anxiety about one’s own capacity to recognize God’s reconciliation. It can be a grim recognition that whatever God does is right, true and proper, and the best form of piety is sheer acquiescence. It can be an intrigued consumption of all things theological, which allow one to cope with one’s life goals or help one makes sense of the entirety of being. In all forms, the relationship between the Creator and creature is conceived “in parallel or by way of simple contrast.”⁶ Thus, the way of out of these alternatives is a description in which God in Christ is “energizing our freedom” because God’s activity in Christ, as the creator of human action, does not compete with human activity.⁷

This study confirms what others have argued - that Barth does just that, especially in his descriptions of God’s investment of God’s own glory in Jesus Christ, in the Christian community and the entirety of creation. But, this study focuses more particularly on Barth’s assertion that God in Christ’s sovereign activity in reconciliation is not competitive with other human agents because it is attractive. On this question, Barth does not simply appeal to God’s identity and act as a creator of all human life and activity, such that human beings live and act in utter dependence on God’s abundant creativity.⁸ Within more Barthian terms, Barth does not appeal simply to the fact that human beings are what they are because they are caught up in the history of Jesus Christ

⁴ Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Univ. Press, 1989), 8.

⁵ Idem., *Modern Social Imaginaries* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004), 3-22.

⁶ Burrell, *Faith and Freedom*, 171.

⁷ Ibid., 172.

⁸ This is the basis of appeal in a whole series of recent work, including: Kathryn Tanner, *God and Creation in Christian Theology: Tyranny or Empowerment?* (Oxford; New York: Basil Blackwell, 1988), 95; Rowan Williams, *On Christian Theology* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2000), 68-69; David Burrell, *Faith and Freedom*, 17-19, 167, 218-221.

(although that is the case).⁹ Christian proclamation, and Christian theology which serves that proclamation, also appeals to an attractiveness in the divine life and activity. A parenting example establishes the point. Many young toddlers simply do not wish to sit down or settle down in order to eat. They are too busy enjoying some toy, a fold of their sister's hair, or attempting to extend their ability to crawl or walk as quickly as possible. But, many parents realize that they can draw their hungry toddlers into a meal by simply calling attention to the food prepared for them – say, by putting it in front of them or rapping the table near the food so that the toddler's attention is directed at the food. Once a hungry toddler spots food, the toddler is now drawn to the food, given the experience that consuming objects like applesauce can satisfy hunger. Parents could feed children by force or by trickery, for the sake of children's health and vitality. But parents also want children to learn to enjoy their food and feed themselves – so they draw the child into a meal. While God's activity fundamentally transcends this sort of interaction between parents and hungry toddlers, interactions like this bear some resemblance to the way that Barth discusses the mode of God's non-violent activity. Human beings are not simply energized to engage their freedom in discipleship, they are drawn into their own self-engagement with or self-inclusion within God's activity. My claim is that when Barth explains how human beings become attracted to an engagement with God's reconciling activity in creation, he uses the vocabulary of glory. Not only is God's activity constitutive of human being and activity (and thus non-competitive with it); but, since God is glorious, human beings take delight in responding to and participating in God's reconciling work in the world. For Barth, because God is glorious, human beings both

⁹ As John Webster succinctly describes Barth's approach to a doctrine of creation: "Creation is the necessary implication of God's primary work of grace in Jesus Christ" (John Webster, *Barth's Ethics of Reconciliation* [Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1995], 64).

recognize the reality of Christ's reconciling achievement and desire to participate in that reconciling activity. God's glory creates – by attraction – human subjectivity, human freedom, human intellection, human volition.

The second question regards Barth's statement that "everything which comes from God takes place in Jesus Christ, i.e. in the establishment of the covenant, which, in the union of His Son with Jesus of Nazareth, God has instituted and maintains and directs between Himself and his people."¹⁰ All of God's life and action centers on Jesus Christ, as Jesus Christ establishes a relationship between God and the Christian community. God's life and activity does not enable and draw out human life and activity in abstraction. God's life and activity enables and draws out the life of Jesus Christ, the life of God's community (both Israel and the Christian community), the life of Jewish and Christian individuals, and the life of nations and individuals outside of God's community, *in that order*. Thus, when Barth propounds that God's reconciling activity in Jesus Christ is both fully sovereign and attractive, he alludes to a whole order and variety of human recipients.

The recipient that will concern us throughout this study is the Christian community. How is it that God institutes, maintains and directs the covenant in Christ in an attractive, non-violent way? How is the community which participates in Jesus Christ's fulfillment of the covenant drawn into that participation by the Triune God? In other words, we will be working out our answer to the first question within the territory of the second question and vice versa. While the other recipients will be discussed along the way in order to situate Barth's account of the life and activity of the Christian community, it is the life and activity of the Christian community that will structure our

¹⁰ CD II/2, 8.

considerations of Barth's work. More specifically, we are asking how it is that the Christian church is drawn by God's glory into its own growth. In terms of the metaphor we put forth above, how does the divine glory induce the Christian community, as the Christian community, to develop its capacity to "feed" itself (whatever that might mean)? Less metaphorically, how is that God's glory attracts and persuades a Christian community to be a Christian community *per se* and to enact its own "upbuilding," as the letter to the Ephesians puts it?¹¹ What does it mean to upbuild the Christian community in the first place?

Again, as with the first question, broad considerations make this a relevant question. Anyone who teaches biblical texts with a theological approach in diverse settings will recognize that ecclesial identity falls prey to the late modern moral ontology mentioned above. Try teaching the Bible theologically to a diverse group of students in America, including those who cannot distinguish biblical commentary in study Bibles from the text itself. Theological arguments from the Bible are often treated with skepticism due to the sense that "it all depends on interpretation." Historian Mark Noll has argued that this skepticism is a uniquely American phenomenon, which came to the surface most damningly in the hermeneutics of race and slavery in the nineteenth century. American Protestant hermeneutics, in line with an individualistic piety, created a crisis for biblical authority. He writes, "'simple' readings of the Bible yielded violently incommensurate understandings of Scripture, with no means, short of warfare, to adjudicate the differences."¹² The issue is not simply Protestantism, but the revivalistic individualism which shaped American Protestantism. Noll points to other models even

¹¹ Ephesians 4.16.

¹² Mark Noll, *America's God* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2002), 396.

within Protestantism that considered the Christian community to be the primary interpreter of scripture, models which were, culturally speaking, unsuccessful (in the U.S. anyway).¹³ For instance, the Reformed theologian John Nevin argued in 1844 that Protestant revivalism had transformed justification by grace through faith into “justification by feeling.”¹⁴ While modern moral ontology allows a negotiation between God and human individuals to take place over the border of human freedom, it can and often does entirely disregard human communities as having any discernible ontological space. Christian communities of every stripe in North America struggle with the challenges of this ontology. Any treatment of the Christian community which describes its actuality and visibility in a way that resists a reduction of the Christian community to a means of individual experience of the divine is worth consideration. For Barth, because God invests God’s glory in Jesus Christ and invests God’s glory through Jesus Christ in the Christian community, the Christian church’s existence has both visibility and actuality. For Barth, just as God is visible and actuality, just so the Christian community *as a Christian community*, is visible and actual insofar as it gathers for worship and has the rest of its life shaped by that gathered worship.

The question of the dissertation is this: For Barth, how does God in Christ draw the Christian community, as a Christian community, into its own growth? The thesis is as follows. For Barth, the Christian community’s growth, defined as both its numerical progress and the intensification of the church’s worship in witness to the death, life and resurrection of Jesus Christ, is drawn out because God enacts the covenant with the

¹³ Ibid., 406-417.

¹⁴ John Williamson Nevin, *The Anxious Bench*, ed. Augustine Thompson (Eugene OR: Wipf and Stock, 2000), 16. Noll flags the Mercersburg movement as offering an alternative to the ecclesiology and biblicism of American revivalism (Noll, *America’s God*, 411-412).

community by investing God's *triune* glory in Jesus Christ, in the Christian community, and in entirety of creation. In sum, I argue that, for Barth, the investment of God's glory draws the Christian community into a common life of ever-expanding worship.

Status Quaestiones

One question that has repeatedly arisen in the history of Barth scholarship concerns the relationship between revelation and ontology. Many have argued that Barth's theology tends to reduce theology to a concern with revelation, such that questions surrounding personal and communal transformation, mediation, and reception of God's activity are hard to answer without simply repeating claims about revelation. This argument has taken two forms. The first form takes its cue from Hans Urs von Balthasar, who argued that "Barth ends up talking about Christ so much as *the* true human being that it makes it seem as if all other human beings are mere epiphenomena."¹⁵ Von Balthasar meant this in two ways. On the one hand, creation *as creation* cannot and does not have any proper meaning apart from its relationship to Jesus Christ.¹⁶ On the other hand, since all of reconciliation happens in the eternity of Jesus Christ's election, the Christian church's life, including its sacraments, are ascribed "to the cognitive order alone."¹⁷ For von Balthasar and others, Barth has created a constriction of reality, such that Jesus Christ is truly God and truly human, but other entities struggle to show up within the events of history.¹⁸

¹⁵ Hans Urs von Balthasar, *The Theology of Karl Barth*, Trans. Edward Oakes (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1992), 243. Stephen Wigley, *Karl Barth and Hans Urs von Balthasar* (London/New York: T & T Clark, 2007), 66 and 152.

¹⁶ Von Balthasar, *Karl Barth*, 242. Fergus Kerr follows this line of critique, especially as it seems to call into question the reliability of philosophical approaches which proceed apart from revelation in Christ (Fergus Kerr, *After Aquinas* [Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2002], 24-26).

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 371.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 393, 371. In one respect, G.C. Berkouwer followed Von Balthasar by asserting that Barth had made Christ into an over-arching system in which "grace is no longer seen in its unconditional grace-character" –

The second form of this argument has to do with the dominant metaphors utilized in Barth's theology. Since Barth frames theology around questions of revelation in response to what he regarded as a crisis in his teachers' so-called liberalism, he offers answers which elide authentic creaturely sanctification.¹⁹ This argument has been offered as of late with sophistication by Rowan Williams and Alan Torrance.²⁰ Williams points out Barth's claim early in the *Dogmatics* that God's knowability in humanity is established by God's own "creative address to man."²¹ In itself, this is not much of a problem, but Barth figures revelation within a "self-expressive" view of language and communication in which "speech is an externalizing of . . . the internal form of thought." Applied to theology, "in the Word, God literally utters himself, makes himself 'outer' . . . and so his speaking to man is also primarily self-expressive utterance, this time directed towards man."²² The metaphor employed by Barth within his doctrine of revelation is that of a speaker addressing a recipient, in which the speaker replicates externally what is already present internally.²³ Williams mentions two problems which stem from this. First, it incapacitates Barth's Trinitarian theology. The three persons of the divine life – or the three modes of being in Barth's parlance – cannot be said to relate to one another in love.²⁴ God is a single subject, not a life unified "in a system of relations."²⁵ Second,

salvation becomes a foregone conclusion if election works in the way that it works in Barth (G.C. Berkouwer, *The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth*, Trans. Harry Boer [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1956], 364).

¹⁹ See Gustaf Wingren, *Theology in Conflict: Nygren, Barth, Bultmann*, Trans. Eric Wahlstrom (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1958).

²⁰ Rowan Williams, "Barth on the Triune God," in *Karl Barth: Studies of His Theological Method*, Ed. S.W. Sykes (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979); Idem., "Word and Spirit," in *On Christian Theology*; Alan Torrance, *Persons in Communion* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1996).

²¹ Williams, "Barth on the Triune God," 148.

²² Ibid., 185-86.

²³ Put in other terms, Barth holds to an unfortunate modern sense of autonomy, only it is now read into the divine life. See John Macken, *The Autonomy Theme in the Church Dogmatics: Karl Barth and His Critics* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2008).

²⁴ Williams, "Barth on the Triune God," 181.

Barth has difficulty conceiving of how human beings can offer a reply to God, or do more than simply “hear and obey.”²⁶ Since only God has access to the internal knowledge of God, and that is what is expressed in revelation, human beings have nothing to offer but their acknowledgment and obedience. What does Williams want? He writes, “To put it metaphorically: it is not that we are simply addressed by a speaker; we are drawn into a conversation.”²⁷ Williams’ gift to Barth scholarship is that he has moved the conversation into territory that Barth’s own work calls forth. The issue is no longer a call to theorize a counter-factual meaning and expressiveness in creation apart from Christ, with the help of a generous *analogia entis*. The issue turns on whether Christian theology can do justice to the God who does reveal himself and to human beings as participants in that revelation.

Alan Torrance follows Williams’ critique quite closely.²⁸ The chief difference is that Torrance argues that Barth needed to centralize Christ’s priestly work as well as the act of worship.²⁹ Torrance also suggests fuller alternatives to Barth’s philosophy of language, his Trinitarianism, and his Christology.³⁰ While Barth made the mistake of considering sanctification and creaturely being within the frame of revelation, Torrance wants to make “communication . . . integral to the wider event of triune communion.”³¹

²⁵ Ibid., 182.

²⁶ Ibid., 186.

²⁷ Ibid., 180.

²⁸ “Barth opts for a revelation model of the theological task which led (paradoxically) to an inadequate interpretation of God’s Self-Communication – to the extent that this requires a more satisfactory exposition of the triune communion than Barth’s categories enabled him to offer” (Torrance, *Persons in Communion*, 1-2). Torrance does take exception to Williams’ suggestions that one of the problems is that Barth is an overweening Calvinist who wants God’s revelation to be irresistible (Ibid., 14). Cf. Williams, “Barth on the Triune God,” 156, 158.

²⁹ Torrance, *Persons in Communion*, 320-325.

³⁰ In short, he offers a theological adaptation of Wittgenstein, a trinitarianism which maintains the need to describe the Father, Son and Spirit as persons in communion, and a full description of Christ’s priestly work (Ibid., 325-355, 367-371, 320-325, respectively).

³¹ Ibid., 105. Cf. 364.

He does this by offering a “a ‘worship-oriented paradigm’ as opposed to a ‘revelation-oriented paradigm.’”³² In other words, using the term “person” analogously, the Father, Son and Spirit are all persons, and God is one person.³³ The communion between the persons depicts the triune life as one that has a “free and dynamic opening to humanity,” since the metaphor of a single speaker no longer shapes the doctrine of God.³⁴

Additionally, this does justice to the fact that participation in Christ by the Spirit is a participation in the worship of Jesus Christ, and as such participation in the divine life itself.³⁵ In other words, if Barth would have utilized social metaphors of the Trinity alongside other metaphors in his doctrine of the Trinity proper and would have centralized the worship of Jesus Christ, he would have avoided Williams’ critique. Readers of Barth would not be tempted to say that human beings simply hear and obey, but that they are indeed drawn into conversation, drawn into worship, drawn into the divine communion. Barth would also avoid Von Balthasar’s claim that human activity in relationship to reconciliation is ascribable to simple recognition of what God has already accomplished in Jesus Christ.

Another reading of Barth has emerged of late which seeks to establish Barth’s status as a liturgical theologian. While Torrance regrets Barth’s sidelining of Jesus Christ’s worship and worship as context in which theology is performed, Matthew Boulton’s work celebrates Barth as liturgical theologian.³⁶ For Boulton, “Barth thought

³² Ibid., 324.

³³ Ibid., 256-257.

³⁴ Ibid., 323.

³⁵ Ibid., 324.

³⁶ Matthew Boulton, *God Against Religion* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008); Idem., “‘We Pray By His Mouth’: Karl Barth, Erving Goffman, and a Theology of Invocation,” *Modern Theology* 17, no. 1 (January 2001), 67-83.

through worship.”³⁷ In Boulton’s hands, however, Barth’s critique of religion in the revised commentary of Romans and in volume one of the *Church Dogmatics* supports Boulton’s claim that “sin is . . . occasioned by liturgy itself.”³⁸ In other words, given Barth’s critique of religion, there is no reconciled or redeemed world (much less a prelapsarian world) in which worship in itself is not a break in the creature’s “friendship with God.”³⁹ Since worship creates a distance between God and humanity indescribable as mutual friendship, it must also be ended at the eschaton.⁴⁰ While Boulton movingly acknowledges that the Spirit and Jesus Christ take up worship in order to reconcile worshippers to God, that is simply a part of God’s project of ending worship altogether.⁴¹ According to Boulton, in Barth’s hands, reconciliation is liturgical and participatory, but only for the sake of carrying liturgy towards its destruction.

In part, readings which simply contrast revelation and ontology in Barth have been answered by work on Barth’s doctrine of God, anthropology, ethics, Christology and worship.⁴² This recent work diagnoses this line of interpretation in multiple ways. First, readings which contrast revelation and ontology in Barth’s work tend to discuss Barth’s doctrine of reconciliation in less depth than his doctrine of revelation and

³⁷ Ibid., 6. Interestingly, Boulton defends this claim without interacting with Torrance’s argument.

³⁸ Ibid., 12.

³⁹ Ibid., 37.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 184-194.

⁴¹ Ibid., 122-135.

⁴² On the doctrine of God, see Eberhard Jüngel, *God’s Being is in Becoming*, Trans. John Webster (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001); Bruce McCormack, *Karl Barth’s Critically Realistic Dialectical Theology* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995). On anthropology, see Jungel, *Barth-Studien* (Gütersloher: Gütersloher Verlagshaus Mohn, 1982). On ethics and worship, see Webster, *Barth’s Ethics of Reconciliation*; Jüngel, “Invocation of God as the Ethical Ground of Christian Action,” in *Theological Essays*, Trans. John Webster (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1989), 154-172; Nigel Biggar, *The Hastening that Waits: Karl Barth’s Ethics* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1996). On participatory response as a reality throughout the *Dogmatics*, see Wilfried Härle, *Sein und Gnade* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1975); Adam Neder, *Participation in Christ* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2009). On Christology, see Paul Jones, *The Humanity of Christ: Christology in Karl Barth’s Church Dogmatics* (London: T & T Clark, 2008).

doctrine of God.⁴³ Second, these interpretations tend to overlook or underplay the ontological implications of Barth's doctrine of election marked out clearly in the English literature by Bruce McCormack, such that God simultaneously shapes God's self and human beings into covenant partners in the history of Jesus Christ.⁴⁴ Third, these interpretations often harbor their own commitments to freedom and autonomy as "a kind of spiritual neutrality" as a ground of Barth's inability to recognize authentic human participation in reconciliation.⁴⁵ Fourth, these studies fail to recognize the important distinction Barth makes between *de facto* and *de jure* participation in Christ, a distinction well-highlighted by Adam Neder's recent monograph.⁴⁶ This study recognizes these critiques, their otherwise positive contributions to an understanding of Barth, and builds upon them.

Boulton's reading of Barth, on the other hand, takes advantage of the readings offered by the likes of Eberhard Jüngel and John Webster (significant figures in the diagnosis of the revelation-ontology contrast).⁴⁷ For instance, Boulton takes quite seriously that invocation, for Barth, is sponsored by the Holy Spirit as a primary mode of response to God's Word in Jesus Christ.⁴⁸ However, Boulton does not undertake any sort of engagement with Barth's discussion of the attributes of God in CD II/1, and especially not Barth's doctrine of glory. His work also fails to engage with the Christology proper that Barth offers in the doctrine of reconciliation, and instead proceeds quite quickly to

⁴³ For example, Torrance states numerous times throughout the text proper and in footnotes that Barth's doctrine of reconciliation is much more resistant to this argument without actually discussing the doctrine of reconciliation (Torrance, *Persons in Communion*, 106, 111, 314, 365).

⁴⁴ Bruce McCormack, *Karl Barth's Critically Realistic Dialectical Theology*, 453-464. See Jones, *The Humanity of Christ*, 68-87.

⁴⁵ Webster, *Barth's Ethics of Reconciliation*, 227.

⁴⁶ Neder, *Participation in Christ*.

⁴⁷ Boulton, 7.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 125.

Barth's ethics of reconciliation in the baptism fragment and the posthumous volume on the Christian life. The work by Webster which Boulton cites, while engaging with both Barth's doctrine of election quite directly and Barth's Christology, focuses on Barth's ethics of reconciliation without leaving Barth's doctrine of God behind.⁴⁹ Boulton fails to learn an important lesson from Eberhard Jüngel with regard to Barth's anthropology: "that man in whose historical existence God defined himself and, in the act of his self-definition, also defined us: the man Jesus."⁵⁰ The man Jesus who is determined by God's own self-definition toward the man Jesus simply does not show up in Boulton's account. If he had, then Boulton would have scoured Barth's doctrine of God who determines himself in relationship to Jesus Christ's worship and vice versa. This, in turn, would have led Boulton to consider Barth's doctrine of glory and dig into what Barth has to offer in the way of Jesus Christ's incarnation of God's glory. But, the reader cannot find those fundamental Barthian turns in Boulton's work.

Studies which attend to Barth's doctrine of glory, though minimal, are growing.⁵¹ With a couple of exceptions, these treatments stay close to how Barth describes glory in CD II/1, without examining how the doctrine of glory integrates into various layers of

⁴⁹ Webster, *Barth's Ethics of Reconciliation*. Boulton refers to this source on page 7.

⁵⁰ Jüngel, "Humanity in Correspondence to God," in *Theological Essays*.

⁵¹ Christopher Holmes, *Revisiting the Doctrine of the Divine Attributes* (New York: Peter Lang, 2007), 12-21, 71-88; idem., "The theological function of the doctrine of the divine attributes and the divine glory, with special reference to Karl Barth and his reading of the Protestant Orthodox," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 61 (2): 206-233; Webster, "'Eloquent and Radiant': The Prophetic Office of Christ and the Mission of the Church" in *Barth's Moral Theology*, (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1998), 125-150; Joseph Mangina, *Barth on the Christian Life* (New York: Peter Lang, 2001), 132-139; Otto Weber, "Die Herrlichkeit Gottes," *Reformierte Kirchenzeitung* 90 (1949), 259-266; Wolf Krötke, "Gottes Herrlichkeit und die Kirche: Zum Gottesverständnis der Auseinandersetzung zwischen Karl Barth und Otto Dibelius," *Kirchliche Zeitgeschichte* 2 (1989), 437-450; Jürgen Moltmann, "Schöpfung, Bund und Herrlichkeit," *Zeitschrift für Dialektische Theologie* 3 (1987), 191-214; Hans Urs Von Balthasar, *Seeing the Form*, Vol. 1, *The Glory of the Lord*, Trans. Erasmo Leiva-Merikakis (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1982), 52-57; idem., *The New Covenant*, Vol. 7, *The Glory of the Lord*, Trans. Brian McNeil (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1989), 18-24.

Barth's work later in the *Church Dogmatics*.⁵² More constructive studies of glory are also appearing as of late, but they usually neglect Barth in favor of von Balthasar's massive treatment of glory.⁵³ The chief reason for this neglect of Barth's doctrine of glory, especially as it impacts other layers of the *Church Dogmatics*, is probably von Balthasar. First, von Balthasar clearly thematizes glory as an intrinsic part of Christian theology, and so attention falls upon his work as the source in twentieth century theology for thinking about glory. Second, and perhaps more importantly, von Balthasar indicated that Barth neglected to carry through his aesthetics into the rest of the *Dogmatics*.⁵⁴ While von Balthasar was right to say that Barth did not carry an *aesthetics* through the *Dogmatics*, it is not true that he did not carry his doctrine of glory through the *Dogmatics*. Thus, those who invest a doctrine of glory with all that they desire in a theological aesthetics have disregarded Barth's work.⁵⁵ In part, this dissertation will argue that what others seek to accomplish through a theological aesthetics, Barth accomplishes without making a move to aesthetics.

⁵² At some level, Webster's "'Eloquent and Radiant'" is an exception, but it spends more time thinking about Barth's approach to Christ's prophetic office than to how IV/3 integrates motifs from II/1 into this layer of Barth's Christology. Krötke thinks about how glory integrates with ecclesiology in Barth, but only in Barth's dialogue with Otto Dibelius ("Gottes Herrlichkeit und die Kirche"). Weber's multi-part article on God's glory in 1949 is actually merely a summary of the second and third volumes of the *Kirchliche Dogmatik*, without any special attention to the unique dynamics of Barth's doctrine of glory (Weber, "Die Herrlichkeit Gottes").

⁵³ Christopher Morgan and Robert A. Peterson, eds., *The Glory of God* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2010). Stephen Nichols' survey of the history of glory in this volume spends a fair amount of time with Von Balthasar in a text dominated by Protestant (more particularly Reformed and evangelical) concerns and sources ("Glory of God Past and Present," 23-46). Barth does not appear once in this essay or in the entire volume. James Hamilton Jr. has written a biblical theology of glory which mentions Barth once, but only in connection to hermeneutical concerns (*God's Glory in Salvation through Judgment* [Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2010], 44).

⁵⁴ Von Balthasar, *The New Covenant*, 22. Stephen Wigley repeats this judgment (*Barth and Von Balthasar*, 76). Noel O'Donoghue claims that "Herrlichkeit is in some ways a rewriting of Barth's Church Dogmatics," implying that it needed to be rewritten with due attention to glory ("A Theology of Beauty" in *The Analogy of Beauty*, Ed. John Riches [Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1986], 3).

⁵⁵ Christopher Morgan and Robert Peterson's volume cited above is a case in point (Footnote 51).

Studies dedicated to Barth's doctrine of the church are massive in comparison with the scholarship on Barth's doctrine of glory.⁵⁶ The best recent studies which bear on ecclesiology usually discuss elements of his ecclesiology within ethical concerns that transcend the ecclesial or are focused on one layer of Barth's ecclesiology.⁵⁷ With regard to worship, many studies are particularly taken with considering Barth's doctrine of baptism.⁵⁸ In addition what we have already discussed, there is some, but not much attention to Barth's theology of worship in general.⁵⁹ Also, while there is minimal attention to Barth's theology of ecclesial growth in the general studies of Barth's ecclesiology, no studies relate it directly to Barth's other concerns.⁶⁰ Other work which does discuss Barth's theology of growth tends to focus on individual sanctification, not the church as a group per se.⁶¹ Only two articles have connected Barth's doctrine of glory

⁵⁶ In addition to the work cited above by Webster and Jüngel, the most important works for our purposes are Colm O'Grady, *The Church in the Theology of Karl Barth* (Washington: Corpus Books, 1968); idem., *The Church in Catholic Theology: Dialogue with Karl Barth* (London: G. Chapman, 1969); Kimlyn Bender, *Karl Barth's Christological Ecclesiology* (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2005); John Flett, *The Witness of God* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010); Eberhard Busch, "Die Kirche am Ende ihrer Weltgeltung: Zur Deutung der Ekklesiologie Karl Barths" in *Das Wort, das in Erstaunen setzt, verpflichtet*. Ed. Dieter Jeschke and Eckhard Langner, et al. (Zurich: Brockhaus Verlag, 1994), 83-97; Jean-Louis Leuba, "Die Ekklesiologie Karl Barths," in *Unsichtbare oder sichtbare Kirche?*, Ed. Martin Hauser (Freiburg: Universitätsverlag, 1992), 59-82.

⁵⁷ In addition to Webster, see also Paul Nimmo, *Being in Action* [London: T & T Clark, 2007]; Mangina, *Barth on the Christian Life*, ch. 5. Nimmo's quite comprehensive account of Barth's ethics in the *Dogmatics* gives some notice to ecclesiology but the focus is on individual "being in action" (*Being in Action*, 158-161, 183-184).

⁵⁸ Archibald James Spencer, *Clearing a space for human action: Ethical ontology in the theology of Karl Barth* (New York: Lang, 2003).

⁵⁹ Friedemann Merkel, "Karl Barth und der kirchliche Gottesdienst," *Jahrbuch für Liturgik und Hymnologie* 30 (1987), 30-42; Andreas Pangritz, "Politischer Gottesdienst," *Communio viatorum* 39 (1997), 215-247. Bender's *Karl Barth's Christological Ecclesiology* and Colm O'Grady's *The Church* are surveys which include short treatments.

⁶⁰ Bender, *Christological Ecclesiology*, 180-181. Nigel Biggar spends a chapter in *Hastening that Waits* responding to Hauerwas' early arguments against Barth's capacity to describe Christian growth, but both Biggar and Hauerwas are focused on individual growth within the context of community, not the growth of the community as a community (Biggar, *Hastening that Waits*, 123-145; Stanley Hauerwas, *Character and the Christian Life* [South Bend, IN: Univ. of Notre Dame Press, 1989], 169-178).

⁶¹ Mangina, *Barth on the Christian Life*; Adam Neder, *Participation in Christ*. One recent exception to this is Nimmo, *Being in Action*, 183-184, 158-161.

and his ecclesiology, and none have connected Barth's doctrine of glory to his theology of ecclesial growth.⁶²

Chapter Outline

Chapter one analyzes Barth's two volumes on the doctrine of God in light of my questions and thesis. I put forward three theses in this chapter. First, I argue that one purpose of Barth's doctrine of glory in II/1 of the *Church Dogmatics* is to explain how human beings are drawn non-violently into a *de facto* participation in Jesus Christ's being and activity. In doing this, I establish a working vocabulary of glory, especially highlighting God's pleasure or joy and God's form as core terms within Barth's doctrine of glory. I also pay attention to the way that Barth considers the church's growth to be a matter of the interpenetration of ordinary life and liturgical activity. This allows the reader to identify those concerns and concepts as they emerge in Barth's doctrine of election. It also prepares the reader to recognize similar threads in the doctrine of reconciliation, discussed in the following chapters. Second, I argue that, for Barth, human communities are drawn into a *de facto* participation in Jesus Christ by communally bearing – living in common responsibility to – the glory of God's triune election in and through worship. As the one who fulfills the covenant, Jesus Christ bears the Triune election as a human being when he countenances the glory of God's elective love by electing God in prayer. In and with Jesus Christ, the Christian community elects God in Christ as a community in worship. For Barth, when Christian communities become both *responsive to* God's election and God's glory and *participants in* God's election and glory for the sake of the rest of creation, their gathered worship happens. Third, I argue,

⁶² Webster, "Eloquent and Radiant" and Krötke, "Gottes Herrlichkeit und die Kirche." See footnote 52 above.

that Barth's decisions in his doctrine of glory fit quite well with his revision of the doctrine of election. For Barth, the doctrine of election can be legitimately identified as "the sum of the Gospel" only if it fits with the trinitarian shape of God's glory, especially as it is expressed in God's good-pleasure.⁶³

Chapter two turns directly to Barth's ecclesiology in the first two volumes of his doctrine of reconciliation (IV/1 and IV/2) and thus is the dissertation's first expression of the substructure of glory within the doctrine of reconciliation. It focuses particularly on Barth's account of ecclesial self-engagement and ecclesial growth, as both dynamics are empowered by the glory of the Triune God. The chapter shows that God's glory, and especially the cluster of terms which God's good-pleasure encapsulates, is part of the matrix of answers as to how the Christian community is self-engaged in its *de facto* participation in the reconciliation accomplished in Jesus Christ – including the community's growth. But the chapter focuses itself more directly on the ecclesial growth that results from the drawing power of God's glory. In sum, I argue that, for Barth, Christian communities grow as their worship - conceived as both liturgy and the day-to-day service of Christian communities – takes on a form that corresponds to the divine joy invested in Jesus Christ's accomplishment of reconciliation.

In chapters three, four and five, my focus shifts to how Barth describes the triune God's acts of reconciliation which result in self-involved ecclesial growth. These chapters show that reference to God's glory is part of how Barth answers that question within the doctrine of reconciliation. Thus, given that these chapters consider Barth's doctrine of reconciliation, my overall question in this dissertation is reformulated according to Barth's *modus operandi*: for Barth, how does the history of Jesus Christ

⁶³ II/2, 10.

draw the Christian community into its own growth? For Barth, the life and death of Jesus Christ opens itself to the Christian community most decisively in the event of the resurrection. Together, these chapters show that in the event of the resurrection, the triune God glorifies Jesus Christ's life and death, drawing the Christian community into its own growth. For Barth, in the event of the resurrection, the triune God draws the Christian community into its own self-development by investing God's triune glory – the same glory which empowers and is embodied in Jesus Christ's life and death - in the rest of creation, beginning with the Christian community. Chapter three focuses primarily on IV/1, and chapter four on IV/2, and chapter 5 on IV/3. Chapter five also attends to the Christian community, because the Christian community participates in the mediation of Jesus Christ to itself and the rest of humanity.

Chapter three deals with how, for Barth in IV/1, the glorification of Jesus Christ's life and death in the resurrection initiates a new temporality, which amounts to an opportunity for the church to grow. I prepare for this by summarizing Barth's account of Jesus Christ's life and death in IV/1, especially as he connects the pleasure of the Father and the prayers of Jesus Christ. I also note that Barth conceives of the cross as the destruction of all humanity, the end of its time – that is the problem that the resurrection addresses, as Barth describes it in IV/1. I argue, first of all, that the substructure of glory appears as Barth frames the resurrection as an intratriune activity between the Father and Son, such that the Father issues his joy upon the Son in the resurrection and thus the Son can and does begin his own resurrected appearance to the Christian community. Second, the Triune God also shares God's own good-pleasure with the Christian community in the resurrection, such that history and the Christian community has a new beginning in

God's own beginning – God's joy in God's own life, which enacts God's election to be God for the creation. In sum, I argue that, for Barth, in the resurrection, the Father shares his good-pleasure in the Son's self-offering on the cross, thereby initiating a temporal field for the activity of the Christian community.

Chapter four addresses how, for Barth in IV/2, the glorification of Jesus Christ's life and death in the resurrection not only opens a temporal beginning for the Christian community, but also draws the Christian community into an ever-renewing maturation from that beginning. I have two basic arguments. The first argument is preliminary and cursory. The task of my preliminary argument is to identify how the substructure of Barth's doctrine of glory operates in his description of Jesus Christ's life and death in IV/2. The previous chapter focuses on Barth's use of the good-pleasure of God in his Christology in IV/1. This chapter brings us to the other key term within the landscape of Barth's doctrine of glory: form. When God takes pleasure in a creature or creatures, the creature's form changes and conforms to that joy. It is Jesus Christ's *form* of obedience which pleases the Father. God's joy in God's own triune form turns toward the man Jesus, and thus produces in Jesus Christ a human form of life corresponding to the triune form of life (i.e. his obedience). This prepares the reader for the central burden of the chapter, which is how the resurrection draws out the Christian community in IV/2. The issue that Barth addresses in his doctrine of the resurrection in IV/2 is that the cross is not only an end to human history, it is also an absolute achievement. The cross, with Barth, is the absolute fulfillment of the covenant, since God fulfills both the human and divine side of the covenant in Jesus Christ. Yet, the Christian community's activity, including its growth, is not depicted as a redundancy in comparison to the completeness of Jesus

Christ's fulfillment of the covenant. Jesus Christ's complete fulfillment of the covenant renders the Christian community's growth an ever-renewed gift. My central argument is that, for Barth in IV/2, the resurrection glorifies the Christian community as the Christian community is directed by the Son and taken by the Spirit into the ever-renewing history – or *form*, in the language of glory - of the triune God. In the resurrection, the Triune God shares the Triune God's own form, God's own distance-crossing or history in partnership, the Triune God's own intratrinitarian transition between the Father and the Son - i.e. the Holy Spirit - making possible the ongoing growth of the Christian community. Put another way: Given God's investment of God's triune form in Jesus Christ's life and in the Christian community through the resurrected Son and the imparted Spirit, the Christian community's form can and does correspond to the growth of the Son and the history of the triune life – that is, the Christian community grows.

In chapter five we turn to Barth's doctrine of the resurrection and his ecclesiology in IV/3. In this chapter we will survey Barth's argument, focusing our attention on how IV/3 displays the Triune God's own self-glorification *through* the Christian community for the sake of the rest of humanity and even the rest of creation. The first thesis is that, for Barth, Jesus Christ glorifies himself through the presence of the Holy Spirit by promising, in the Christian community's life, the binding of God's self to creation, the corresponding completion of creation at his return, and God's own future. Not only does the Christian community have its beginnings in the Triune God's own joyful beginning, turned toward creation (chapter 3/IV/1). Not only does it have its movement in God's own transition, turned toward creation (chapter 4/IV/2). But, the Christian community also has its end, and thus its movement toward this end, in God's own future. This is how

God's life, in Jesus Christ, the draws the Christian community into its telos, which is also the telos of the rest of human history and the rest of creation. Second, in part two, I argue that, for Barth, the being and act of the Christian community draws others into itself because its mediation of the sending of Jesus Christ - especially through gathered worship - corresponds to God's glory and the future glory of the humanity and creation.

Sources, Methods, and Goals

The overall thesis of this dissertation and the specific theses within each of the chapters are, in part, argued through comparisons with thinkers who influence Barth and who are indebted to Barth, especially with regard to Barth's doctrine of glory. At certain points, it may appear that I am arguing for a conscious dependence on the part of Barth, as though he was positioning himself against certain claims of his forebearers. At times this is true (for example, with regard to Calvin's construal of creation as the theatre of God's glory). But for the most part the comparisons are made for the sake of locating Barth more clearly, not for the sake of determining Barth's own conscious positioning. At certain points, I also draw attention to figures that discuss similar questions to Barth but may not have clear connections to Barth (for example, with regard to Nicholas Wolterstorff). I do this in order to show Barth's ongoing relevance to constructive Christian theology, not in order to establish a genetic relationship.

In part, the goal of this study is to thicken the interpretive work done on Barth's so-called "moral ontology" by showing that Barth's doctrine of glory is an essential layer in how Barth describes God's "action-eliciting divine activity."⁶⁴ Without attention to that layer of Barth's moral ontology, interpreters will not make full sense of Barth's claim that the church's action is drawn out non-violently by God's activity. While

⁶⁴ Webster, *Barth's Ethics of Reconciliation*, 7.

previous work can identify that divine activity draws out human action due to the mutual self-determination of God and humanity in Jesus Christ, it has not yet fully addressed persuasive, non-violent, attractive character of God's activity, as Barth describes it. Second, in a very modest way, this study aims to foster more dialogue about how Protestant theology can recover an articulation of ecclesial self-development (as opposed to individual growth in sanctification) within Barth scholarship, within Protestant theology, and within Christian theology at large. Third, it seeks to re-orient discussion of Barth as a liturgical theologian, against those who might wish to claim that Barth functionalizes worship or diminishes its importance as an activity that defines human being and activity.

Also, the interpretive lens I exhibit in the project is due to my own dialogue with a number of influences: postliberal currents in contemporary theology which take ecclesial practice – especially liturgical practice - to be constitutive of theological meaning and fundamental for Christian ethical reflection; the Reformed Christian tradition's vigilance in conforming ecclesial practice to Scripture while rejecting revolution as a model of change; the reconsideration in western English language theology, in light of the tonalities of Eastern Orthodoxy, of the themes of participation and deification; and even the boldness with which figures in Radical Orthodoxy (and others such as David Bentley Hart) have proclaimed the uniqueness of Christian forms of ontology. I believe all of these currents help interpreters locate Barth's goals, methods and substructures, because each of them bears some historical relationship to Barth (as either part of the tangled legacy of Barth's work or the long historical context in which Barth was situated). Barth cannot be pegged as a paragon for any of these movements –

his thought is too unique for that. But we would be remiss if we neglected these streams of sensibility in interpreting Barth because he addresses the concerns of each of them. This dissertation provides some cursory hints as to how Barth does this. But, on the whole, it simply prepares the ground for more direct engagements.

Chapter One: No Cowering Down: Glory in Barth's Doctrine of God

Hope of old people,
Never assuaged.
They wait for their day
Of power and glory.¹

You were loved first, that you might become worthy to be loved.²

Introduction

The task of this chapter is to analyze Barth's doctrine of glory within both parts of volume two of the *Church Dogmatics*, which constitutes his treatment of the doctrine of God. I will identify the purposes of Barth's doctrine of glory and elucidate the basic concepts with which Barth addresses those purposes. Within the scope of the larger argument of the dissertation, this chapter will then provide me with a working Barthian vocabulary of glory, which I will track in the doctrine of reconciliation in the following chapters. Indeed, we will begin to see the substructural use of Barth's doctrine of glory even within volume two, as we see how it is put to use in Barth's doctrine of election and the role it plays within Barth's consideration of the divine attributes.

I put forward three theses in this chapter. I argue the first two theses throughout the chapter. First, I argue that one purpose of Barth's doctrine of glory in II/1 of the *Church Dogmatics* is to explain how human beings are drawn non-violently into a *de facto* participation in Jesus Christ's being and activity. Second, I argue that, for Barth,

¹ Czeslaw Milosz, "From the Rising of the Sun," in *The Collected Poems* (Hopewell, NJ: The Ecco Press, 1988), 253.

² Augustine, Sermon 142.5.

human communities are drawn into a *de facto* participation in Jesus Christ as they communally bear – live in common responsibility to – the glory of God’s triune election in and through worship. As the one who fulfills the covenant, Jesus Christ bears the Triune election as a human being when he countenances the glory of God’s elective love by electing God in prayer. The Christian community, like Jesus Christ in prayer, is elected in order to elect. In and with Jesus Christ, the Christian community elects God in Christ as a community in worship. For Barth, when Christian communities become both *responsive to* God’s election and God’s glory and *participants in* God’s election and glory for the sake of the rest of creation, their gathered worship happens.

The third layer of the argument in this chapter is in part two. In part two, I take advantage of Barth scholarship which argues that the doctrine of election – the primary question of II/2 – proved to be a turning point in Barth’s work. I argue, in support of this line of scholarship that Barth’s decisions in his doctrine of glory fit quite well with his revision of the doctrine of election. Indeed, his doctrine of glory – especially the way that he describes God’s joy or pleasure in trinitarian terms – creates a pattern that calls out for some sort of revision of the concept of God’s good-pleasure, as that concept was utilized in many traditional accounts of the doctrine of election. For Barth, the doctrine of election can be legitimately identified as “the sum of the Gospel” only if it fits with the trinitarian shape of God’s glory, especially as it is expressed in God’s good-pleasure.³

One final note: My discussion below intersects with the debate that has emerged over what Bruce McCormack calls the “logical relationship between the being of God as

³ II/2, 10. My references to the *Church Dogmatics* (the English translation of *Kirchliche Dogmatik*) follow standard practice in Barth scholarship: volume/part, page number. My quotations are from the *Church Dogmatics* and I will sometimes add the abbreviation CD to indicate this. Often I also refer to the *Kirchliche Dogmatik*, and will abbreviate references to it as KD. I will indicate when I modify the CD translation and if the quotation is translated and references only KD, I have provided my own translation.

triune and the eternal act of election.”⁴ My presentation does assume that God shapes God’s being in accord with God’s act of election. In other words, I agree with the general claim that, for Barth, the immanent Trinity is not untouched by election. I also assume that a shift has been made between II/1 and II/2, such that Barth much more boldly comes to terms with the implications of the doctrine of election for God’s immanent life.⁵ Due to my purposes here, however, I withhold judgment on this narrow question of the logical *priority* of election. My contribution to this discussion is to say that Barth’s account of the drawing power of God’s activity wholly depends upon his trinitarian theology. If interpreters think that, in Barth’s theology, it is most consistent to say that the trinity depends logically on election and not vice versa, then they will be saying that Barth’s way of describing the attractive power of God’s action will also need to be revised.⁶

Part One: Divine Glory in *Church Dogmatics* II/1

Purposes of Barth’s Doctrine of Glory

⁴ Bruce McCormack, “Election and the Trinity: Theses in response to George Hunsinger.” *Scottish Journal of Theology* 63, no. 2 (2010), 203.

⁵ As one interesting example: On the basis of the idea that God could satisfy God’s self with God alone, Barth claimed that “we are tied to God, but not God to us” (II/1, 281). Yet, as Barth begins his doctrine of election, he says just the opposite: “. . . if God is to exhaustively described and represented as the Subject who governs and determines everything else, there must be an advance beyond the immediate logical sense of the concept to the actual relationship in which God has placed Himself; a relationship outside of which God no longer wills to be and no longer is God, and within which alone He can be truly honored and worshipped as God. If it is true that it pleased the fullness of God to dwell in Jesus Christ (Col. 1.19) { *dass es der Fuelle Gottes gefiel, in Jesus Christus Wohnung zu nehmen* }, then in a Christian doctrine of God this further step is unavoidable . . . Jesus Christ is . . . Himself the relation . . . (the) relationship of God to the world” (II/2, 7). However, Barth also says in II/1 that the bond that God has elected to have with creation—out of the freedom of God’s glorious love—is a “bond with which He has bound Himself” and is “the fact of His nature for the sake of which we are bound to Him” (II/1, 514). Clearly, given statements like this, II/2 solidifies and makes conspicuous moves that are made throughout the *Church Dogmatics*. That is why Eberhard Jungel, in *God’s Being is in Becoming*, can make the case he does from I/1 (Eberhard Jungel, *God’s Being is in Becoming*, trans. John Webster [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001], 27ff).

⁶ I refer to McCormack’s claim that the triunity of God is “logically . . . a function of divine election” (Bruce McCormack, “Grace and Being: The role of God’s gracious election in Karl Barth’s theological ontology,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Karl Barth*, Ed. John Webster [Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2000], 103.

Barth's first direct and explicit presentation of glory in the *Church Dogmatics* appears in paragraph 31 of II/1, the first half of Barth's doctrine of God. God's glory "is God Himself in the truth and capacity and act in which He makes himself known as God."⁷ God's glory is "the fullness of God's deity" because it is "the emerging, self-expressing, and self-manifesting reality of all that God is."⁸ For Barth, glory is God's self-expressiveness, that which makes God accessible. Glory is God's capacity to be communicated or recognized, God's capacity to have an audience, a witness. As Wolf Krötke puts it, "Voraussetzung dieses Verständnisses der Herrlichkeit Gottes ist . . . dass die Herrlichkeit Gottes eigentlich darauf zielt, *gesehen* zu werden."⁹ Barth's purpose is to absolutely affirm God's "freedom to love" in relationship to the creation: "in the fact that He is glorious He loves."¹⁰ Due to God's glory, God can be described as one who truly and successfully "seeks and finds fellowship, creating and maintaining and controlling it." If God's life in the creation can be accessed by the creature, then God's freedom to love the creature would be conditioned by the creature's capacity to recognize God's life. God is graceful, holy, unified and omnipresent and thus has *de jure* fellowship with creatures. But if *de facto* fellowship with God is to be achieved, then that gracefulness, holiness, unity and omnipresence within the creation must be declared by God alone. As Christopher Holmes puts it, "glory . . . reiterates God's divinity in his act of establishing covenant fellowship."¹¹ Creaturely fellowship with God, at all levels, is something

⁷ Barth, II/1, 641.

⁸ II/1, 643.

⁹ Wolf Krötke, "Gottes Herrlichkeit und die Kirche," *Kirchliche Zeitgeschichte* 1989 (2): 445.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 641.

¹¹ Christopher Holmes, *Revisiting the Doctrine of the Divine Attributes* (New York: Peter Lang, 2007), 74.

induced by God in God's own life. God's glory accounts for his lordship over God's own transition to creatures.¹²

The primary purpose of Barth's treatment of the divine glory is to establish that God makes God's own life accessible to creatures.¹³ But Barth also has a subsidiary purpose: to delineate a non-violent relationship between divine and human activity. God's glory is a presence "which opens them . . . which also looses at once tongues

¹² The same concern can be registered in von Balthasar's appropriation of Barth's theology of glory, which works to establish "a point of unity that would serve to provide justification for the demand of faith" (*Love Alone is Credible*, Trans. D.C. Schindler [San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2004], 9, cf. 75).

¹³ Calvin's doctrine of glory sits within Calvin's clear distinction between God as God is in himself and God in relation to the creation. Calvin makes his belief very clear: "We know God, who is himself invisible, only through his works" (*Comm. Genesis Argumentum*, in Zachman, *Image and Word*, 53). Only God's acts toward and within the creation make it possible for human beings to know God. Yet, glory is not simply God's status which God reveals through the economies of creation and redemption. Instead, God opens God's self - God's own powers - to the creation, through the creation itself. As Calvin states famously near the beginning of the *Institutes*, "... his essence is incomprehensible; hence, his divineness far escapes all human perception. But upon his individual works he has engraved unmistakable marks of his glory, so clear and so prominent that even unlettered and stupid folk cannot plead the excuse of ignorance" (*Institutes*, I.5.1). God is glorious apart from the creation, according to Calvin. (*Comm Ps. 115.16* and see Zachman, *Image and Word*, 47). Yet, it is from God's glory and to God's glory - it is from God's divineness and to God's divineness - that God moves in creation. Thus, when God marks the creation with God's powers, God makes God's own self available in creation. This is not to say that God becomes entirely visible in revealing himself. Randall Zachman has recently pointed out quite nicely that, for Calvin, "God always remains invisible even when God renders Godself somewhat visible" (Zachman, *Image and Word*, 53). For example, Calvin claims in his commentary on Exodus 20.4, "It is wrong for men to seek the presence of God in any visible images, because he cannot be represented to our eyes" (*Comm. Exodus 20.4*, in Zachman, *Image and Word*, 52). God's actions in the creation are fully mediated by the creation. We do not know God as God is in Godself. We know God, but we do not know God as God in God's self.

Randall Zachman's *Image and Word* is a key text for those wanting to compare Barth's doctrine of glory with Calvin. Zachman's project is to show that, for Calvin, "The goodness of God not only proclaims and attests itself in truth, but it also manifests and exhibits itself in beauty" (3). The result, among scholarship on Calvin, is that "the interdependence of the Word and work of God, or proclamation and manifestation, is not present in a few isolated topics of Calvin's theology but is central to the way he thinks theologically" (7). Susan Schreiner's *The Theatre of His Glory* (Durham: Labyrinth Press, 1991) appears to be an important source as well. The argument is that Calvin's doctrine of creation centers itself "on the concept of order" because Calvin wanted to secure a doctrine of God's faithful providence amidst the chaos of the sixteenth century (*Theatre of His Glory*, 3). Hence, the book really addresses how God's providence prevails in creation, but it does little to thematize glory itself until it deals with the twentieth century debates about natural theology in the conclusion. And, there, the conclusion is that is God's order has not been restored to nature and history (122). Thus, the point of contact debates between Barth and Brunner (and others) does not intersect directly with Barth's work, because those have to do with the difference between the human subject and divine object, as opposed to the instabilities of creation (which was Calvin's concern). Zachman's project, then, directly concerns the issues of this study of Barth, while Schreiner's is only tangentially relevant.

which were bound.”¹⁴ But, Barth adds: “To what extent, when God is present to Himself and others, does he really convince and persuade?”¹⁵ Since God is glorious, God has “the power of attraction.”¹⁶ God is not lord of the transition to creatures simply by “ruling, mastering, and subduing with the utterly superior force.” This way of presenting the matter would not be “worthy of the knowledge . . . of the God who is the truth.” God’s life is irresistible *and* attractive, powerful *and* persuasive, and overwhelming *and* non-violent.¹⁷ Barth states quite directly: “But where this element is not appreciated—and this is why the question of the form is so important—what becomes of the evangelical element in the evangel?”¹⁸

Locating the Doctrine of Glory within Barth’s Ontology in II/1

Barth’s direct treatment of glory completes Barth’s consideration of the divine attributes (or perfections, in Barth’s preferred parlance) in the *Church Dogmatics*, which is crucial because there Barth attempts to fully describe “the subject of all other statements” in theology.¹⁹ Glory occurs in Barth’s discourse, insofar as Barth has now turned from “the order of revelation” to the “nature of the being of God as known in His revelation.”²⁰ Barth lays out his procedure and provisional description for his doctrine of God in the simple claim: “God is who He is in the act of His revelation.”²¹ Procedurally, filling out the subject of the acts described in dogmatics is a matter of attending to the

¹⁴ II/1, 647.

¹⁵ II/1, 649.

¹⁶ II/1, 650.

¹⁷ Again, von Balthasar follows this concern: He seeks to establish glory as Christianity’s way of delineating “a logos that . . . had the power to persuade” (*Love Alone is Credible*, 9, cf. 15, 59-60). David Bentley Hart focuses all of his constructions on this question, although he does not credit Barth directly as a predecessor of his concern (David Bentley Hart, *The Beauty of the Infinite* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004], 1). Hart does say that his work is “a kind of extended marginalium on some page of Balthasar’s work” (29).

¹⁸ II/1, 655.

¹⁹ II/1, 258.

²⁰ II/1, 349.

²¹ II/1, 257.

God *revealed*. But, ontologically, *God* is to be identified in accord with God's act of revelation. Thus, the act of revelation "carries with it the fact that God has not withheld Himself from men as true being . . . Himself as the Father in His own Son by the Holy Spirit."²² Barth's claims appear similar to Karl Rahner's famous rule for Trinitarian (and all dogmatic) discourse: "The economic Trinity is the immanent Trinity and the immanent Trinity is the economic Trinity."²³ Yet, the implications of Barth's claims are far more radical. The form of revelation as act informs us that "without prejudice to and yet without dependence upon His relationship to what is event, act and life outside Him, God is in Himself free event, free act and free life."²⁴ God's act of revelation informs us that God's being "consists in the fact that it is . . . the event of His action."²⁵

What does Barth mean? God's being simply is God's free activity insofar as it has a pattern. I describe God's being as a *pattern* of free activity because when Barth gives content to the act of God, he mentions the acts of a triune God. For Barth, the summary term which denotes the entirety of God's being is "loves." Thus, his famous sentence: "'God is' means 'God loves.'"²⁶ Being is defined by act, but act is also defined by being: "What God does in all this, He is; and He is no other than He who does all this."²⁷ For Barth, the chief substantive problem with traditional dogmatics on the question of God's being was that they took place in "abstraction from the Trinity."²⁸ While Barth writes that "that He is God . . . consists in the fact that he loves," he also affirms that loving is "His

²² II/1, 261-262.

²³ Karl Rahner, *The Trinity*, trans. Joseph Donceel (Herder and Herder, 1970; reprint, New York: Continuum, 2001), 22.

²⁴ CD II/1, 264.

²⁵ II/1, 263.

²⁶ II/1, 283.

²⁷ II/1, 274. If that is not the case, then Barth would have dropped the term 'being' altogether, as he does with other words (such as "person" in relation to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit in their distinction). Interpreters can avoid this reduction only if they key upon loving as a Trinitarian pattern of action.

²⁸ II/1, 261.

act as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.”²⁹ Thus, love is a pattern because it is the free activity of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. That patterned activity of the triune God – love – is God’s being.

We see this in the way that Barth defines “love.” Barth initially fills out the definition of God’s being by saying that “God is He who seeks and creates fellowship (*Gemeinschaft*) between Himself and us.”³⁰ Then, Barth deepens the description: “As and before God seeks and creates fellowship with us, He wills and completes this fellowship in Himself.”³¹ Then, he takes it further: “He is Father, Son and Holy Spirit and therefore alive in His unique being with and for and in another. The unbroken unity of His being, knowledge and will is at the same time deliberation, decision, act.”³² Barth orders his various definitions of love, moving from God in relation to the creation into the depths of God’s being (without losing that relation to creation). Barth’s readers can understand these claims now because God’s fellowship is an ongoing act, an action, a happening undertaken by God in God’s will. God completes his fellowship between the Father, Son and Holy Spirit – into eternity – and does this with a creation God does not need for this completion. But love, both in time and eternity, is a pattern of action – it is a *seeking* and a *finding* of fellowship – because is the action of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. As the Triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit love. In that God loves in three modes of being, God is.

I say the pattern of *free* activity because God does not act simply because of any relationship, dialectical or non-dialectical, to the creation. In other words, God’s freedom

²⁹ II/1, 275, 273. Also, see II/1, 323.

³⁰ II/1, 273.

³¹ II/1, 275.

³² II/1, 275.

is not simply a lack of conditioning by a creation. Instead, God's freedom "means to be grounded in one's own being, to be determined and moved by oneself."³³ God is and can be love in himself. Even more, however, since God is the God of "Holy Scripture," God's freedom can and does include the power to become conditioned.³⁴ Barth argues this because God is free to be radically immanent to the creation without succumbing to its limits and its distortions.³⁵ God does not surrender God's own freedom. God is free with regard to God's own freedom, such that God "can have and hold communion with this reality."³⁶

Within this being-in-act ontology, God's glory has to do with God's worth. Barth spells it out: "The glory or honor of God is the worth which God Himself creates for Himself (in contrast to what He is not) simply by revealing Himself, just as light needs only itself and has only to be light in the midst of darkness to be bright and to spread brightness in contrast to all the darkness of heaven and earth."³⁷ More particularly, then, God's glory marks the worth of God's love.³⁸ For Barth, as well as for Von Balthasar, "we interpret and understand the form of Christian revelation either wholly in terms of the self-glorification of absolute love or else we simply fail to understand it."³⁹ God's love, in that it is its own worth, is God's glory. God's glory – or the worthiness of God's

³³ Ibid., 301.

³⁴ Ibid., 303.

³⁵ II/1, 313-314.

³⁶ Ibid., 304.

³⁷ Ibid., 642.

³⁸ In other words, Barth presents a certain kind of axiology, or account of divine value vis-à-vis love. Axiology has to do with "questions of good or value," in distinction from the question of "the right" (Robert Merrihew Adams, *Finite and Infinite Goods* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999], 4). Indeed, Barth's work on glory fits within the categories of Adams' own approach to value as the good, which considers "the goodness of that which is worthy of love or admiration" or "excellence" (Ibid., 13-14).

³⁹ Von Balthasar, *Love Alone is Credible*, 60.

“free love” – is the luster of God’s love in that it is undertaken freely.⁴⁰ God’s glory is God’s very life, very being, God’s very love, insofar as God’s life, being, and love prove themselves worthy and attractive to the beloved, whether the beloved is the Triune God or creatures in Jesus Christ. We shall explore this in more depth below.

We begin to see why critiques of Barth that try to demonstrate a split between revelation and ontology do not attend carefully to Barth’s doctrine of the divine attributes, where the shift from revelation to ontology occurs, as we noted above.⁴¹ Barth builds a case in this section that God’s love, which happens without rival in the triune life, is a love that demonstrates its own worth in declaring itself. Revelation simply is ontology for Barth and vice versa. Moreover, Barth does not simply offer what John Webster calls a moral ontology (in following Charles Taylor) that evokes and sustains authentic human agency, but he proffers an ontology that makes sense of the worthiness of the ontological order. On one level, this ontology is aimed at clarifying the

⁴⁰ Note Barth’s way of describing glory as a kind of power. Barth’s summary definition of God’s glory is “God Himself in the truth and capacity and act in which He makes Himself known as God” (II/1, 641). Barth offers this definition in order to show that God’s glory is “the triumph, the very core of His freedom” which is a “freedom to love.” Is God’s free in his love over God’s own transition to creatures? Barth’s broader theology of power, which occupies largest subsection of all of II/1, is invoked here. In these reflections on glory, Barth comes to his most decisive claims about God’s freedom, since freedom is most centrally a summary term for the depth of God’s power. God’s power is an “omnipotence of love” (599). As such, God’s power is not simply omnicausality – the fulfilled capacity to do the work that God performs. Instead, if God is to be absolutely free to love, then all power is God’s power or comes from God’s power. Otherwise, God would need to draw power from elsewhere in order to be free to love. Thus, God *is* power. Anything else that is powerful is powerful because it “has power...by and from Him” (542). Yet, because God’s power is a power to love, power connotes both a “moral and legal possibility” or “dignity” and a “physical possibility” (526) – or a *potestas* and a *potentia*. God’s power neither lacks legitimacy nor meets resistance because it is the fullness of God’s capacity to love. Barth’s primary concern in describing this perfection was to forestall any sense of God’s power which enforces human obedience by virtue of sheer revelation - in other words, to show that God’s power frees human beings to love (525). But, only in his reflections on God as the one who self-illuminates do we see how God is both legitimate and irresistible.

⁴¹ Both Williams’ “Barth on the Triune God” and Alan Torrance’s *Persons in Communion* fall prey to this. See also Joseph Mangina, “Bearing the Marks of Jesus: The Church in the Economy of Salvation in Barth and Hauerwas,” *Scottish Journal of Theology* 52 (3) 1999, 269-305. Mangina has a different problem in this article - he decontextualizes Barth’s doctrine of reconciliation from Barth’s doctrine of the divine attributes.

attractiveness of God's self-bestowal, as we have mentioned. But, on another level, God's love makes the object worthy of that love. The doctrine of glory within Barth's thought also has to do with the worthiness of the beloved *as beloved* (given all the referents of that term). When God gives God's self, the object of that love becomes worthy of that love. In the Triune life, the love of God and worth of God are identical. Creatures, on the other hand, become engaged in God's love in a way that makes them worthy to be loved by God, worthy to love God, and worthy to testify to God's love in its own loving.⁴² Again, more on that below. In any case, if this is true, then Barth's theology does not succumb to the charge that epistemology or speaker-driven metaphors improperly determine Barth's description of participatory sanctification.

Defining Glory Again

We have already had the occasion to begin defining glory in Barth's terms above, but have not yet discussed how Barth develops his claims. For Barth, as we saw, God's glory "is God Himself in the truth and capacity and act in which He makes himself known as God"⁴³ and "the emerging, self-expressing, and self-manifesting reality of all that God is."⁴⁴ Barth uses a cluster of phrases or words to describe God's glory: "radiance

⁴² One question emerges here: Should we use the word aesthetics? The category of aesthetics provides a convenient category of comparison. Nothing hangs on the word itself. Barth divides the dogmatics in terms of revelation, ontology, and ethics, but not according to aesthetics. God's word as an unveiling event (revelation) is God's being (ontology) and is also a commanding event (ethics). Barth's reflections on the worthiness of God and the creation proceed within those broad categories of truth, ontology and action. Parallel phenomena in Barth's work include his various uses of the term person, his broadly Kantian epistemology, and his conceptualization of infinity, necessity, contingency and, to a lesser extent, freedom. All of these are habits of thought that occur within Barth's dogmatics and are controlled by the contours of God's self-revealing and self-activating life in Christ. They name habits of thought which surface frequently within the performance of theology, but are rarely and sparsely denominated. However, because they surface frequently, they ought to be examined as such. Because Barth does not organize his theology into aesthetic categories, the interpreter is forced to exposit Barth's aesthetics within the overall structure of the *Dogmatics*.

⁴³ II/1, 641.

⁴⁴ II/1, 643.

of light,” “outshining,” “magnificence,” “splendor,” and “illuminating.”⁴⁵ In other words, God has no need of any external power to illuminate God’s self. God self-illuminates. God is who God is because God self-illuminates.⁴⁶

In paragraph 31, Barth develops these theses in three parts. First, he delineates the subjects and objects of glory. First and foremost, God is glorious because he excels all other beings absolutely.⁴⁷ Yet, Barth also defines glory as “the indwelling joy of his divine being which as such shines out from Him, which overflows in its richness, which in its superabundance is not satisfied with itself but communicates itself.”⁴⁸ God’s glory shines into the creation such that God in God’s self is given to the creation. Creatures are,

⁴⁵ CD II/1: “radiance of light” (643), “outshining” (646), “magnificence” (641), “splendor” (641), and “illuminating” (647).

⁴⁶ Richard Muller notes that for Reformed Orthodox thinkers majesty and glory “are fundamentally and categorically revelatory . . . they are theophanic in their biblical context and are so understood by the Reformed orthodox.” He also notes that glory (along with majesty) is often understood in a trinitarian way. In both moves, Barth is following the Reformed Orthodox (Muller, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics*, vol. 3, 541).

⁴⁷ II/1, 646. For Calvin, God’s glory refers to God’s status as God which deserves human recognition and acknowledgment. For instance, when Calvin comments on Exodus 3.14, he claims that “God attributes to himself alone divine glory, because he is self-existent and therefore eternal; and thus gives being and existence to every creature. Nor does he predicate of himself anything common, or shared by others; but he claims for himself eternity as peculiar to God alone, in order that he may be honored according to his dignity” (Comm. Exodus 3.14). As this quotation indicates, Calvin constantly concerns himself with the importance of God’s uniqueness for creation in general and human beings in particular. At this point, Calvin’s peculiar concern is with the honor that God deserves, due to God’s self-existence and eternity. Later, in the same section of commentary, he continues that “the one and only Being of God absorbs all imaginable essences; and that, thence, at the same time, the chief power and government of all things belong to him . . . in order rightly to apprehend the one God, we must first know, that all things in heaven and earth derive at His will their essence, or subsistence from One, who only truly is . . . if God sustains all things by his excellency, he governs them also at his will. And how would it have profited Moses to gaze upon the secret essence of God, as if it were shut up in heaven, unless, being assured of his omnipotence, he had obtained from thence the buckler of his confidence?” (Ibid.). The issue turns from the honor that Moses and other human beings give to God to the trust that Moses and other human beings place in God. If Moses was to be sure that God was capable of the things that Moses was called to do, God’s unique status – God’s glory – must be revealed to Moses and thus recognized by Moses. God’s unique status as God becomes warranted once Moses can see that the one he encounters is not only eternal and self-existent, but also “absorbs all imaginable essences,” including especially in this context the essence of power.

⁴⁸ II/1, 647.

henceforth, induced to participate in God's own glory and mediate God's glory to other creatures.⁴⁹

At this point Barth leans on the concept of joy. Part of what makes Barth's conceptualization of joy interesting is that he leaves it undefined. This is perhaps strange, given that he uses the term to convey how the power of God's glory, which is the "sum" of God's perfections, transitions to the creature.⁵⁰ However, we gather its meaning from its various usages. First, it ought to be noted that joy (*Freude*) is simply one among many terms which perform similar and undistinguished semantic functions, including *Wohlgefallen* (pleasure), *Genuss* (satisfaction), *Jubel* (jubilation), even *Begehren* (desire, demand, yearn) and *Lust* (appetite, desire).⁵¹ Second, Barth uses joy to specify the power of God's glory. But, a power to do what? When Barth turns from his discussion of God's joy to that which gives joy, he writes, "To what extent, when God is present to Himself and others, does he convince and persuade? In what way does he move Himself to glorify Himself, and move others, others outside himself, to join in His self-glorification?"

⁴⁹ God's glory is not simply God's status for Calvin. When Calvin appeals to God's glory, he does not simply assert God as God. He constantly poses an implicit question: Why does God have this status as God? God's self-existence, God's eternality, and God's power all provide markers of God's glory, such that God's people can respond fittingly to God. That is, God is God in being self-existent, eternal and any number of words which denote God's attributes. Who God is in being identical to these attributes funds God's status as God. Where does glory fit into this structure? Glory, for Calvin, is a summary term. It is short-hand term for all of God's powers as those powers have been revealed to us. For example, he writes, "Suppose we but once begin to raise our thoughts to God, and to ponder his nature, and how completely perfect are his righteousness, wisdom, and power – the straightedge to which we must be shaped. Then, what masquerading earlier as righteousness was pleasing in us will soon grow filthy in its consummate wickedness . . . Thus it comes about that we see men who in his absence normally remained firm and constant, but who, when he manifests his glory, are so shaken and struck dumb as to be laid low by the dread of death – are in fact overwhelmed by it and almost annihilated" (*Institutes*, I.1.3). God's glory creates a response in the creatures who receive and recognize it. Here the response is fear of annihilation, brought on by a sense of one's wickedness in the face of God's righteousness, wisdom and power. When Calvin summarizes this list of attributes as he continues to explain himself in this passage, he simply uses the word glory. This pattern is repeated ad infinitum in the 1559 version of the *Institutes*, as well as in many other places (for example in *Institutes*, I.1.1-5)

⁵⁰ II/1, 652. This particular claim was common among 16th century Reformed thinkers and later Reformed scholastics. See Richard Muller, *The Divine Essence and Attributes*, vol. 3, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 541-546.

⁵¹ See KD II/1, 734, 738-739 for examples of this.

(*Inwiefern wird Gott, indem er sich selbst und Anderen gegenwaertig ist, ueberfuehrend und ueberzeugend? In welcher Weise bewegt er sich selbst, sich zu verherrlichen und bewegt er Andere, Anderes ausser ihm, in diese seine Selbstverherrlichung einzustimmen*).⁵² It seems that, for Barth, joy is a power to be moved, to be vulnerable to God's own life. God's joy is God's acting capacity to recognize and acclaim God's life. God makes God conspicuous, even within God's self, because God has the power to be moved by God. God is God's own audience of recognition and acclaim and joy is to power-in-act in which God recognizes and acclaims God's life. God recognizes God's own worth. We might say that, for Barth, God makes God conspicuous in that God persuades God's self.

It is important to prepare for how Barth uses the concept of joy in his doctrine of election by making two notes. First of all, the term *Wohlgefallen* is simply one way of accessing the semantic domain of joy, a domain in which the terms mentioned above are interchangeable. Later, this will help us see how Barth's use of the term in the doctrine of election differs from other common uses of it.

Second, God's *Wohlgefallen* emerges earlier in II/1 when Barth explains how the creation does not condition God's love for creation. That is not meant to establish the capricious character of God's love, but to secure the freedom, or unconditioned nature of, God's satisfaction in loving. God does not require fellowship with the creation because "he has that which he seeks and creates between Himself and us."⁵³ The core of the issue is that since God is triune, God already has fellowship and does not require fellowship with creatures. God's love, if it is to be "free from all necessity in respect to its object,"

⁵² CD II/1,649/KD 732. The musical root *stimmen* means, literally, to add a harmonic sound to something. *Ueberfuehren* metaphorizes "transport," into "convince."

⁵³ CD II/1, 273.

must be defined as “necessary” and “eternal” with regard to God’s own love of God’s self.⁵⁴ In that God is triune, God provides God’s self with an object that is not “different from Him.” If God’s love is to be free in relation to other objects and God is to be eternally loving, then God must be said to be “satisfying (*genug*) in Himself.”⁵⁵ God is not conditioned by the created object of love because God’s being is love, eternally and necessarily, in triunity.

After Barth delineates the subjects and objects of glory and introduces joy as a key term, Barth queries how God is glorious, especially how it is that God is joyful and thus desirable for creatures. God’s glory is not simply the power of joy; God’s glory is the power to be moved by God insofar as God’s being is beauty. Insofar as God is joy, the object of God’s joy is God’s beauty. Barth writes:

. . . God is beautiful, to say this is to say how He enlightens and convinces and persuades us. It is to describe not merely the naked fact of His revelation or its power, but the shape and form in which it is a fact and is power. It is to say that God has this superior force, this power of attraction, which speaks for itself, which wins and conquers, in the fact that He is beautiful . . . beautiful in His own way, in a way that is His alone, beautiful as the unattainable primal beauty, yet really beautiful. He does not have it, therefore, merely as a fact or as a power. He has it as a fact and a power in such a way that He acts as the One who excites pleasure, creates desire and rewards with satisfaction. And he does it because He is pleasant, desirable, fully satisfied, because He is the One who is Pleasant, Desire, Satisfaction, because first and last He alone is that which is Pleasant, Desire, and Satisfaction. God loves us as the One who is worthy of love as God. This is what we mean when we say that God is beautiful.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ Ibid., 280.

⁵⁵ KD II/1, 315.

⁵⁶ “Gott schoen ist, dann sagen wir eben damit, wie er erleuchtet, ueberfuehrt, ueberzeugt. Wir bezeichnen dann nicht bloss die nackte Tatsache seiner Offenbarung und auch nicht bloss deren Gewalt als solche, sondern die Form und Gestalt, in der sie Tatsache ist und Gewalt hat. Wir sagen dann: Gott hat jene fuer sich selbst sprechende, jene gewinnende und ueberwindende Ueberlegenheit und Anziehungskraft eben darin, dass er schoen ist . . . in seiner ihm und ihm allein eigenen Weise schoen, schoen also die unerreichbare Urschoenheit, aber gerade so wirklich schoen and eben darum nicht nur als ein Faktum, nicht nur als eine Kraft, oder vielmehr ...als Faktum und Kraft in der Weise, dass er sich durchsetzt als der, der Wohlgefallen erregt, Begehren schafft und mit Genuss belohnt und das damit, dass er wohlgefaellig, begehrens-wert und genussvoll ist: der Wohlgefaellige, Begehrenswerte, und Genussvolle, das zuerst und zuletzt allein Wohlgefaellige, Begehrenswerte und Genussvolle. Gott liebt uns als der, der als Gott

This text, which is often quoted by those interested in a theological account of glory, confirms that Barth refers to joy or delight with any of the verbs or nouns mentioned earlier within a certain domain – he does not distinguish between them with any precision. God is joy in that God excites God’s pleasure by being beautiful. Second, this quote confirms that Barth’s reflections on glory are reflections on God’s worth that God has in being beloved. God’s worth is confirmed in that God’s beauty excites a pleasure in God, which is the pleasure according to which God elects to be God to creatures. This helps us see later that God’s election, in that it comes from God’s *Wohlgefallen*, arises from the satisfaction God gains from God’s beauty. God’s glory is the pleasure in which God satisfies God’s self to be God in relation to creatures. Third, beauty is a key term in Barth’s claim that God’s glory makes God’s action attractive, persuasive and non-violent. In other words, God’s beauty is both of the object of divine joy and that which elicits joy in creatures, as that beauty is given and unveiled in revelation, reconciliation, and redemption. To be drawn into God’s action is to be drawn to the beauty of God’s glory. God’s causality in creatures does not simply overpower creatures, God’s causality overwhelms creatures with God’s beauty and draws them into a new kind of participation in God’s acts and life.

What is beauty? Barth’s answer is that God is “the perfect form.”⁵⁷ He writes, “the form of the perfect being of God is, as we have seen all along, the wonderful,

liebenswuerdig ist. Das sagen wir, wenn wir sagen, dass Gott schoen ist“ (CD II/1, 650-651 mod./KD 733-734).

⁵⁷ CD II/1, 657. The terms *Art*, *Form*, *Weise*, *Gestalt* overlap in meaning for Barth, just as we saw with the terms Barth uses for joy. For example, see the following quotes from II/1: “...what the creature does as a result of and in this liberation does not have in itself the character of a glorification of God, a turning to Him, a participation in His Being. On the contrary, it has this character in the divine liberating as such, and therefore in the fact that in its form as a creaturely action it is accepted by God, an object of his good-pleasure, his grace, his mercy and patience, and that for this reason it is righteous and holy praise of God,

constantly mysterious and no less constantly evident unity of identity and non-identity, simplicity and multiplicity, inward and outward, God Himself and the fullness of that which He is as God.”⁵⁸ Barth mentions three examples of unity and identity in God’s life that demonstrate and embody this unity of identity and non-identity: the perfections of God, the triunity of God, and the incarnation. The fuel for all of these claims, however, is God’s triunity: “the triunity of God is the secret of His beauty.”⁵⁹ Why? He writes, “Here first and here in final truth we have to do with a unity of identity and non-identity . . . it certainly follows from God’s triunity that the one whole divine being, as the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit whose being it is, must be at the same time identical with itself

and therefore directed to God’s glory and participant in it. The creature’s liberation from its powerlessness, presumption and limitations as a creature does not consist in the fact that as a creature it is free in itself, or that it ceases to exist as a creature. It consists in the fact that God co-exists with it in such a way that in its unique form as a creature, and as it were in addition to this form, it acquires the new form in which it may praise God and therefore can and should and will and must praise Him (*was die Kreatur tut aus und in jener Befreiung, seinen Charakter als Verherrlichung Gottes, als Zuwendung zu ihm und als Teilnahme an seinem Wesen nicht etwa in sich selbst hat, sondern in dem göttlichen Befreien als solchem und also darin, daß es in seiner **Art** als kreatürliches Tun von Gott angenommen, Gegenstand seines **Wohlgefallens**, seiner Gnade, Barmherzigkeit und Geduld und deshalb und darin gerechtes und heiliges Lob Gottes, deshalb und darin seiner Herrlichkeit zugewendet und seiner Herrlichkeit teilhaftig ist. Darin besteht ja die Befreiung des Geschöpfes von seiner Ohnmacht, von seinem Übermut, von seiner Schranke als Geschöpf - nicht darin, daß es als Geschöpf von sich aus frei wäre, nicht darin also, daß es aufhörte, als Geschöpf zu existieren, aber darin, daß Gott ihm in der Weise koexistiert, daß es in seiner Eigenart als Geschöpf und gewissermaßen zu dieser seiner Eigenart hinzu die neue Eigenart bekommt, Gott loben zu dürfen und insofern zu können, zu sollen und zu wollen und so auch zu müssen*) (CD II/1 672; KD 758, bold emphasis mine). For more examples, see II/1, 672/KD 757, II/1, 664/ KD 749 (What makes it divine and actual being is that it is the being of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and that they are in this triunity, in his unified and differentiated essence, his freedom and love and all of his perfections are divine form in this concretion/Sondern daß es das Sein des Vaters, des Sohnes und des Heiligen Geistes ist, das macht es zum göttlichen, zum wirklichen Sein, und damit, daß sie in diesem Dreieinigen, in seinem einigen und unterschiedenen Wesen sind, in dieser Konkretion sind seine Freiheit und seine Liebe und alle seine Vollkommenheiten göttlicher Art), and especially II/1, 657/KD 741 (However, is it not also the case that, over and above this, in an additional but not additionally suppressed delight one must establish that the form, character or way in which God is perfect is itself perfect, the perfect Form?/Aber ist es nicht so, daß man darüber hinaus, in nachträglichem, aber nachträglich nicht zu unterdrückendem Entzücken feststellen muß, daß auch die Form, die Art und Weise, in der Gott vollkommen ist, selber vollkommen, die vollkommene Form ist?).

⁵⁸ II/1, 657. “Die Form des vollkommenen Wesens Gottes ist . . . jene wunderbare, immer wieder raetselhafte und auch immer wieder in sich klare Einheit von Identitaet und Nicht-Identitaet, von Einfachheit und Vielfachheit, von Innen und Aussen, von Gott selbst und von der Fuelle dessen, was er als Gott ist” (KD II/1, 741).

⁵⁹ II/1, 661.

and non-identical, simple and multiple, a life both in movement and at peace.”⁶⁰ God has God as God’s own object of joy, and as that object of joy, God is beautiful. Since God’s life is beautiful in that it is a life of unified distinction and a distinguished unity, God’s life is characterized by “movement” and “peace.”⁶¹ It is this movement and peace which God enjoys, which satisfies God and which overflows into the life of creatures.⁶²

In each of these examples, Barth is careful not to suggest that God’s beauty is to be found in the unity “as such.”⁶³ Instead, it is God’s own unity. It should not be forgotten that, as Wilfried Härle puts it, “Gottes Sein als Akt heisst in Sinne Barths also: Gottes als Gottes *Akt*.”⁶⁴ Beauty is one way of describing the pattern of God’s act in that God is Father, Son and Holy Spirit.⁶⁵ The Father, Son and Holy Spirit love in freedom, and the form is the life of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit “radiating outwards” (*Ausstrahlung*).⁶⁶ God’s being is a pattern of act insofar that takes place in the triune God.

⁶⁰ II/1, 660/KD 744, translation modified. Cf. Barth’s claim in I/1 that “it may be said of this essence of God that its unity is not only not abrogated by the threeness of the ‘persons’ but rather that its unity consists in the threeness of the ‘persons’” (I/1, 350-351). George Hunsinger’s claim that, for Barth, “Although there is no ousia without the hypostases, and no hypostases without the perichoresis, the divine ousia is, in Barth’s judgment, logically prior and determinative” is put under strain, given these texts (George Hunsinger, “Mysterium Trinitatis: Karl Barth’s Conception of Eternity,” in *Disruptive Grace* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000], 190-191).

⁶¹ II/1, 658. Compare David Bentley Hart’s claim that beauty is “theologically defensible” if it allows the Christian tradition to provide a bulwark for the claim that the evangel is “a gospel of peace” (Hart, *Beauty of the Infinite*, 1). Thus, Hart’s thesis is that “beauty belongs continuously to the Christian story (as, indeed, a chief element of its continuity), and that it appears there as peace . . . that for theology beauty is the measure and proportion of peace, and peace the truth of beauty” (Ibid., 33). Again, it is strange that David Bentley Hart does not recognize the indirect debt he owes to Barth in terms of the main lines of his work on beauty.

⁶² Von Balthasar unfolds his own *Herrlichkeit* work within two categories of form/splendor and rapture/eros (*Glory of the Lord*, vol.1, 117-127). These categories clearly parallel Barth’s distinction between form and joy. Barth would have little problem with von Balthasar’s first category, but, if his comments on eros in IV/2 are to be taken seriously, he would not replace joy with eros. Eros grasps, joy receives in its being drawn into the object (IV/2, 734-751). However, the chief difference comes down to the fact that von Balthasar thinks that “‘glory’ stands or falls with the unsurpassability of the analogia entis” (*Glory of the Lord*, vol 5., 548; see Wigley, *Barth and von Balthasar*, 73).

⁶³ CD II/1, 658.

⁶⁴ *Sein und Gnade*, 54.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 57-59 on this point.

⁶⁶ CD II/1, 659/KD 743. More from KD 743: “. . . es ist die Vollkommenheit seiner Form nur die Ausstrahlung der Vollkommenheit seines Inhaltes und also Gottes selber.”

We see that repeated here, only Barth now addresses God's glory. For, in the divine life, "we can never have one without the others. Here one is both by the others and in the others, in a *perichoresis* which nothing can restrict or arrest, so that one mode is neither active nor knowable externally without the others . . . the divine being draws from this not only its inner perfection, its great truth and power."⁶⁷ The form of God's life is threefold self-differentiation and unity; God is effusive self-impartment. But Barth also seems to be hinting that God has an outward shine in God's self: "The glory, the self-declaration of God, exists in that God Himself has his life in it outwardly just as he has it inwardly" (*"Die Glorie, die Selbstkundgabe Gottes, lebt ja ueberhaupt davon, dass er selbst in ihr nach aussen wie nach innen sein Leben hat"*).⁶⁸ The form of the divine life makes it possible for God to be God's own audience. The form of God's life is an eccentric self-impartment among the three modes of being – *perichoresis* just is this act of eccentric self-impartment in the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. But, that *perichoresis* includes joy, the reception of that form, as we saw above. For Barth, God is God's own audience. What he has outwardly, he has inwardly, as he says above. In other words, God declares God's own life to the creation insofar as God imparts, declares and acclaims God's own life to God's self.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ II/1, 660.

⁶⁸ CD II/1, 659/KD 743.

⁶⁹ Calvin does not make a direct appeal to the doctrine of the Trinity in order to unfold the meaning of God's glory. For Calvin, God is not glorious because God is triune. Calvin did subscribe to the perichoresis of the Father, Son and Spirit (*Institutes* 1.13.17). God is both glorious and triune, but Calvin does not take the essence of God's life to be constituted by the relationality of the triune life. In contrast to a view like this, Calvin writes, "When, however, Christ is called the **image of the invisible God**, this is not meant merely of his essence, as being the 'co-essential of the Father,' as they speak, but rather has a reference to us, because he represents the Father to us. The Father himself is represented as invisible, because he is in himself not apprehended by the human understanding. He exhibits himself, however, to us by his Son, and makes himself in a manner visible. I state this, because the ancients, having been greatly incensed against the Arians, insisted more than was befitting on this point — how it is that the Son is inwardly the **image of the Father** by a secret unity of essence, while they passed over what is mainly for edification — in what respects he is the **image of God** to us, when he manifests to us what had otherwise been hid in him . . . the

Lastly, Barth unfolds in more depth what it means for creatures to be glorified. Indeed, this is the purpose of Barth's whole undertaking – how is it that the Triune God is Lord of the transition to his creatures? God's glory is a presence “which opens them . . . which also looses at once tongues which were bound.”⁷⁰ Glory induces worship in creatures: God's glory is “the answer evoked by Him of the worship offered Him by his creatures.”⁷¹ Primarily, it is Jesus Christ whose worship is provoked, whose tongue is loosened for praise.⁷² But other human beings, too, once they accept their destiny in Jesus Christ, are “slipping shamefacedly into creation's choir in heaven.”⁷³ Creatures can recognize and respond and acclaim the Triune God because of God's glory, God's form and joy as it overflows into creation.⁷⁴

term **image** has a reference to us . . .” (*Comm. 2 Cor. 4.4*). One definite implication of their different trinitarian approaches is that Calvin will not appeal to the trinity of God as a means of unfolding the persuasiveness of the biblical story – that is, in order to show that the reception of God as Creator and Redeemer is not a case of God simply overpowering and coercing human identity. Jesus Christ is glorious because He is God, not because He is the Son or the Word. Why would it not be advantageous to God for Jesus Christ to become incarnate and to die on behalf of all of the elect? Barth would say it would not be advantageous because God is triune, while Calvin will not make such an appeal because it appears to be improper speculation about God's essence, which cannot be known by human beings. That is not to say that Calvin has a violent conception of God's action, but that he does not appeal to God's trinity to justify God's self-sufficiency and the gratitude which such self-sufficiency provokes. The difference between Calvin and Barth on the Trinity boils down to Calvin's statement that “it is foolish to imagine a continuous act of begetting” (*Institutes* I.13.29). Calvin seems to have trouble conceptualizing a God whose action is identical to God's being, unlike Barth. See Philip Butin, *Revelation, Redemption and Response: Calvin's Trinitarian Understanding of the Divine-Human Relationship* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1995), esp. 39-53.

⁷⁰ II/1, 647.

⁷¹ II/1, 647.

⁷² II/1, 668.

⁷³ II/1, 648.

⁷⁴ For Calvin, humanity has “has been placed in this most glorious theatre to be a spectator of them [God's works]” (*Institutes*, I.6.2). For example, for Calvin, God made the universe in six days in order to make it easier for human beings to function as spectators of God's glory. In this, “God has shown by the order of creation that he created all things for humanity's sake . . . he willed to commend his providence and fatherly solicitude toward us in that, before he fashioned humanity, he prepared everything he foresaw would be useful and salutary to him” (I.14.22). God could have created in a moment – God had no need of six days – but God shapes the entirety of creation for the sake of humanity. The creation is made so that they might be able to live in contemplation of God's glory as that glory is manifested in the creation (*Institutes* I.14.21 and I.5.8). Indeed, Calvin seems to hint that God has created the week so that each day of the week can be dedicated to meditation on order and beauty of creation noted in the corresponding day of the creation story (I.14.21). We will discuss how human beings do with regard to the reception of this glory in Calvin's thought in chapter 5.

Human beings glorify God in response to God's glory by corresponding to God's glory. For Barth, glorification is God glorifying God's self through creaturely form. Thus, creatures are to confirm and testify to God's glory by "following (or imitating) Him."⁷⁵ For "the meaning and purpose of this glorifying cannot be fulfilled by any form of existence, speech or action that is arbitrary or follows any pattern. The glory of God in its glorification by the creature must assume the form of correspondence, or it does not take place at all."⁷⁶ To what do creatures correspond? They correspond to the act in which "God does not keep to Himself the fullness and . . . sufficiency of His divine being."⁷⁷ Barth writes, "God gives Himself to the creature. This is His glory revealed in Jesus Christ, and is therefore the sum of the whole doctrine of God."⁷⁸ Human glorification must take a form that conforms to God's own self-radiance. Thus, human beings must offer themselves, all of themselves to God. God offers all of himself to humanity in Christ. Thus, when a creature is drawn into God's glory, it also offers "nothing more and nothing less than itself."⁷⁹ Glorification is simply offering all of one's life to God in Christ, just as God has offered all of God's life to humanity in Jesus Christ.

Glorification is also a matter of participation. Human beings glorify God by corresponding to God only because they participate in God's own self-glorification in Christ. Barth writes, "It is not only that we magnify Him in this answer, but that He magnifies Himself through us. Looking to Jesus Christ, in faith in Him . . . in the life of the church . . . looking to the creature which is God's own Son . . . we . . . must say that . .

⁷⁵ II/1, 674.

⁷⁶ II/1, 674.

⁷⁷ II/1, 645. Cf. Barth's claim that God "does not withhold Himself, but gives Himself...gives Himself fully" (II/1, 282).

⁷⁸ II/1, 671.

⁷⁹ II/1, 674.

. it is not too small a thing for God's self-glorification take place also in the form of his glorification through creation."⁸⁰ Following Adam Neder's recent work on union with Christ in Barth, Barth seems to be indicating two types of participation.⁸¹ First, he refers to a participation that happens because human beings are accepted "by Him and in Him."⁸² Human beings participate in Jesus Christ insofar as Jesus Christ substitutes for them as their representative – in this context, human beings participate in the glorification of God that Jesus Christ offers on their behalf. This is *de jure* participation in Christ: "By being who he is *for* humanity, Jesus Christ establishes, in any objective sense, the being and identity *of* humanity."⁸³ Second, Barth seems to distinguish this from *de facto* participation, or the participation which is "a supplement to the existence of Jesus Christ."⁸⁴ In other words, the worship offered in the history of the church and in the history of individual Christians is as real as the offering of Jesus Christ himself. Jesus Christ's offering is the "ground" and the offering of other human being in Christ is the "consequence" - *de jure* participation "establishes a trajectory for humanity" in *de facto* participation.⁸⁵ All layers of this glorification are not simply corresponding responses to the glory of God, they are all forms of God's own self-glorification. As a whole, in its entirety, this is "divine-creaturely worship."⁸⁶

As this quote at the end of the last paragraph indicates, for Barth, God's self-glorification through creaturely form is identical to "worship." Barth uses the word worship in two ways. First, it is simply that exhaustive self-offering to God in all times

⁸⁰ II/1, 668.

⁸¹ Neder, *Participation in Christ*, 17-18.

⁸² II/1, 668.

⁸³ Neder, *Participation in Christ*, 18.

⁸⁴ II/1, 668.

⁸⁵ Neder, *Participation in Christ*, 18.

⁸⁶ II/1, 668.

and places in which the creature persists, as we saw above. Yet, that offering has one very concrete expression – the gathered worship of the Christian community. The form of human participation in God’s glory, the form of life into which God’s glory draws them, is “the form of the Church, proclamation, faith, confession, theology, prayer.”⁸⁷ Once Barth distinguishes these two ways of talking about worship, he carefully unites them. With regard to the liturgical life of the community, he asserts that “It is only in this way that the life-obedience which is the meaning of all glorification of God can take shape here and now.”⁸⁸ It is not that glorification “does not actually take place in any other way” than in liturgy.⁸⁹ Instead, God glorifies God’s self in gathered worship “in order that all other things, and indeed everything, may occur to the glory of God.”⁹⁰ Indeed, God has indeed determined to be radiant only insofar as he has a church which radiates God’s glory to the rest of creation. And so he ends II/1: “He is the God who is glorious in His community, and for that reason and in that way in all the world.”⁹¹ We will address the relationship between these two forms of worship below, as we consider how Barth indicates the church’s growth.

In sum, God’s glory is expressible in three basic concepts. God’s life, even if there were no creation, has the form of eccentric self-impartation. Coinciding with that eccentric self-impartation is God’s joy, in which God recognizes and acclaims God’s life. Joy is the recognition and acclaim which emerges within God’s life – God not only shares life among the Father and the Son, God recognizes and acclaims that life – the Father and the Son enjoy one another, and thus glorify one another. Third, God’s glory

⁸⁷ II/1, 676.

⁸⁸ II/1, 676.

⁸⁹ II/1, 676.

⁹⁰ II/1, 677.

⁹¹ II/1, 277.

overflows into the creation in Jesus Christ, such that other human beings now live by the light of God's glory. They are insofar as they worship God in Christ with their lives, in liturgy and otherwise.⁹²

Glorification as Attractive Gift

We turn more explicitly to the question of the drawing power of God's glory. It is God's beauty which "attracts us to joy in Him," but why?⁹³ Barth gives two basic answers to this question. First, Barth writes that "He seeks it out in order that He may be God with it and not without it, and that in so doing He draws it to Himself, in order that it, for its part, can henceforth be a creature only with Him and not without Him. God gives Himself to the creature. This is His glory revealed in Jesus Christ, and is therefore the sum of the whole doctrine of God."⁹⁴ God's self-giving to creatures draws creatures

⁹² Richard Muller argues that the Reformed Orthodox understood glory to be "an attribute that eminently reflects and reveals the perfection of all the attributes" (*Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics*, vol. 3, 547). He takes Edward Leigh (1602-1677) as a primary example when Leigh writes that God's glory is "'the inward excellence and worthy whereby he deserves to be esteemed and praised'" and "'the actual acknowledging of it, for glory is defined as clear and manifest knowledge of another's excellence'" (Ibid., 546-547). These two categories are then combined with an immanent-economic distinction. In general terms, Barth follows this way of thinking – glory is God's worth and is also a matter of recognition of worth, both in the divine life (insofar as it is triune) and in creaturely life. There are a host of thinkers here, but if Muller's summary is accurate, Barth departs from this Reformed scholastic tradition in two ways. First, there is no internal life of God's glory that is "incommunicable," as it is for the Reformed Scholastics. For instance, the Reformed Scholastics would not affirm that Jesus Christ's humanity shares in God's own immanent glory, only in glory as it is manifested to creatures (Ibid., 548). Barth makes an immanent-economic distinction, but it is not a way to distinguish one attribute from another. The creation participates in the life of the Triune God, in all of the divine life, in a distinctively creaturely way. This has to do with Barth's actualism and his reframing of divine immutability. Second, on a related point, God's glory is not absolutely mediated to the creation by the incarnation. For Barth, as we shall see in chapter five, God glorifies the creation only in and through the incarnation and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Also, Christopher Holmes notes that Barth approved of Polanus and Van Mastricht's treatments because, for them, "the glory of God attests that God is a communicative essence who holds nothing back in the works that are essentially his" (Christopher Holmes, *Revisiting the Doctrine of the Divine Attributes*, 19; Cf. Idem., "The Theological function of the doctrine of the divine attributes and the divine glory, with special reference to Karl Barth and his reading of the Protestant Orthodox," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 61 (2): 211, 214). Holmes refers to Barth's statement to this effect (II/1, 644). This may be where Barth misunderstands Polanus and Van Mastricht. In any case, he knew he differed from the Reformed Scholastics with regard to God's immutability, as it is synthesized within his doctrine of glory. It is God's glory to become outward, so to speak.

⁹³ CD II/1, 655.

⁹⁴ II/1, 671.

into a corresponding activity. God's self-giving draws out creaturely activity because God's self-giving determines creaturely identity. To be a creature is to be drawn into a particular identity, or way of being. Human beings are drawn to God's self-giving because the core of their identity simply is to be drawn into God's self-giving. Second, Barth writes, ". . . as we look to Jesus Christ . . . we also confess that there is a sinner reconciled by Him and in Him . . . a therefore a reply awakened to his glory and evoked by God Himself, and as awakened and evoked by Him having a share in His glory."⁹⁵ As we saw above, God's self-giving is self-bestowal by inclusion. God gives God's self to be object of creaturely participation. God gives God's very glory through participation in that glory. God's gift of participation in God's glory is what draws out human worship. So then, how does participation in God's glory determine the being and act of human beings, as human beings? How is glorification, as Barth puts it, "an act of freedom and not of force"?⁹⁶

Barth's central point is that glorification draws because it is a gift. For Barth, glorification of creatures must be participation because "in the abstract, it is complete untruth to say that we have the power to thank and serve the glory of God."⁹⁷ Just as Barth argued that human beings do not have the power to recognize and acknowledge God, just so human beings do not have the power to glorify God: "It does not belong to the essence of the creature to have or be the power or ability to glorify God. This ability is God's." Thus, God's glorification of human beings, if it is to be a glorification in which human beings act of their own accord, must involve participation in God's own glorification. Only God can recognize the shine of God's life.

⁹⁵ II/1, 668.

⁹⁶ II/1, 671.

⁹⁷ II/1, 671.

Why does only God have the ability to glorify God? At all levels, the divine being has its “great truth and power” because the divine life is triune.⁹⁸ Christopher Holmes observes that “God’s power and dignity persuade because they originate only in relation to a communion of persons.”⁹⁹ The triune life satisfies its own glorification because “Here there is always one divine being in all three modes of being, as that which is common to all. Here the three modes of being are always together – so intimate and powerful are the relationships between them.”¹⁰⁰ God is who God is because God is triunity, and God’s triunity is unique to God. No creature can enact a simplicity born from absolute *perichoresis*.¹⁰¹ The three modes of being absolutely pervade one another in their distinction and are who they are in relationship to each other. The divine being does not in any way transcend the three modes of being, there are only three modes of being who fully possess divine being as they contain one another. Thus, the divine life happens without “disparity or dissolution or contradiction” as “a life both in movement and at peace.”¹⁰² Thus, since “one is both by the others and in the others,” it is the case that “one mode is neither active nor knowable externally without the others.”¹⁰³ Creatures cannot recognize God or be God’s audience because they cannot contain triune life in the way that the three modes of being contain one another.

⁹⁸ II/1, 660. “As the triunity – and by this we mean in the strictest and most proper sense, God himself – grounds the power and worth of the divine being, and therefore also of His self-declaration, His glory, so this triune being and life (in the strict and proper sense, God himself) makes this power and worth enlightening, persuasive and convincing. For this is the particular function of this form. It is radiates, and what it radiates outwardly is joy” (II/1, 661).

⁹⁹ Holmes, *Revisiting the Doctrine of the Divine Attributes*, 82.

¹⁰⁰ CD II/1, 660.

¹⁰¹ See Christopher Franks, “The Simplicity of the Living God: Aquinas, Barth, and Some Philosophers,” *Modern Theology* 21(2), April 2005, 293-297.

¹⁰² CD II/1, 660.

¹⁰³ II/1, 660.

But, why would we want to be gifted in this way? First, God's self-sufficiency, God's self-satisfaction creates contentment – or comfort as our translations of Isaiah 40 have it – because humanity which is not sufficient is given the self-sufficiency of God in Jesus Christ. All that humanity lacks – its own inability to generate itself, its own inability to reverse its opposition to God, its own disregard of God's life – is remedied by God's self-bestowal. When God shares God's self fully by sharing God's own glory, the last depths of God are poured into human beings – they can recognize all of God's life and acts in the creation, and thus participate more deeply in that life and act.¹⁰⁴

Second, what irresistibly draws the Christian community into worship is “the jubilation with which the Godhead is filled from eternity to eternity.”¹⁰⁵ Human beings correspond to God's self-radiance when they participate in “worship and service according to God's good-pleasure.”¹⁰⁶ Despite all the sin and condemnation that might happen in the creation which is meant to be an echo of God's glory, God's joy is undiminished.¹⁰⁷ Also, since God is eternal joy insofar as God is triune, creatures can confidently trust that the incarnation does not in any way diminish God's joy, become an energy drain on God's life.¹⁰⁸ As Barth writes: “God stands in need of nothing else. He has full satisfaction in Himself. Nothing else can even remotely satisfy Him. Yet he satisfies Himself by showing and manifesting and communicating Himself as the One who He is . . . He is what He is in irresistible truth and power and act even for that which

¹⁰⁴ II/1, 644: “The glory of God consists in the fact that He declares himself as all this and in all this.”

¹⁰⁵ II/1, 648.

¹⁰⁶ II/1, 675.

¹⁰⁷ This is one layer that Joseph Mangina identifies in his fine but brief treatment of the correspondence between Christian joy and God's glory. He writes that “As God rejoices in himself, so he empowers us to share in that joy” (*Barth on the Christian Life*, 135). Yet he fails to recognize that glory is joy, and so Christian joy corresponds to God's simply, pure and simple.

¹⁰⁸ CD II/1, 649.

is not God, which is something else, which exists only through him.”¹⁰⁹ Thus, the humiliation of God in the life and death of Jesus Christ does not become tarnished or mitigated by our sympathy for the loss God experiences on our behalf. The life and death of Jesus Christ takes place within God’s eternal, undiminished joy.¹¹⁰

However, perhaps the most important way in which Barth warrants the attractiveness of glorification is to unfold the gratuity of glorification. In Barth’s introductory comments on God’s freedom in paragraph 28, he makes the important point that “to the exact extent that...we have learnt . . . to reckon with Him as the One who is absolute above and beyond the absoluteness in which He confronts that which is not Himself, and in respect of which we are irresistibly drawn to wish ourselves like Him – we can therefore . . . guard against the temptation to self-apotheosis.”¹¹¹ God’s self-sufficient freedom irresistibly draws us to be like God. Barth’s point here is that human beings are drawn to be *like God* because, in light of God’s self-sufficiency (apart from any distinction from a creation), we can imagine no more than a likeness to God. Equality with God, being another God, is ruled out of discussion, but a likeness to God is affirmed. How so? What are the results? Per the quote in the last paragraph, God’s triune self-satisfaction makes God self-sufficient – God has thus no need for the creation. But, this is meant simply to draw out the character of God’s acts of creation, reconciliation and redemption. Those acts are gifts. As Barth says, “God gives Himself to the creature . . . What can ability and obligation and necessity mean when everything depends on the gift of the divine love . . . ?”¹¹² Since God has no need of the creation, the creation’s existence

¹⁰⁹ II/1, 666-667.

¹¹⁰ II/1, 665-666.

¹¹¹ II/1, 308.

¹¹² II/1, 672.

and the self-giving of God to the creation are gratuitous. The non-necessity of the creation exhibits God's self-giving as grace and marks the creation as a gift.¹¹³

This helps the interpreter understand why Barth says that the "utter creatureliness" of creation that is "the echo of God's voice" and this connects glorification as participation to glorification as correspondence to God in Christ.¹¹⁴ Given what happens in Jesus Christ, creatures correspond to the divine life by giving themselves entirely, just as God gives God's self entirely in Jesus Christ. As God's self-giving in Christ is grace, creatures give themselves entirely to the Triune God with gratitude. Gratitude participates in the divine glory because it "becomes as such the confirmation of the divine existence."¹¹⁵ For, as Barth claims within an ontology that refuses to reduce act to being or being to act, "gratitude is to be understood not only as a quality and an activity but as the very being and essence of this creature."¹¹⁶ Grateful creaturely existence, in the face of its gratuitous participation in the divine glory, expresses the

¹¹³ One interesting layer to Calvin's distinction between God *in se* and God *quoad nos* is that Calvin will often appeal to God as God is in God's self in order to describe how God's glory draws human beings into a certain kind of activity. For example, note the following text: "God, satisfied with his own glory, has enriched the earth with abundance of good things, that mankind may not lack any thing. At the same time he demonstrates, that, as God has his dwelling-place in the heavens, he must be independent of all worldly riches; for, assuredly, neither wine, nor corn, nor any thing requisite for the support of the present life is produced there. Consequently, God has every resource in himself. To this circumstance the repetition of the, term '*heavens*' refers, 'The heavens, the heavens are enough for God;' and as he is superior to all aid, he is to himself instead of a hundred worlds. It remains, therefore, as another consequence from this, that all the riches with which the world abounds proclaim aloud what a beneficent father God is to mankind . . . God, in bestowing all good things upon us, reserves nothing for himself, except a grateful acknowledgment of them?" (Comm. Ps. 115.16, cf. Comm. Ps. 113.5). In other words, God's glory is associated in these texts with God's self-satisfaction or God's self-sufficiency. God has no need because God satisfies God's own needs, which can be summarized by saying that God is satisfied with God's own glory. In these claims, Calvin appeals to some sort of knowledge of God *in se* in order to maximize his readers' experience of the gratuity of God's actions. God has no need of the creation and thus God's action in relation to the creation is utterly gratuitous, gracious, the overflow of God's goodness. If human beings recognize this, they are drawn into gratitude for God's fatherly care. God's self-satisfying glory draws human beings into gratitude. Recognition of God's self-satisfaction *in se* and the contingency of God's action *ad extra* makes human gratitude possible.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 668.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 673.

¹¹⁶ II/1, 669.

divine life insofar as it expresses its difference from the Triune life. The history of Jesus Christ happens because God invests the fullness of God's glory in the man Jesus. That divine self-investment in Jesus Christ forms the creation in gratitude. Due to the glory of Jesus Christ, the creation just *is* gratitude. Thus, creaturely unlikeness to God makes for creaturely correspondence to God.

For Barth, the gracefulness of God's glorification, in light of the non-necessity of creation for God's glory, unfolds in various ways. One example has to do with the connection between joy and worth. We noted that God's pleasure in the created object of love is created by the love of God itself. God is not motivated to love because, out of love, God has "ein vorangehendes Wohlgefallen an dem Geliebten."¹¹⁷ He continues, "Sie ist der Gegenstand des der voranghenden Liebe nachfolgenden goettlichen Wohlgefallens. Der Gegenstand der Liebe Gottes als solcher aber ist ein Anderes, das dieses seines Wohlgefallens an sich gerade nicht bezw noch nicht wuerdig ist."¹¹⁸ The pleasure or delight of God in a created object follows the love which God freely bestows upon creature. When God seeks fellowship with a creature, God finds the creature to be pleasant because of that very love. Yet, when God delights in creatures, this is neither a self-deluding delight nor a heuristic assurance for anxious creatures. God's delight in the beloved *makes the creature delightful*. In a sentence, "*Amabilis* wird der von Gott Geliebte als *amatus*."¹¹⁹ God's love is self-bestowal by inclusion: "...our being loved by Him is our being incorporated (*unser Aufgenommensein*) into the fellowship of His eternal love"; "God's loving is...itself the blessing that it imparts (*vermittelt*) to the

¹¹⁷ KD II/1, 313.

¹¹⁸ KD II/1, 312.

¹¹⁹ KD II/1, 313.

loved, and it is its own ground as against the loved.”¹²⁰ As such, when God loves in a way that makes creatures delightful, God is communicating God’s own delightfulness – God’s own pleasantness – to the creature. Just as with the creature, God does not love God’s self because God is worthy of love. Instead, God’s own worthiness coincides with God’s love. He writes, “Gewiss ist Gott sich selber *objectum amabile*, aber wiederum ist er nicht deshalb die ewige Liebe, weil er sich selbst liebenswuerdig findet, sondern darin wird er sich selbst liebenswuerdig, darin ist er selig in sich selber, dass er, lebendig als der Vater, der Sohn, und der Heilige Geist, die ewige Liebe ist.”¹²¹ God finds God’s self worthy of God’s love by the very love of God. God’s pleasure refers to the object of God’s love insofar as it is worthy of God’s love. Even though God’s love and worth could be utterly satisfied with God’s own worth, God loves creatures with God’s own love for God, making them worthy of that love.¹²²

Thus, creatures are grateful because God could be satisfied apart from them. God could be satisfied without having creatures to love, but God gives creation a life in Jesus Christ, and a life lived in the fullness of God’s life. *Even more*, God gives creatures who are not Jesus Christ the permission to supplement Christ’s glorification of God. *Even more*, this supplemental glorification “does not have in itself the character of a

¹²⁰ CD II/1, 280/KD 315; CD II/1, 279/KD 313.

¹²¹ KD II/1, 313.

¹²² Again, with this move, Barth confirms God’s freedom to love. If God’s freedom includes the power to be moved by God, then God would not require a creature to trigger or actualize that power. God is God’s own acting power to be moved. God moves and is moved in eternity. God determines God’s own changes, eternally. As such, God is then able to offer, freely and gratuitously, God’s own power *to be moved to the creature* as God takes up the creature into God’s life. Thus, when God bestows God’s joy, creatures worship. Worship is simply the activated capacity in which creatures are moved by God. Put another way, worship is how human beings share in God’s capacity to be transfixed by God. As a result, the worship of God is God’s self-declaration in creaturely form. When creatures are free to be moved by God, they are God’s own self-declaration – God’s glory.

glorification of God.”¹²³ Glorification is an ongoing gift of the Triune God which is lent to creatures by God, and their responsive glorification are justified in Christ. Despite all human limitation and human disregard of God’s life, God glorifies God’s self in and through the sinful creatures. For all of this, human beings become grateful. In sum: God’s power of self-satisfaction figures human life as a gift, and once that self-satisfaction is shared with creatures, they are drawn into grateful being.

Thus, on the one hand, interpreters such as Alan Torrance, who wish to suggest, against Barth, that Christian theology should summarize the encounter with Christ as doxological participation need to consider very carefully Barth’s work here. Barth’s work here is indeed one in which God is “conceived as reconciling, communicating Triunity” and in which “there is no address of the human subject which is not integral to the human subject’s being brought to participate within that same triune communion.”¹²⁴ On the other hand, Matthew Boulton’s arguments from the second edition of *Romans* and the critique of religion in volume one of the CD need to directly engage the way that Jesus Christ’s worship, and the worship of the Christian community, both correspond to and participate in God’s glory. Boulton’s argument turns on the claim that liturgy is a way for human beings to “disengage themselves from the divine embrace” and shift from an I-Thou relationship to a “third-person point of view.”¹²⁵ The chief problem is that, to use Härle’s framing of Barth’s theology of relationship, “Indem Gott in den drei Seinsweisen als Vater, Sohn und Geist existiert, existiert er ‘in Beziehung und Gemeinschaft.’”¹²⁶

¹²³ CD II/1, 672.

¹²⁴ Torrance, *Persons in Communion*, 105. It will not do to say that he is offering “a controlled reinterpretation” of Barth on this score, when these texts, which speak directly to the issues Torrance outlines, are ignored (365).

¹²⁵ Boulton, *God Against Religion*, 69.

¹²⁶ *Sein und Gnade*, 57-58. Härle quotes from KD III/2, 390.

Barth conceptualizes the worship that happens as glorification, including the worship of Jesus Christ, as the participation in the vulnerability that God has for God's own life, God's joy in God's own triune form. Boulton's interpretation of Barth is a challenge to Barth's doctrine of God, and should be reframed as such. If God gives God's self in Christ, and God takes joy in God's own beauty, then Christian worship happens as the overflow of God's own life. It is no doubt true for Barth that all Christian worship "amounts to self-adoration" or idolatry.¹²⁷ But, that simply proves the point Barth makes about the participatory nature of glorification: "It is . . . always God's self-glorification which is accomplished even in His glorification by the creature."¹²⁸ For Barth, only God has the ability to glorify God. Yes, human beings are idolaters. Idolaters are the only kind of human beings that participate in God's self-glorification, and they do this "wholly and utterly" by gift.¹²⁹

Glorification as Ecclesial Growth

We now take up the notes we made on the unity and distinction between Barth's two ways of referring to worship. For Barth claims that it is precisely because God's glory draws the church into its liturgy that the church can be said to grow, or self-develop. Self-development is a self-including movement toward the achievement of an end. The end, specified in terms of the church's life, is "the totality of life-obedience" in which all of the church's action radiates God's life.¹³⁰ Liturgy simply is the church's movement towards persistent, exhaustive life-obedience.

¹²⁷ Boulton, *God Against Religion*, 60.

¹²⁸ II/1, 672.

¹²⁹ II/1, 672.

¹³⁰ II/1, 675.

In other words, Barth relates these two types of worship through eschatology. The liturgy of the *ekklesia*, for Barth, is an eschatological act, the mode in which human beings wait for God's glory to "become visible in the totality of our existence."¹³¹ Gathered worship is how the church "conforms itself to its perfection," to the perfected life in which everything will indeed be fully offered to God as God has offered God's self to humanity in Christ.¹³² In light of the eschaton, gathered liturgy is provisional: "This prayer . . . is the temporal and provisional form of our participation in the glorification of God and therefore in God's glory itself."¹³³ One metaphor Barth uses is the relationship between a part and whole: "Because this part [liturgy] as such is virtually the whole, the part may stand for the whole [persistence and exhaustive life-obedience coming to fruition in the eschaton]. We may not, then, seek the whole beyond this part."¹³⁴ While the church's participation in its own perfection is "provisional," Barth affirms that "it is as we are gathered to the Church . . . that we really glorify God and therefore share in His self-glorification: no less really in this form than in the future form which here and now we still await and to which the church moves."¹³⁵ By "provisional" Barth does not mean that prayer eventually vanishes, but that the fact that prayer stands in for the whole before the eschaton. At the eschaton prayer finally characterizes the whole, so that everything might be done to the glory of God.

The church's liturgy is not, however, under any circumstances, a self-possessed habit-forming act by which the church trains itself to achieve its end. Its end is God's glory, which is a specific way of saying that God is its end. The church cannot train itself

¹³¹ II/1, 676.

¹³² II/1, 677.

¹³³ II/1, 676.

¹³⁴ II/1, 676.

¹³⁵ II/1, 676.

to glorify God – it has no such power. But, it does participate in God’s glory and so moves towards its own perfected obedience which is in full “harmony with God’s predetermination.”¹³⁶ The church’s obedience before God, expressed in both gathered worship and day-to-day obedience as they mirror and shape one another, grows as it participates in the history of God’s glory. This will be becoming increasingly clear in the doctrine of reconciliation.

Barth specifies a movement toward the church’s perfection because the church’s glorifying action “as a whole and in all its members” corresponds to a depth in God’s actualizing being.¹³⁷ The church develops itself because it corresponds in participation to the constancy of God’s self-movement. Barth summarizes God’s self-movement as the seeking and finding of fellowship. This seeking and finding of fellowship happens within the triune life, as well as in relation to the church as it provisionally moves itself towards its own perfection of seeking and finding fellowship. Consider again a quote we saw earlier: “at the core of His being, and therefore in His glory, God is the One who seeks and finds fellowship, creating and maintaining and controlling it. He is in Himself, and therefore to everything outside Himself, relationship, the basis and prototype of all relationship. In the fact that He is glorious He loves.”¹³⁸ In God’s self, God *seeks* and *finds* fellowship. God’s perfection is a perfection of “movement and peace.”¹³⁹ The church moves into its own perfection because it participates in God’s self-movement. It moves toward the perfection of its life-obedience insofar as it moves with and into God’s own fellowship, which is a fellowship of glory and love.

¹³⁶ II/1, 674.

¹³⁷ II/1, 675.

¹³⁸ II/1, 641.

¹³⁹ II/1, 658.

But, this simply to say that the Triune God is the kind of God who can and does become incarnate in Jesus Christ. For Barth, it is just as impossible to overemphasize the peace of the triune life as it is to overemphasize “the depth with which He here differentiates himself” in the incarnation.¹⁴⁰ While Barth will say that the incarnation is not strange to God, that does not mean it is not a new thing for God. The incarnation exemplifies the form of God’s life because there God “extends his own existence to co-existence with this other.”¹⁴¹ By God’s own action, God has given God’s “an outer as well as an inner side.”¹⁴² Yet, Barth is careful to say that “this does not mean surrender or loss of His divinity.”¹⁴³ Instead, for Barth, God cannot “be more glorious as God” than in the history of Jesus Christ. For, “He is glorious in this very differentiation, this renunciation of Himself.”¹⁴⁴ God’s glory is what it is in relationship to a creature, even though God’s glory could be just as full without the history of Jesus Christ. This draws the church into its own self-developing worship.

How do we pull these last thoughts together? The answer, I think, is that in II/1, Barth has laid the ontological groundwork for his radical claims about the history of God in electing and being elected in II/2 and history of God in Christ in the doctrine of reconciliation. As we shall see more clearly, “history” specifies a depth or pattern of intensification in God’s life in relation to God’s self and in relation to the creation and to the church in Jesus Christ. The church self-develops its history with God because God

¹⁴⁰ II/1, 662.

¹⁴¹ II/1, 662

¹⁴² II/1, 667. Cf. Barth’s claim in the *Dogmatics in Outline* that “God changes Himself, God Himself comes most near, God thinks it not robbery to be divine, that is, He does not hold on to the booty like a robber, but God parts with Himself” ([New York: Harper, 1959], 116).

¹⁴³ CD II/1, 663. Cf. II/1, 499ff.

¹⁴⁴ II/1, 663.

has a history with the church. In worship, the church develops its own provisional participation in that history.

Part Two: Glory in Barth's Doctrine of Election

In part two, I continue to argue the first two theses I mention above – that Barth tasks his doctrine of glory in order to account for the drawing power of divine activity in Jesus Christ and that the Christian community grows its common life as it undertakes worship. I also add a third layer of argument. Many have argued, and my argument concurs, that Barth's doctrine of election – the primary question of the second half of Barth's doctrine of God (II/2) – reorients Barth's theology in the remainder of the *Church Dogmatics*. I argue in part two that Barth's trinitarian doctrine of glory illuminates what drew Barth into a revision of the doctrine of election. I point to how Barth used his configuration of the divine good-pleasure in II/1 to counteract, in II/2, problematic accounts of God's election in the Reformed Christian tradition (problematic to Barth, that is). In light of Barth's use of his doctrine of God's good-pleasure in II/2, he attempts to make plain that many traditional Reformed accounts of election improperly decontextualize the doctrine of election from God's unique glory – that is, God's triune glory.

The Importance of Election in Barth's Theology

Why analyze Barth's theology of election in relationship to God's glory and the church's growth? Barth describes election as “the beginning of all God's ways and works.”¹⁴⁵ For Barth, the term election elucidates both the directedness and resolve of the Triune God in loving an object that is not identical with God. Even more, the creation originates in that very love. The church is no exception. It is a creature which exists to be

¹⁴⁵ II/2, 3.

loved by God and exists by the love of God. By existing, the church fulfills God's election to love. Thus, Barth writes that any "final description of the basis of their (Christian) being and action" must say that "it is God's eternal election, His love directed towards them and embracing and activating them in this particular way, which makes them Christians, not only as individuals in their solitariness, but also in their common life, and therefore all together as a people of single descent."¹⁴⁶ Before we can understand the distinctiveness of a Christian common life, we can and thus must orient ourselves to the distinctiveness of its source.

We attend to election in order to describe the source of Christian common life not simply because it is a creature. We attend to election because, for Barth, God has grounded the common life of Christians in such a way that the Christian community is "the earthly-historical form of His (Jesus Christ's) own existence."¹⁴⁷ In Christ, God identifies God's self with the Christian community. To be able to identify God is to be able to identify the Christian community. Indeed, it is only through the ability to identify God that the Christian community can be identified. Christian common life mediates God's life to the creation and mediates God's creation to the Triune life. Although these claims require extensive qualification, they remain accurate renderings of Barth's ecclesiology. If we are to describe the growth of Christian common life, we must attend to the character of its source – the Triune election of God – because the growth of the Christian common mediates something about the character of the Triune God. Otherwise, we risk overestimating or underestimating how the church is identifiable with the Triune life of God.

¹⁴⁶ IV/2, 642. Cf. IV/2, 616.

¹⁴⁷ IV/2, 642.

Also, this project agrees with scholarship that takes Barth's doctrine of election in the *Church Dogmatics* to be a key turning point in Barth's theological development. Bruce McCormack has argued that the dialectic between the Triune God and the creation which Barth described in his earliest theological writing was never superseded.¹⁴⁸ According to McCormack, Barth used a broadly Kantian epistemology in order to express the necessity and benefit of divine revelation. Barth held that human beings organize the input of intuition in human understanding, which turns that input into objects that are reliably identifiable as objects. As such, human beings require the revelation of God within the objective, material creation in order to obtain knowledge of God. However, that knowledge of God cannot, in any way, emerge from or be conditioned by human epistemic apparatus. Human epistemic apparatus must be overcome if God is to reveal himself – God must unveil God's self within the creation if the creature is to have reliable knowledge of God. Thus, with regard to God's revelation, Barth is a "critically-realistic dialectical" theologian.

This dialectic, in its many forms, developed over the course of Barth's lifetime. The primary target of McCormack's argument is Hans Urs von Balthasar, who claimed that Barth had made a turn in his theological method from dialectics to analogy as a result of writing a book on Anselm's theological method (published in 1931).¹⁴⁹ Against this, McCormack shows that Barth's book on Anselm merely gave him tools by which he could unfold his commitment to dialectic and analogy – a commitment which is

¹⁴⁸ Bruce L. McCormack, *Karl Barth's Critically Realistic Dialectical Theology : Its Genesis and Development, 1909-1936* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995). See pages 43-44, 66-77, 129-130, 207-209, 226. See especially the footnote on page 207 and page 226 which note that Barth's Kantianism was only strengthened over time, over against Neo-Kantianism (marked by the difference in the constructivism of Romans I against the claims about the intuitable God in Romans II). Also, the periodization I mention below follows McCormack. For a quick reference to this periodization, see pages 21-23.

¹⁴⁹ Hans Urs Von Balthasar, *The Theology of Karl Barth*.

discernible even as far back as Barth's first commentary on Romans.¹⁵⁰ That is, Barth averred a likeness between God and the human activity of faith in God. But, this analogy, specified generally as the "analogy of faith" as Barth matured, was predicated on the "infinite qualitative difference" in every facet of his theology. Barth's commitment to analogy solidified and developed over the course of his life, but it was always made possible by an unrelenting commitment to an absolute difference in kind between God's being and created being.

McCormack also argues against von Balthasar that the major shifts in Barth's work happened around 1924 and after 1936. *Pace* von Balthasar again, these two final turns were fundamentally substantive, not methodological. The penultimate turn was his discovery of the Protestant scholastic (and ancient) distinction between the *anhypostatic* and *enhypostatic* modes of Christ's humanity. Previous to this discovery, Barth had resorted to two types of eschatologies, both of which were meant to "speak of revelation in history, but not of history."¹⁵¹ McCormack calls the first a process eschatology in which "a gradual realization of the Kingdom of God in history" comes through "a series of actualistically conceived 'breakthroughs' of 'real history' into phenomenal 'so-called history.'"¹⁵² He deems the second eschatology a "consistent eschatology" in which God's eternity, God's kingdom, "brings about 'the dissolution of all things, the cessation of all becoming, the passing away of this world's time.'"¹⁵³ Instead of holding to an eschatological dialectic in which history is merely turned to its goal in Jesus Christ

¹⁵⁰ McCormack, *Karl Barth's Critically Realistic Dialectical Theology : Its Genesis and Development, 1909-1936*, 16-20.

¹⁵¹ McCormack, *Karl Barth's Critically Realistic Dialectical Theology : Its Genesis and Development, 1909-1936*, 233.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, 155.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, 208.

(process eschatology) or is made intuitable only through the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ (consistent eschatology), Barth could use the *anhypostatis/enhypostatis* distinction to build “an eschatological reservation...into the very structure of his Christology.”¹⁵⁴ God now unveils himself in the veil of Jesus Christ’s history without that history being fully substitutable for the Second Person of the Trinity. Barth could now take the entirety of the incarnation seriously as a veil of revelation. Previously, only Jesus Christ’s self-offering in the face of God-abandonment and a non-historical event that intersects with history could be appropriate places to think about God’s offering God’s self to human intuition – that is, the cross and resurrection. Barth also now had Christological grounds for analogies required by human faith and speech about God.¹⁵⁵

For McCormack, the ultimate turn in Barth’s work took place in his doctrine of election after 1936. Barth argued in his Göttingen lectures that the revealing subject and revealed object of revelation are “identical.”¹⁵⁶ While an irreducible distinction between

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., 328.

¹⁵⁵ Dale Dawson has recently suggested a revision this account of Barth’s development, noting that Barth’s 1924 commentary on I Corinthians, entitled *The Resurrection of the Dead*, seems to deal more clearly with the problems surrounding the *analogia fidei*. Dawson argues that “While he took the whole of the history of Jesus Christ to be revelation, more particularly Barth understood the divine being of Jesus Christ to be veiled in his incarnation from Bethlehem to Golgotha, but gloriously unveiled in his resurrection. Barth’s anhypostatic-enhypostatic Christology does not fully account for his notion of the dialectic of veiling and unveiling in God’s self-revelation. It is rather firstly in his resurrection – and only on that basis and in that light in his incarnation – that his self-revelation has the dialectical character of unveiling and veiling . . . as early as *The Resurrection of the Death* Barth is working with a discernable distinction between the God-man dialectic and the Christ-others dialectic,” R. Dale Dawson, *The Resurrection in Karl Barth* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2007), 29-31.

¹⁵⁶ McCormack, *Karl Barth’s Critically Realistic Dialectical Theology : Its Genesis and Development, 1909-1936*, 352. McCormack is summarizing the following claims which open Barth’s discussion of the Trinity in the Göttingen lectures: “I have proposed and tried to defend the four theses (1) that in revelation as such we may not distinguish between form and content, that is, between the revealing subject and the revealed object; but (2) we may distinguish between revelation itself, which is identical in subject and object, and all the means of revelation; (3) that the revealed object, because it is one with the revealing subject, is not a greater or lesser quantity, so that one neither can nor should speak of different or partial revelations, but only of one revelation; and (4) that revelation as God’s answer is never and nowhere coincident with the human question represented in the concepts of reason and religion,” Karl Barth, *The Göttingen Dogmatics: Instruction in Christian Religion*, trans. Geoffrey Bromiley (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1991), 95.

the immanent and economic Trinity remains, God's act of revelation in Jesus Christ identically corresponds to God's being.¹⁵⁷ Any appeal to revelation would entail such a claim, otherwise the status of revelation as revelation would be in jeopardy. In his Göttingen lectures, election, given that it is coordinated to and identical with revelation, is also a free act of God.¹⁵⁸ To be elected is to be one who recognizes God's revelation in Jesus Christ. Revelation and election are the free gifts of God in which God owes nothing at all to the creation. If they are to be maintained, they must be repeated.¹⁵⁹ Just as the union of Jesus' humanity to Christ's person is constantly and freely sustained by God as a veil of revelation, just so other human beings are freely sustained in their election by God. God must continue, again and again, to unveil God's self through the veiling of God's life. Just so, God must continue, again and again, to elect human beings as his witnesses.

Barth also considered the doctrine to have a problematic legacy of the doctrine in most Reformed discussions. The concern is that predestination in most Reformed discussions is "a mixed message of joy and terror, salvation and damnation."¹⁶⁰ For Barth, one example of this mixed message is the Synod of Dort's claim that "The fact that some receive from God the gift of faith within time, and that others do not, stems from his eternal decision."¹⁶¹ Those who receive the gift of faith unto salvation do not receive it based on foreseen faith, but solely on the basis of "the good pleasure of God" –

¹⁵⁷ Ibid, 357.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., 371-72.

¹⁵⁹ As Barth stated in the Göttingen lectures, "all are at every moment under the divine either-or and can be either elect or rejected. No one is hopeless, and no one is yet in port. All can and must seek the decision where from all eternity . . . it has been made for time, and will now be made in time one way or another according to God's will." (*Göttingen Dogmatics*, 471).

¹⁶⁰ II/2, 13.

¹⁶¹ *Canons of Dort*, Ist Head of Doctrine, Art. 6. A translation of the Synod of Dort can be found in *Ecumenical Creeds and Reformed Confessions* (Grand Rapids: Faith Alive Christian Resources, 1988).

this is the doctrine of election.¹⁶² Those who do not have faith, and thus incur damnation, are also decreed to be passed over on the basis of God's good-pleasure, resulting in their damnation for their sin – this is doctrine of reprobation.¹⁶³ In this form, for Barth, God's predestinating decree could not be “unequivocally” presented as Gospel, as good news, as though “in its substance . . . it is altogether Yes.”¹⁶⁴ According to Barth's diagnosis, the problem proceeded from an appeal to the *decretum absolutum* which happens in abstraction from Jesus Christ: “while Christ is indeed the medium and instrument of the divine activity at the basis of election . . . yet the electing God Himself is not Christ but God the Father, or the triune God, in a decision which precedes the being and will and word of Christ, a hidden God . . . who made the actual resolve and decree”¹⁶⁵ The decree for salvation and the decree to pass over others are both performed apart from the human history of Jesus Christ, and emerge from an obscured good-pleasure of God. God's gracious intentions are thus obscured, and the comfort gained from such knowledge is also mitigated, because we cannot gain access to this decree behind the history of Jesus Christ.

Barth was led into his mature doctrine of election by Pierre Maury in 1936.¹⁶⁶

Due to these problems, Barth was drawn to Maury's argument that Jesus Christ himself was the object of God's reprobation and God's election.¹⁶⁷ Yet, in grafting Maury's work

¹⁶² Ibid., Art.10.

¹⁶³ Ibid., Article 15.

¹⁶⁴ CD II/2, 13.

¹⁶⁵ II/2, 64.

¹⁶⁶ II/2, 154, 191.

¹⁶⁷ II/2, 154. Barth had begun to realize that his actualistic doctrine of election was caught between an arbitrary voluntarism or a semi-Pelagian conditioning of revelation and election. Revelation and election could quite easily be described, in Barth's earlier theology, as divine game-playing or payments God owed to a community because of its worth (II/2, 190). Barth's criticisms are explicitly directed at Peter Barth, not himself. But it is quite clear that his own claims in the Gottingen lectures have the same problematic. McCormack notes this underwhelming lack of explicit self-criticism (*Karl Barth's Critically Realistic*

onto his own project, Barth radicalized it in two ways. First, he did not elide the claim that God was now the subject and object of election and reprobation, just as God was the subject and object of revelation. He writes: “Jesus Christ is the electing God . . . He is also elected man.”¹⁶⁸ As a consequence, as Matthias Gockel puts it, “God’s choice is a ‘self-giving’ that entails God’s self-determination and the determination of humankind. It is at once righteous, in that God judges and condemns the evildoer, and merciful, in that God takes upon Himself this condemnation, so that God’s reprobation does not have to concern human beings anymore.”¹⁶⁹ As I show below, given that Jesus Christ is the subject and object of election, Barth explores how his divinity and humanity can be described as both subject and object of election, with the determination of humanity laying fundamentally in Christ’s Trinitarian identity. Thus, Barth will say that God is the reprobate one on behalf of all, as Gockel notes.

Second, since the Son of God is (indirectly) identical to a human being, God has made the constancy of God’s own life the affirmation and warrant of the inalienability of election. It is God’s own life that is at stake in God’s election to have fellowship with God’s creation in Christ. Indeed, many interpreters go so far as to say that “the idea of the immanent Trinity depends on the concept of predestination,” such that God would not be Triune if God has not elected the creation in Jesus Christ.¹⁷⁰ But, even if interpreters are

Dialectical Theology, 456). With Maury’s revision, both God’s reprobation and election are realized in Jesus Christ, neither to be feared as arbitrary acts of an arbitrary God nor to be presumed as a payment. Since election happens in Jesus Christ alone, it cannot be earned. Since reprobation is undergone in Jesus Christ alone, it need not be feared.

¹⁶⁸ II/2, 103.

¹⁶⁹ Matthias Gockel, *Barth and Schleiermacher On the Doctrine of Election* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2006), 181.

¹⁷⁰ Gockel, 177. This line of thought is actually quite common in Barth scholarship. McCormack, in a recent article on this question, names a number of figures who indicate this, including Hans-Theodore Goebel, Thiess Gundlach, Rowan Williams and Paul Collins (Bruce McCormack, “Election and the Trinity,” *Scottish Journal of Theology* 63, no. 2 (2010), 204-205).

not willing to go that far, Barth avoids an actualistic occasionalism. In II/2, Barth offered a critique of an “activist predestination” which depicts God as “free at every moment to make His decision.”¹⁷¹ For Barth, this makes election “a mere game which God plays with man, a game which is bewildering in its hiddenness and unexpectedness.” Thus, he asks, “What chance is there, if any, of a final knowledge of how one stands with God?”¹⁷² Barth cuts through these problems by making Jesus Christ the subject and object of election. Election is the choice of God, “fulfilled in His eternal willing of the existence of the man Jesus and of the people represented in Him,” to give Himself in sending the Son of God.¹⁷³ As such, it is grounded solely in the love of God. Predestination, as both election and reprobation, is no longer a capricious act. It is a free choice to love, even to reject the rejection of those who oppose it.¹⁷⁴ Election is no game because God has elected to make God’s self “benefit and favor” in linking God’s own sufficiency to the life and being of the creature.¹⁷⁵ God is what and who God is with the being and act of the creature. God’s being is grace because God has constituted God’s self to be in co-existence with creatures.¹⁷⁶ In Barth’s revision of the doctrine, God lives revelation and reconciliation.¹⁷⁷ If God lives, reconciliation and revelation will happen.¹⁷⁸ However, God must live in the act of burdening God’s self with human disobedience, resistance, and the limitation. Due to the turning of God in election, whatever God is, God is for the

¹⁷¹ II/2, 190, 188, respectively. The second quotation is Barth’s quotation of Peter Barth’s paper, given at the same conference where Barth encountered Pierre Maury in 1936.

¹⁷² II/2, 190.

¹⁷³ II/2, 25.

¹⁷⁴ II/2, 27.

¹⁷⁵ II/2, 10. We are “noetically to hold by Christ and Christ alone” because “there is no election and no electing God outside Him” (II/2, 63).

¹⁷⁶ II/2, 6.

¹⁷⁷ See CD II/2, 187 for Barth’s summative comparison of proper and improper actualism.

¹⁷⁸ As Eberhard Jüngel says, “As self-movement God’s independent being makes revelation possible. As God’s self-interpretation, revelation as God’s interpretation of himself is the expression of this self-movement of the being of God . . . since this self-interpretation is a reiteration of the *being of God through God*, God’s being as such is a being capable of reiteration” (*God’s Being is in Becoming*, 109-110).

creation. If God does not secure God's fellowship with creation, God will have lost something of God's own life.

With these modifications, Barth also aims to avoid a lingering Pelagianism. God's election in Christ is not conditioned by the worthiness of Christian community (or the creation) because God has accomplished the election in Christ, a divine human being. Barth judged that the Reformed doctrine appeal to a secret divine decree launches Reformed theology and piety on a search for a way of establishing a mercy-filled relationship with God historically. He writes, "The refusal to speak of Christ in order to speak rightly of grace prevented any proper discernment of the fact that the complement of election is faith. And the inevitable result was an experimenting with those other 'complements' which are always in the offing when it is thought that there can be dealings with God apart from Jesus Christ, and consequently the call to faith cannot be heard."¹⁷⁹ In Barth's version of the doctrine, God has accomplished the election as a human being; therefore, God has performed both sides of covenant partnership which election intends. Without this Christological location of the doctrine, Reformed piety and doctrine begins to make faith or other kinds of experiences and acts into signs of election in order to come to grips with obscuring of God in an absolute decree behind Jesus Christ. How else is Reformed theology and piety to establish how human beings stand before God (as Barth remarks in the last paragraph)?

Thus, revelation and reconciliation become locatable and embodied for Barth once they were dilated into the history of Jesus Christ's election. Barth could now point to a location of revelation and reconciliation in a way that he previously could not. Revelation and reconciliation just are the history that God elects to have in the history of

¹⁷⁹ II/2, 113.

Jesus Christ. The activity of human beings other than Christ, such as their prayer, serve as “confirmation” of this election, accomplished in the incarnate Son of God.¹⁸⁰ However, the question arises as to whether the Christological localization of revelation and reconciliation hampers Barth’s ability to locate the various ways that human beings who are included in Christ’s election “confirm” their own election. Does localizing reconciliation in Christ exclude a localizing of the appropriation of reconciliation in others? In particular, does it exclude a localizing of reconciliation in the common life of others? These questions have been answered in part, but treatments of the doctrine of election have not addressed the drawing power of God’s election, which is also part of how Barth does justice to human activity while avoiding slipping into semi-Pelagianism.

Guiding Questions

Our central question is simple. Barth writes near the beginning of II/2 that “In His love, God elects another to be in fellowship with God’s self . . . God gives himself the determination to allow himself not to be satisfied with himself, even while he can satisfy himself. He gives himself the determination of that overflowing, that movement and condescension. . . . In so doing, he elects another as object of his love - he draws it upward, near to himself (*zieht er es heran und hinzu zu sich selbst*). He does this in order to be no longer without this other, but to be with him - to be who he is in covenant with him.”¹⁸¹ What does Barth mean here? How does God’s election draw human being near to himself in Jesus Christ? We will show, as we did in our treatment of II/1, that the language of glory, especially the language of good-pleasure, is one way that Barth answers this question. We will also focus particularly on how glory allows Barth to say

¹⁸⁰ II/2, 194.

¹⁸¹ II/2, 10/KD II/2, 9.

that God's election in Jesus Christ draws out the action of the Christian community, especially its growth. All of this also helps interpreters be cognizant of the way that glory allows Barth to avoid the creeping Pelagianism he detected in traditional Reformed doctrine and piety.

Given that election is ontologically mediated by Jesus Christ as the subject and object of election in Barth's account, we can break our question into two parts: 1) For Barth, how does glory account for the drawing power of God's election, such that the man Jesus is himself drawn into his own election? 2) How does glory account for the drawing power of Jesus' own obedience, resulting in the *de facto* participation of the Christian community?

The Actors and Movements of Election

Before I answer our two questions directly, I seek to gain a sense of the actors involved in election as well as a sense of the kind of movements they make toward, against and with one another. Election is a free event, an act which corresponds to the being of God's life. As such an event, it includes various movements which are ontologically ordered to this Triune resolve. Only then can we see that, in his doctrine of God, Barth carefully prepares an account of how Christian communities as communities are drawn into self-developing their participation in Christ's election.

Barth's depiction of election includes at least five movements, all of which unfold the content of Christ as the subject and object of election. The first movement is God's decision to be a covenant God. God decides to be "what he is only in this movement, in the movement towards this man, and in Him and through Him towards other men in their

unity as His people.”¹⁸² God is not God “without the Son sitting at the right hand of the Father.” Just so, “apart from this man and...this people, God would be a different, an alien God....he would not be God at all.” God’s “covenant” with humanity in Jesus Christ just is this movement he makes towards humanity in and as Jesus Christ. God elects God’s self. On its own, this is an extraordinary claim with deep and extensive implications for Barth’s theo-ontology. We will return to this movement and these implications as we specify its determination as God’s good-pleasure, but for now we note that God is whatever God is because he has elected to move towards the creature.

In the second movement, Jesus Christ receives the Triune election as a human being. Barth writes about this passive election:

... before all created reality, before all being and becoming in time, before time itself, in the pre-temporal eternity of God, the eternal divine decision as such has as its object and content the existence of this one created being, the man Jesus of Nazareth, and the work of this man in His life and death, His humiliation and exaltation, His obedience and merit. It tells us further that in and with the existence of this man the eternal divine decision has as its object and content the execution of the divine covenant with man, the salvation of all men ... Jesus Christ, then, is not merely one of the elect but the Elect of God.¹⁸³

It is important to be clear that, in this movement, God remains subject and object. In this move, however, God remains subject and object as a human being. God receives God’s own election to be a human being, *as a human being*. Even in its creaturely reference, its primary object of election is God in God’s self. Speaking from above, in God’s eternity, God elects to give himself to receive God’s own election as a human being. Speaking from below, God elects to take a creature into God’s eternity, in a hypostatic union with

¹⁸² II/2, 7.

¹⁸³ II/2, 116.

the Son of God, in order to receive God's election. In sum, God made "the covenant...with Himself."¹⁸⁴

But, as the quote in the last paragraph indicates, God's election of God's self, in both its divine and creaturely modulations, does include other creaturely objects – God's people and "all men."¹⁸⁵ This is our third movement. Jesus Christ is elected as a human being who is the Head of all other human beings. As the subject of election he "unites Him with them" since he is "electing them in His own humanity."¹⁸⁶ He writes, "In that He (as God) wills Himself (as man), He also wills them." No other human being can be said to elect other human beings. Only Jesus Christ is hypostatically unified to the Son of God; thus, only Jesus Christ elects other human beings. Thus, Barth claims that Christ is not simply the example of election; He is the "organ and instrument of all divine electing." When God resolves to move toward God's self as human being in Christ, God resolves to move toward them as well. Even more, in eternity, God resolves, *as one of them*, to move toward them.¹⁸⁷

Barth carefully notes that, in contrast to traditional theologies of election which only discuss Jesus Christ's reception of election as a human being, the second and third movements bear no import for the fulfillment of the covenant without the first movement.¹⁸⁸ He writes, "where can Jesus Christ derive the authority and power to be Lord and Head of all others, and how can these others be elected 'in Him,' and how can they see in His election the assurance of their own, if He is only the object of election and

¹⁸⁴ II/2, 107.

¹⁸⁵ II/2, 116.

¹⁸⁶ II/2, 117.

¹⁸⁷ As to whether Barth affirms that Jesus Christ elects others as a human being, the answer is not so clear. He comes close but does not clearly affirm this. See II/2, 116, 121, 126.

¹⁸⁸ Barth refers to both Augustine and Aquinas as those who denote Jesus Christ as elected, but the connotation of that election has to do simply with his humanity (II/2, 106-110).

not Himself its Subject...if the testimony of Holy Scripture concerning the man Jesus Christ is true, that this man does stand before God above and on behalf of others, then this man is no mere creature but He is also their Creator.”¹⁸⁹ Christ cannot be a mediator unless he is both the subject and object of election. As he questions, “How can a mere creature ever come to the point of standing in this way above and on behalf of others?” In addition, other human beings will not be able to gain assurance of God’s movement toward them unless both of these movements are contained in Jesus Christ. But, most relevant to our purposes, Barth obliquely refers to the power that Christ has as the Head of all others, as the Head of a community.

Yet, as both quotes indicate, Jesus’ obedience as a human being displays his reception of election. Or, as Barth puts it, he “elects God in faith.”¹⁹⁰ This is the fourth movement. God elects God’s self as a human being.¹⁹¹ God becomes an object (again) inasmuch as God becomes a human in order to elect God’s self as a human being. At one point, Barth summarizes the essence of Jesus Christ’s election of God : “it is steadfastness of obedience to God, and of calling only upon Him, and of confidence in the righteousness of His will.”¹⁹² Obedience and confidence are still too abstract for Barth: He typifies the act of election as the act of prayer, of “calling only upon Him.” What is the import of this movement? Barth says multiple times that without the absoluteness of that human obedience, Jesus’ election would not be known or confirmed.¹⁹³ But, he also claims that this steadfastness on the part of Jesus Christ, which

¹⁸⁹ II/2, 116.

¹⁹⁰ II/2, 103.

¹⁹¹ My interpretation of this movement is deeply indebted to Paul Jones’ interpretation of the agency of Jesus Christ in election (Jones, *Humanity of Christ*, 102-114).

¹⁹² II/2, 125.0

¹⁹³ II/2, 125-126.

corresponds to the steadfast of God in the resurrection, strikes the being of creation. He writes, “With this prayer He undertakes to be both priest and victim, thus affirming for his part the salutariness of the holy wrath of God. In this prayer He fulfils his creaturely office in the history of creation as it was determined and prepared by God . . .” In brief: divine *and* human steadfastness is “actualized in Him.”¹⁹⁴ Putting it positively, the church knows that Jesus Christ is elected *because of* the absoluteness of his obedience. The church knows that God resolves to impart God’s self to it and the rest of creation because of Jesus’ radical obedience. Even more, Jesus Christ’s absolute obedience is undertaken “on their behalf” and on behalf of “all others.”¹⁹⁵ Election is not simply the election to make a covenant, but an election of a fulfilled covenant, a covenant fulfilled on divine and human side.¹⁹⁶

Jesus Christ’s obedience reveals and confirms God’s resolve to impart himself because his obedience is free. Barth writes about the relationship between Jesus’ election of God and God’s determination to be elected as a human being:

We cannot over-emphasise God’s freedom and sovereignty in this act . . . But to the creature God willed from all eternity to give, to communicate, and to reveal Himself. To the creature God determined, therefore, to give an individuality and autonomy, not that these gifts should be possessed outside Him, let alone against Him, but for Him, and within His kingdom; not in rivalry with His sovereignty but for its confirming and glorifying. But the sovereignty which was to be confirmed and glorified was the sovereignty of His love, which did not will to exercise mechanical force, to move the immobile from without, to rule over puppets or slaves, but willed rather to triumph in faithful servants and friends, not in their overthrow, but in their obedience, in their own free decision for Him. The

¹⁹⁴ II/2, 126.

¹⁹⁵ II/2, 126, 124, respectively. Texts like these in the doctrine of election need to create a pause for folks who are quite sure that election is, strictly speaking, an event outside of created history (von Balthasar, *The Theology of Karl Barth*, 371; Michael Horton, *People and Place* [Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008], 174-175). See Paul Jones’ recent work (*The Humanity of Christ*, 102-116, 229-242). As Robert Jenson nicely says it, for Barth, “. . . God took time from our time to be His eternity, which is as one event an event in time and an event in eternity” (*Alpha and Omega*, 84).

¹⁹⁶ “it was the choice of the Son to be obedient to grace, and therefore to offer up Himself and to become man in order that this covenant might be made a reality” (CD II/2, 101).

purpose and meaning of the eternal divine election of grace consists in the fact that the one who is elected from all eternity can and does elect God in return . . . at the beginning of all God's ways and works, in the eternal decree of God, there stands the relationship between Himself and the creature which became event and revelation in Jesus Christ. In this event and revelation, what is it that takes place on God's side? It is not a fatalistic overruling and disposing, but a deciding, a deciding which in a single and truly sovereign decision takes on the form and outward appearance of creation and the man Jesus. The man Jesus is not a mere puppet moved this way and that by God. In His wholehearted obedience, in His electing of God alone, He is wholly free . . . The perfection of God's giving of Himself to man in the person of Jesus Christ consists in the fact that far from merely playing with man, far from merely moving or using him, far from merely dealing with him as an object, this self-giving sets man up as a subject, awakens him to genuine individuality and autonomy, frees him, makes him a king, so that in his rule the kingly rule of God Himself attains form and revelation . . . God's eternal will is man: man who is the wholehearted witness to God's kingdom and enjoys as such a kingly freedom.¹⁹⁷

Barth highlights two central reasons that Jesus' obedience must be free. First and foremost, Jesus' human obedience is God's rule in human form. God's rule is the rule of his love, which is free. God rules in that God freely elects to give God's self to the creature. In the freedom of God's love, God elects to be tied to the creation in Christ. Thus, if Christ does not freely obey in accordance with his election, he could not be, in himself, God's self-gift in human form. God's human obedience must be free obedience, because God loves in freedom. If Jesus Christ's obedience were not free obedience, it could not serve as the creaturely form of God's free rule. To be clear: this is both a claim about epistemology and a claim about ontology. Jesus Christ is "wholehearted witness" and so anything less than a free obedience would not bear witness to the love of God's sovereignty. Jesus Christ is the form of God's rule, and so he rules within the freedom that God's rule enjoys.

Second, God elects God's self in Christ because God elects to have friendship with those elected in Christ. Barth does not develop the point here, but to befriend God is

¹⁹⁷ II/2, 177-179, italics mine.

to decide to obey God freely. Jesus Christ, and God's friends in Christ, can freely decide to become God's friends because they are given God's own gift of freedom. As Barth says, God does not want puppets or slaves as disciples, he wants obedient friends.

Although Barth does not mention it, he follows a long line of Christian theologians who key on God's befriending of humanity as a great contribution of the incarnation. As Irenaeus wrote, "It was necessary that . . . through his sharing in the life of both, (the mediator) bring the two together in friendship and harmony."¹⁹⁸ Indeed, this phrase from Irenaeus could be offered as a simple definition of friendship: Friends share a common life in harmony. Thus, those whom God befriends share in the life of God, which is a life of free, outward-directed, love. If human beings are to be God's friends, then their representative and lord must offer God's own freedom. They cannot be God's friends if they do not share in God's own freedom. Indeed, the purpose and meaning of election is this sort of friendship.

This brings us to our fifth and final movement. Just as Jesus Christ performs and fulfills election as a human being who faithfully calls upon God, other human beings who elect in him also exercise their election in prayer. Barth writes, "those who are elected 'in Him' . . . are elected only to believe in Him, i.e. to love in Him the Son of God who died and rose again for them, to laud in Him the priest and victim of their reconciliation with

¹⁹⁸ *Against Heresies*, 3.18.7. For Irenaeus, and for others after him, Jesus is said to be both divine and human because the narratives of both the Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament indicate that God affiliates human beings with the divine life in order to befriend them. The theology of Jesus' identity must conform to the nature of the affiliation between human beings and God. Here, Irenaeus indicates that human beings require an agent of mediation who can produce friendship between God and human beings. This is a remarkable claim in the ancient world, especially in predominantly Greco-Roman contexts, since friendship between God and human beings was often treated as mere metaphor. For example, Plato did acknowledge that salvation occurs when a human being becomes like God and that "assimilation to God, as far as one is able" is the goal of human life (*Theaetetus* 176). However, when he used the word friendship, it was only in reference to the self-sufficient friendship God enjoys with God's self (*Timaeus* 28/37). If God could be said to extend friendship, it could only be said as a metaphor for the Goodness and Beauty of the One that attracts human beings. For Plato, unlike Irenaeus, friendship is not offered by God, friendship is offered to God.

God, to recognize in Him the justification of God (which is also their own justification), to honor in Him their Leader and Representative.”¹⁹⁹ Election is not simply something which happens in eternity nor is it something which simply happens in Jesus Christ’s human history. While this quote may be interpreted in this way, Barth’s being-in-act ontology cannot be so contained. If God is who God is in election and humanity is what it is in relationship to Christ, then election is a happening in the Triune life, in the man Jesus, and in the community which awakens to that election. As Barth writes, “to believe in Jesus is to have His resurrection and prayer both in the mind and in the heart. And this means to be elected. For it is the man that does this who ‘in Him’ is the object of the divine election of grace.”²⁰⁰ To have faith is to be elect, that much should not be in doubt for Barth interpreters.²⁰¹ The key distinction to be made is that although to pray with Jesus Christ is to be elect, the converse is not true. To be elect does not mean one prays with Jesus. To be elect is to be determined to pray, even if one does not conform to that determination. Yet, for Barth, to pray is to enact election.

The overall point of the fifth movement is that the Christian community is, in Jesus Christ, God’s covenant partner. In grace, God elects to have a “covenant partner” so that he could “share His life with another and to have that other as the witness of His glory.”²⁰² If the Christian community, which participates in this covenant in its own way, is to be a witness to God’s glory, then the Christian community is to engage in its own election with free activity in analogy to Jesus Christ. But, as we shall see, the Christian

¹⁹⁹ CD II/2, 126.

²⁰⁰ II/2, 127.

²⁰¹ As Matthias Gockel has shown, Barth’s early doctrine of election carries over in this regard. Election “continues to happen . . . through the proclamation and reception of the Word, the foundation and guiding of Israel and the church . . . the awakening of individual human beings to faith, love and hope” (*Barth and Schleiermacher*, 184).

²⁰² II/2, 19-20.

community is not simply imitating Jesus Christ, the Christian community bears witness to God's glory in Jesus Christ. If the election of Jesus Christ is an act of grace due to God's freedom, then the witnesses to God's glory in electing must also engage free activity corresponding to God's free grace. Prayer is just such an activity.

It is important to note how the Christian community is contextualized with Barth's doctrine of election. Jesus Christ includes in his election all other human beings.²⁰³ But, in Christ God does not abstractly elect all human beings. First, God does not elect "private persons in the singular or plural."²⁰⁴ Instead, God's elects human beings as a "fellowship (*Gemeinschaft*)."²⁰⁵ God elects communities and then God elects individuals who are related somehow to those communities. Barth defines community as "diejenige menschliche Gemeinschaft, die vorläufig in besondere Weise die natürliche und geschichtliche Umgebung des Menschen bildet."²⁰⁶ In part, Barth uses the more abstract words *Gemeinde* and *Gemeinschaft* to denote Jesus Christ's community in order to include both Israel and the church in one differentiated community elected by God in Christ. Our focus is on the Christian community, but it helps to locate the Christian community in the doctrine of election through a comparison with Israel, given that Israel and the church are defined in relationship to one another through II/2.

Barth uses three key terms to describe Jesus Christ's community. First, the community is a "mediate" community because "it is the middle point between the election of Jesus Christ and . . . the election of those who have believed, and do and will

²⁰³ CD II/2, 449-458.

²⁰⁴ II/2, 196.

²⁰⁵ II/2, 216.

²⁰⁶ KD II/2, 216.

believe, in Him.”²⁰⁷ In other words, Barth carefully denotes the community as a historical and eschatological phenomenon, with a particular role in history.²⁰⁸ This will surface especially in the relationship between Israel and the Christian community. Second, the community is “mediating” because “the relation between the election of Jesus Christ and that of all believers . . . is mediated and conditioned by it.”²⁰⁹ How the community mediates that relationship has to do with its overarching task: the community is to provide a “witness” to Jesus Christ “in the face of the whole world, to summon the whole world to faith in Him.”²¹⁰ Thus, Barth uses the word witness in two ways. First, the community is to *stand in witness* to Jesus Christ, to behold and recognition and mark the glory of God as it is invested in Jesus Christ. Second, the community is *bear a witness to* Jesus Christ, to proclaim who and what the community beholds in Jesus Christ in the rest of human culture. In both of these senses, the community mediates and conditions the relationship between Jesus Christ’s election and all other believers – the community is the place which witnesses to and for Jesus Christ for all those in it. Correspondingly, the community is mediate because it is always bound to the rest of world, summoning it through its witness.

While both Israel and the church witness to Jesus Christ, they do so dialectically, in relationship to one another. The Christian community witnesses to the glory of election by accepting that election; Israel witnesses to human resistance to the glory of Jesus

²⁰⁷ CD II/2, 196

²⁰⁸ Herman Bavinck defines the church as “The community of those who share in Christ and his benefits” (*Reformed Dogmatics, Vol. 4: Holy Spirit, Church and New Creation*, trans. John Vriend [Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008], 275. This would not satisfy Barth on many levels, but the chief reason would be that it is too abstracted from history and thus does not do justice to either the identification of Jesus Christ with the church or the mission that they share in that identification.

²⁰⁹ II/2, 196.

²¹⁰ II/2, 196.

Christ's election.²¹¹ The Christian community thus witnesses to God's mercy in election; Israel witnesses to the judgment in election (albeit a judgment ordered to and even identical to mercy).²¹² The Christian community witnesses to the promise of God's election by responding to it in faith; Israel witnesses to that promise by hearing it without faith.²¹³ The Christian community is the coming form of the community which witnesses to the future eternal life given in election; Israel is the passing form of Christ's community which gives witness to futility of resistance to election.²¹⁴ Barth's description of the community as mediate is apropos here, for the Christian community is simply "Israel fulfilling its determined purpose, to live by nothing else but the grace of God directed toward Israel."²¹⁵ In other words, the community is mediate because Israel is passing into the Christian community, the Christian community supersedes Israel as the community of promise.

There are a host of issues surrounding the Israel-church relationship, which we simply do not have the space to address. Those who concern themselves with this layer of Barth's work often study it in order to find new ways of approaching the Israel-church relationship.²¹⁶ Our concern is with the particular way that the Christian community

²¹¹ II/2, 198-199.

²¹² II/2, 205-206.

²¹³ II/2, 235. Israel hears "and does not believe" (235), and that means Israel has no faith, since faith includes belief (234).

²¹⁴ II/2, 260-261.

²¹⁵ II/2, 267.

²¹⁶ See Mark Lindsay, *Barth Israel and Jesus* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2007); Katherine Sonderegger, *That Jesus Christ was Born a Jew* (Penn State Press, 1992); R. Kendall Soulen, *The God of Israel and Christian Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996), 81-108; Eugene Rogers, *Sexuality and the Christian Body* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1999), 140-179. Barth's differentiation and unification of the church and Israel represent both some of his most fascinating and disappointing work. His affirmation of the unabrogated covenant that includes Israel was ground-breaking for modern Christian theology. Yet, on the other hand, he was strangely content to let them be differentiated in binary ways. Although he would say that predestination is a "non-dialectical" proclamation of joy, he was willing to say that the church witnesses to God's mercy in Christ and Israel witnesses to God's judgment in Christ (II/2, 12, 198). Yet, disappointing and dangerous though it may be, the fundamental judgment that God's predestination is

provides a witness to the glory of God's election in Jesus Christ. Much work could and needs to be done on the relationship between the Christian community and Israel with regard to glory and would provide possible ways of modifying Barth's work, but that would take us beyond the scope of this study.²¹⁷

We pointed out above that Barth aimed to circumvent the sign-of-election moralism which he diagnoses as one of the ironic problems of most Reformed approaches to the doctrine. By appealing to an obscure absolute decree, Reformed doctrine and piety tended to secure assurance of election through an appeal to human experience or activity. Barth does circumvent the problem, since all movements depend on the previous movements, ending with God's election of God's self. God has made God's own self the guarantee of election, in and through of Jesus Christ. But, if certain human beings do not take up the prayer of Jesus Christ, that does not mean they are not elect. For Barth, they have become resistant to their own election. The Christian community and Christian individuals accept their own destiny in election, but their election does not depend on their acceptance. The conforming of their lives to election depends upon their acceptance and their faith, not election itself.

unified by the unity of God's own life (through God's decision to be a covenant God) has given theologians ample room to repair Barth.

²¹⁷ Matthias Gockel presents a unique voice among sympathetic and non-sympathetic interpreters. Gockel thinks that the universal bearing of Barth's election makes it difficult for Barth to think of election applying to communities in any way (*Barth and Schleiermacher*, 207). If all human individuals are elected equally, then a mediating communal election will create an unneeded hierarchy between communities which undercuts that solidarity in Christ. Thus, Gockel would remove the problem of the relation between Israel and the Christian community by making communities into ephemeral entities that do not in any way identify human beings as human beings. Gockel's interpretation simply will not work as a repair to Barth's theology, for various reasons. For Barth, human beings are identified by their relationship with Jesus Christ, and thus by their relationship with one another. As such, human beings are constituted by their mutual activity. Chief among those activities would be prayer, which makes communal prayer indispensable. If communal prayer is indispensable, then human beings best serve their humanity in the Christian community, where such prayer is offered in groups.

But, another way that Barth circumvents this problem is through an appeal to the doctrine of glory he now integrates into his doctrine of election. We are now ready to answer our two questions.

Answering Our Questions

1) For Barth, how does glory account for the drawing power of God's election, such that the man Jesus is himself drawn into his own election? 2) How does glory account for the drawing power of Jesus' own obedience, resulting in the *de facto* participation of the Christian community?

God's decree is that human beings, in Christ, will be witnesses of God's glory, as we saw above. Thus, it would make sense that God's glory is part of how Barth accounts for the faith and prayer of the man Jesus. Barth accounts for this drawing power through the use of the term good-pleasure. For Barth, the man Jesus is drawn into his faithful prayer and obedience by God's good-pleasure. Note the following quotation:

. . . the eternal history, encounter and decision between God and man, the content of the Gospel in which we have to acknowledge the concrete content of predestination . . . is the presupposition of all the movement of creaturely life. This presupposition is not merely static but moving. It has authority, and it also authorises. It is powerful, and it exercises power. It happened, and it also happens. Who then, and what then, is unchanged and unchangeable? God Himself in His triune being as free love. And not only God, but God's decree, God's electing of man according to His own good-pleasure, an electing which resulted in the election of man, *and man's electing of God and finding of his good pleasure in God . . . This is predestination . . . God's decision which precedes everything, and therefore the divine electing of man and man's election by God, is made visible and becomes operative in time in the form of the Word of God proclaimed and received, in the form of the people Israel and the Church, in the form of the calling, justification, sanctification, and glorification of man, in the form of man's faith and hope and love. For this reason we must see in all these things quite literally the divine predestination, the eternal decision of God's free love . . .*²¹⁸

²¹⁸ II/2, 184-185, italics mine.

This quotation affirms much that we have seen so far. God's decree is a history in the triune life, as that triune life intersects with both the history of Jesus Christ and the history of other human beings. But, what Barth emphasizes here is that God's decree is a *history*. Barth alludes to a distinction between the mode of Jesus Christ's finding God's good-pleasure and how Jesus Christ's community finds God's good-pleasure. The mutual election between God and humanity becomes "visible and operative" in Jesus Christ's community, through worship, faith, love, etc. This is simply a way for Barth to create an ordered relationship between all the movements of election we describe above. Each latter movement depends on the previous, and the previous results in the latter. But, with regard to our particular interest, the man Jesus comes to prayerful obedience and fulfills the covenant because he responds to the expression of God's good-pleasure in election. This is simply Barth's way of integrating his doctrine of glory from II/1 – it is the joy of God, turned toward to the creature, turned toward Jesus Christ, which attracts the man Jesus into his own corresponding good-pleasure in God's election. Good-pleasure begets good-pleasure.

This is part and parcel of Barth's recasting of God's good-pleasure, in distinction from what he takes to be the dominant line in the Reformed tradition. "Good-pleasure" is the English translation of *Wohlgefallen*, which is, in turn, a translation of the biblical word *eudokia* which occurs twice in Ephesians 1. In English translation, the Ephesians text reads:

(3) Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, (4) just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. (5) He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, *according to the good pleasure* of his will, (6) to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved . . . (8b) With all wisdom and insight

(9) he has made known to us the mystery of his will, *according to his good-pleasure* that he set forth in Christ, (10) as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

Barth uses the phrase *gottlichen Wohlgefallen* or other variants to refer to this text, among others. This biblical text becomes, for Barth, a central point of contention in a doctrine of election. For Barth, in most of its occurrences in the Reformed tradition, appealing to the good-pleasure of God was simply a way of obscuring God who elects (as noted in the Synod of Dort above).²¹⁹ Since it was an infinite and powerful God who elects, the traditional accounts would merely affirm as “a bald statement of fact” that to elect or condemn was a matter of God’s good-pleasure.²²⁰ God does whatever God pleases, election or reprobation included. As Barth writes, “It is most dangerous to believe that . . . redemptive work . . . must be a means of election and also a means of

²¹⁹ Calvin simply refers to God’s good-pleasure as the cause of election and reprobation : “We teach nothing not borne out by experience: that God has always been free to bestow his grace on whom he wills . . . if they willfully strive to strip God of his free power to choose or reject, let them at the same time also take away what has been given to Christ . . . Paul sets ‘God’s good-pleasure’ over against any merit of ours” (Institutes, III.22.1). It is important to note that the Synod of Dort was not quite so bald. The Synod does appeal to good-pleasure as both a cause of election in I.7 and reprobation in I.15. This is quite common in Reformed sources (See Heinrich Heppe, *Reformed Dogmatics: Set Out and Illustrated from the Sources*, Trans. G.T. Thomson [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1978], 155, 178-189; Herman Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics, Vol. 2: God and Creation*, Trans. John Vriend [Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004], 385-386. The Synod, along with many later Reformed sources just mentioned, was able to countenance a human cause of reprobation (that is, sin) in addition to the divine good, at least on one layer. The Synod made a distinction in I.15 between preterition (not choosing to elect) and predamnation (positive choice to damn). God’s good-pleasure was the sole cause of preterition, but predamnation included (or at least could include, depending on the reception of the Synod) sin as the cause for being damned. See Donald Sinnema, *The Issue of Reprobation at the Synod of Dort (1618-1619) in Light of the History of this Doctrine* (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of Toronto, 1985), 427-435. For recent work on Dort, see *Revisiting the Synod of Dordt*, ed. Aza Goudriaan and Fred van Lieburg (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2011). Schleiermacher argues for a single decree in which “all belonging to the human race are eventually taken up into having fellowship with Christ” (*Christian Faith*, 549). Interestingly, when it comes to distinguishing the process or history in which faith spreads (thus, making it necessary to distinguish between those without and those with faith), Schleiermacher appeals in the same abstract way to God’s good-pleasure: “it has been His good-pleasure to make the dispensation of human affairs perfect through Christ. He might from the very beginning have arranged the whole march of the human race differently; only it would have been a different human race . . . for the religious there is no path of escape from this circle of necessities, each leading back to and conditioned by the others, except by way of this one all-inclusive divine good-pleasure” (Ibid., 556). In other words, the emphasis for all of these sources was on *good* in good-pleasure, not in making sense of the *pleasure* (and, for Barth, still in abstraction from Christ as subject and object of election).

²²⁰ II/2, 156.

rejection . . . both as a fulfilment of that secret good-pleasure of God which is wholly anonymous and completely closed in upon itself.”²²¹ God’s relationship with the creature appeared arbitrary and thus election obscured a reliable sense of revelation. For Barth, however, the phrase “according to (God’s) good-pleasure,” along with other examples such as the Hebrew phrase *berith olam* (“everlasting covenant,” Gen. 17.7), indicates that election “is not (whatever concepts of time might be supposed) incidental, not ephemeral, but is an essential relationship characteristic of God in God’s self [...*ist sie (welches auch die Zeitbegriffe sein moegen, die hier vorausgesetzt sind) als nicht-zufaellig, not voruebergehende, sondern von Gott selbst her notwendige Beziehung charakterisiert*].”²²² In other words, passages such as Ephesians 1 warrant his claim that election is an eternal act on God’s part in which God self-determines to be God in relationship with creatures. Since election happens according to God’s good-pleasure, it is not capricious. Instead, “at the beginning of all things God’s eternal plan and decree was *identical* with what is disclosed to us in time as the revelation and of the truth about all things.”²²³ God’s election – since it is *God’s own* good-pleasure that determines it – is reliably revealed to the creation in Jesus Christ and received by the church. Or, it is as reliable as God. If election is identified with Christ who is both the subject and object of election, then God is no longer obscured in election.

The phrase God’s good-pleasure does more for Barth. In the process of revising the doctrine of election, the good-pleasure of God no longer connotes the same sense. Perhaps it is obvious at this point, but the word *Wohlgefallen* reveals that God’s election in Christ accords with God’s *pleasure*. This pleasure of God in God’s own election

²²¹ II/2, 140. Cf. 103, 115, 134, 136, 138 for similar comments.

²²² II/2, 102/KD, 109.

²²³ II/2, 156. Italics mine.

signals the worthiness of God's glory in electing, which is what draws Jesus and his community into their own corresponding action. It still marks God's freedom in election without regard to the worth of the creatures: "God's decision is grounded in His good-pleasure, and for that reason it is inexplicable to us."²²⁴ Creatures cannot call God to account. Barth also argues that this phrase from Ephesians 1 (and elsewhere) must be something that summons obedience. The mystery of God's good-pleasure summons obedience because "God's will is our salvation."²²⁵ But, God's good-pleasure does this because it connotes the exuberance and delight God has in electing: "In this primal decision God did not remain satisfied with His own being in Himself . . . this decision can mean only an overflowing of His glory."²²⁶ The inscrutability of God's good-pleasure is that God has given God's self even though God's sufficiency does not require it. The inscrutability of God's good-pleasure is that God actually takes pleasure in the creature. The depth of this good-pleasure is measured by the fact that the creature has already been given "participation in His own glory, the glory to which it owes its origin."²²⁷ God's good-pleasure allows, permits, and draws human obedience because God has given God's self, the constancy of God's own power to love. God's love is inscrutable in that it is too good to be true.

This, again, is how Barth makes sense of how Jesus Christ is drawn into worship. Obedient worship and obedient day-to-day life are the forms of gratitude made possible by the investment of God's glory in Jesus Christ, as we saw in II/1. In II/2, Barth uses

²²⁴ II/2, 30.

²²⁵ II/2, 31.

²²⁶ II/2, 168.

²²⁷ II/2, 169. "If it is indeed the case that the divine good-pleasure which was the beginning of all things with God carries with it the risk and threat of negation, then it is so because the Son of God incarnate represents and Himself is this divine good-pleasure. The risk and threat is the portion which the Son of God, i.e. God Himself, has chosen for His own" (II/2, 163). Cf. II/2, 156-157.

similar reasoning, with other language: “Inasmuch as in the election He has made Himself the object of our worship, all the demand now made of us consists in the one thing – that we should really offer Him this worship.”²²⁸ Barth then pulls both threads together. Barth writes that “. . . it is His own glory which ordains for itself this overflowing as the predestination of all things.”²²⁹ Then in the same context emphatically asserts that “the man Jesus is not a mere puppet moved this way and that by God. He is not a mere reed used by God as an instrument of His Word. The man Jesus prays. He speaks and acts” on the basis of the fact that “His glorifying is for Him not a matter of vague expectancy and hope, but the goal to which he strides with the same sober certainty as to the preceding fulfillment of His humiliation.”²³⁰ For Barth, the purpose and meaning of divine election is that “the one who is elected from all eternity can and does elect God in return.”²³¹ More concretely, the purpose and meaning of divine election is the worship and obedience offered by Jesus Christ and all those elected in him. God’s glory, insofar as it overflows in predestination, provokes the worship of Jesus Christ. God’s glory, exercised in election, attracts the faithful prayer of Jesus Christ.

Does faith in other human beings operate in the same way? Is the Christian community drawn into their election through the same path? How does Barth guard the uniqueness of Christ in this regard? Barth does say forthrightly that Jesus Christ is “the original pattern of the believer.”²³² Barth makes this claim in the midst of explaining how “Jesus Christ is the risen Lord of the Church.” In other words, the pattern of Jesus’ role within election signals how it is that Jesus is the “inaugurator of the gracious coming of

²²⁸ II/2, 32.

²²⁹ II/2, 178.

²³⁰ II/2, 179.

²³¹ II/2, 178.

²³² II/2, 198.

the new form of man.” Since Jesus Christ is Lord of the church, he is “the authentic witness of the mercy in which God in choosing man for fellowship with Himself turns towards him His own glory.” Jesus Christ’s Lordship over the Church makes him a pattern for the believer’s witness to God’s election. But, Jesus Christ is not simply a pattern for individual believers who constitute the church. Jesus Christ is himself the pattern for the common life of the church. Near the beginning of II/2 he writes:

The other to which God stands in relationship . . . the partner of God which cannot now be thought away is neither “humanity” as an idea, nor “humanity” as it exists, nor indeed a large or small total of individual men. It is the one man Jesus and the people represented in him . . . Everything happens according to this basic and determinative pattern, model and system. Everything which comes from God takes place in Jesus Christ, i.e. in the establishment of the covenant, which, in the union of His Son with Jesus of Nazareth, God has instituted and maintains and directs between Himself and his people, the people consisting of those who belong to Him, who have become His in this One.²³³

With qualification, what happens in Jesus Christ happens also in a community that Jesus Christ represents. God’s partner is Jesus Christ *and* his community. When Barth demarcates the being and action of Jesus Christ, he also demarcates the being and action of a community which belongs to Him.

We could say that, for Barth, Jesus Christ becomes a pattern for the believer and the church in that Jesus Christ offers a life worthy of imitation. Christ’s lordship would be a deduction from the example that Jesus offers or would simply be a parallel line of argument. Not for Barth. Indeed, he writes, “Not that we should believe like Jesus Christ – that aspect is better left to one side seeing that He is God and we are only men – but that we should believe in Jesus Christ, in the gracious action of God actualized and revealed in Him”²³⁴ If this is true, how is Jesus a pattern?

²³³ II/2, 8.

²³⁴ II/2, 583.

Jesus Christ is a pattern, or an example, in that he receives God's election as a human being. Consider the following selection:

... in the predestination of the man Jesus we see what predestination is always and everywhere—the acceptance and reception of man only by the free grace of God . . . in the man Jesus there is indeed no merit, no prior and self-sufficient goodness, which can precede His election to divine sonship. Neither prayer nor the life of faith can command or compel His election. It is by the work of the Word of God, by the Holy Spirit, that He is conceived and born without sin, that He is what He is, the Son of God; by grace alone. And as He became Christ, so we become Christians. As He became our Head, so we become His body and members. As He became the object of our faith, so we become believers in Him. What we have to consider in the elected man Jesus is, then, the destiny of human nature, its exaltation to fellowship with God, and the manner of its participation in this exaltation by the free grace of God. But more, it is in this man that the exaltation itself is revealed and proclaimed. For with His decree concerning this man, God decreed too that this man should be the cause and the instrument of our exaltation.²³⁵

Since Jesus Christ is the Lord of the church insofar as he is predestined to be the Son of God, he is a pattern for the church. In the same way that the man Jesus is predestined, the church is predestined. Even more, *as* the man Jesus is elected, the church is elected in him. Both are elected in grace, without any creaturely conditions.

But the difference between Jesus Christ's own faith and the faith of other human beings which makes operative their election is that other human beings have faith *in Jesus Christ*: "in respect of those who are elected 'in Him,' it follows that their election consists concretely in their faith in Him . . . to believe in Jesus is to have His resurrection and prayer both in the mind and in the heart. And this means to be elected. For it is the man that does this who 'in Him' is the object of the divine election of grace."²³⁶ Just as the man Jesus receives his election in faith, just so does the community elected in him receives it in faith. One of the movements in God's election of God's self is God's

²³⁵ II/2, 118, italics mine. Cf. II/2, 121.

²³⁶ II/2, 126-127.

reception of God's election as a human being. Without God's own reception of God's election as a human being, there is no election. Yet, as Barth says here, this is also true of the other creaturely objects of election. Their election consists in their faith. To have faith is to be an object of election. The difference between the faith of Jesus and the faith of other human beings is that other human beings have faith in Jesus. Jesus does not obey other human beings; other human beings obey God in Jesus Christ. The object of Jesus' faith is himself, along with the Father and the Spirit. The object of the community's faith is Jesus Christ. Thus, for Barth, Jesus Christ holds out a pattern to be received and trusted, not a pattern for faith to imitate.

Thus, in unique ways, what goes for the man Jesus with regard to the power of glory goes for the Christian community. In the following passage, Barth is elaborating on the fact that, since Jesus Christ is the subject and object of election, God's eternal decree is "identical with what is disclosed to us time."²³⁷ The corresponding *de facto* participation of human beings in this election depends upon this identity:

Revealing to us the fulness of the one God, it discloses to us not only what the will of God is, but also what it was and what it will be. And it does so in such a

²³⁷ "...in full accord with tradition, we acknowledge the unsearchable majesty of the good-pleasure with which God has from all eternity and in all eternity both the right and the power to dispose of the world and us, in which as God He has in fact disposed of us and the world . . . But we depart from tradition when we say that for us there is no obscurity about this good-pleasure of the eternal will of God... When we assert the wisdom and mercy and righteousness of this good-pleasure, we do not need to do so merely as a bald statement of fact. We negate this whole understanding because positively we must affirm that at the beginning of all things God's eternal plan and decree was identical with what is disclosed to us in time as the revelation of God and of the truth about all things. This is the light of the divine good-pleasure.... This is the wisdom and mercy and righteousness of God which not only asserts itself but discloses itself so fully and clearly that we may know what it is we do when we have to subordinate ourselves unreservedly to the good-pleasure of this wise and merciful and righteous God, and when in fact we can subordinate and surrender ourselves to this good-pleasure.... The core of this thesis is to be found in the perception that in respect of predestination we must not and need not separate ourselves from the revelation of God as such, because in that revelation predestination is revealed as well, because predestination is not hidden but disclosed. God is the self-revealing God, and as such He is the electing God. The eternal will of God which is before time is the same as the eternal will of God which is above time, and which reveals itself as such and operates as such in time. . . God himself is one. He may be known either altogether or not at all... the revelation of God . . . has . . . the character of completeness." (II/2, 154-155).

way that *we are satisfied as well as God* . . . Certainly, it is the secret of God's good-pleasure that it should take this form and not another, and that it should be revealed to us as such; that in all its fulness it should have the character and form and content displayed to us in God's revelation, and that it should really be disclosed in this revelation and not hidden. Certainly, *there corresponds to this secret the secret of faith, in the question whether we do know and know fully its character and form and content, whether the good-pleasure of God does find our confidence and obedience.* This is, indeed, the secret of God's good-pleasure, and even in the secret of the decision of faith it is still a question of our relationship to this secret. It is a question of revelation. It is a question of the knowledge of the will of God; of all His will, of His will which is before time, of His predestinating will . . . In this decree we do not have to assert a God of omnipotence and to cower down before Him. In all His incomprehensibility we may know Him and love Him and praise Him as the One who has truly revealed to us His wisdom and mercy and righteousness, and who has revealed Himself as the One who is Himself all these things. *God's glory overflows in this the supreme act of His freedom: illuminating, and convincing, and glorifying itself;* not therefore demanding a *sacrificium intellectus* but awakening faith. The Son of God determined to give Himself from all eternity. With the Father and the Holy Spirit He chose to unite Himself with the lost Son of Man. This Son of Man was from all eternity the object of the election of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. And the reality of this eternal being together of God and man is a concrete decree. It has as its content one name and one person. This decree is Jesus Christ, and for this very reason it cannot be a *decretum absolutum*.²³⁸

One of Barth's points in this series of quotations is that God not only sponsors faith through a revelation of God's election, God sponsors faith by revealing the pleasure and form of God's self-declaration - God's glory - in election. As Barth says, God becomes worthy of "praise," of human beings striving toward absolute "obedience," when God reveals God's election in glory. God's election convinces because it is glorious. Barth again rings the changes on the Trinitarian logic of glory, since it is the triune life which makes God's good-pleasure possible. He also alludes to the fact that the incarnation supremely reveals the beauty of God, for the incarnation is the unity of identity and non-identity made possible by the overflowing of the unity of identity and non-identity of the

²³⁸ II/2, 156-158.

triune life.²³⁹ Human faith can and is nourished by the doctrine of election in Jesus Christ, because the divine election is turning of God's triune joy toward humanity in Jesus Christ. Election is the sum of the Gospel because, once it is located fully in Jesus Christ, it cannot be found in one's acts apart from Jesus Christ. It is the sum of the Gospel because, in Barth's hands, the full weight of God's joy has been trained on a human being: "Jesus Christ is not merely one object of the divine good-pleasure (*Wohlgefallen*) side by side with others . . . He Himself is this good-pleasure."²⁴⁰ And, if Jesus Christ has taken on a sinful human nature that is judged, there is no way to say that God's pleasure results in anything other than faithful worship on the part of human beings who themselves not worthy of glorification.²⁴¹ If God is God's own good-pleasure and God elects in that triune good-pleasure to give of God's self in Jesus Christ, then revelation indicates that God's good-pleasure must be determined, in the end, to reconciliation and redemption. There is now no terror before the face of a *decretum absolutum*. There is only attraction to a God who has elected to give God's whole self to creatures in Jesus Christ. There is only joy in the face of God's good-pleasure in electing.

The concrete event in which God draws the Christian community into a *de facto* participation in Jesus Christ is the resurrection, the "actualization of the overflowing of the inner glory of God."²⁴² It is in the resurrection that God confirms that Jesus Christ is elect, as the resurrection is God's steadfast answer to Jesus' prayers.²⁴³ As we saw above, Jesus' human steadfastness is to prayerfully face his own death as God's good-will. The man Jesus comes to participate in the divine glory because he is hypostatically united to

²³⁹ II/1, 661-662.

²⁴⁰ II/2, 104.

²⁴¹ II/2, 592.

²⁴² II/2, 125.

²⁴³ II/2, 126.

the Son, who is God's glory.²⁴⁴ The church, however, is drawn into its own faith, its own confident vulnerability to the life of God because faith "is a question of the essential, absolute and total confidence which no one assumes on his own but which is founded for everyone on the fact that in the awakening of Christ from the dead God has revealed and turned to man his own glory. It is thus a question of the confidence awakened by God in which man – whether Jew or Gentile – may rely on God who has made, and does and will make, everything right for him."²⁴⁵ We see now more clearly the difference between the faith of Christ and the faith of the Church. The Church believes as a whole in the faith of Jesus Christ. But, it can only believe in that faith when God glorifies it. God's glory, if it is the power to be moved by God, is revealed in the resurrection because God has been moved by God's own human faith to maintain steadfast to Jesus Christ. God's glory, if it is the form of God's life, is revealed in the resurrection because God is achieving a unity of identity and non-identity by maintaining God's fellowship with human beings despite the cross. The church does not achieve this steadfastness in its faith. Its faith is a confidence in God's divine and human steadfastness in the being and act of Jesus Christ. God's glory in Jesus' prayer and in the resurrection gathers the Church into its own awakening. But, this is simply to anticipate what we will explore in the following chapters.

Yet, in the doctrine of election, some of Barth's most moving descriptions of the gathering power of God's glory come when he describes the fulfillment of the covenant decreed in Christ's election as a command which unifies the church. God's self-giving – God's grace – is a command that both summons and draws communities, as

²⁴⁴ Barth remarks that the Son does not need glorification, but the man Jesus does (II/2, 173).

²⁴⁵ II/2, 237.

communities. We end this chapter with a brief look at how Barth modulates his theology of glory to specify the community-forming power of God's command.

Christian Community, God's Command and God's Good-Pleasure

In his general ethics in II/2, Barth circumspectly illuminates the claim which God's grace makes on human beings. God is justified in claiming the full and free obedience of human beings because "He is the God in whom we may believe."²⁴⁶ Barth's point is to shift belief into a category of ethical trust – God is the one in whom human beings can entrust themselves. God cannot be entrusted with human lives because of God's raw power, or from God's goodness, or from God's ability to satisfy human longing and desire. Human beings can entrust themselves to God in Christ because "God has given us Himself. He is not only mighty over us. He is not only the essentially good. He is not only our complete satisfaction. He has given Himself to us. He has graciously turned to us. He has made Himself ours."²⁴⁷ In other words, God's might, God's goodness, and God's pleasantness have been turned to creatures in Jesus Christ. Human beings can entrust themselves to God because God has entrusted God's self to human beings.²⁴⁸

²⁴⁶ II/2, 557.

²⁴⁷ II/2, 557.

²⁴⁸ Barth is here overcoming the Protestant dialectic between Law and Gospel, often associated more directly with the Lutheran than the Reformed traditions. Gospel and Law do not mutually affirm one another by driving their recipients to and fro in comfort and fear. Luther wrote, "Grace contains the forgiveness of sins, a joyful peace, and a quiet conscience. But peace is impossible unless sin has first been forgiven, for the Law accuses and terrifies the conscience on account of sin"; "...when the Law terrifies you, sin accuses you, and your conscience is crushed, you must say...I have the forgiveness of sins through Christ, on whose account all my sins are forgiven. But in a matter apart from conscience, when outward duties must be performed, then, whether you are a preacher, a magistrate, a husband, a teacher, a pupil, etc. this is no time to listen to the Gospel. You must listen to the Law and follow your vocation. Thus the Law remains in the valley with the ass, and the Gospel remains with Isaac on the mountain." (Martin Luther, *Lectures on Galatians*, Trans. Jaroslav Pelikan [St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1963], 26, 117). As Hans Schwarz puts it, "The law sharpens our conscience and show us that we are in a hopeless predicament. Luther said that the law always accuses; it delivers us to God's wrath, to judgment and to eternal death" (Carl Braaten, Robert Jenson, Hans Schwarz, et al., *Christian Dogmatics*, vol. 2

Yet, Barth's ethics of command emits a note of joy. The Christian community trusts God because God empties his joy into human life in Jesus Christ. The Christian community is attracted to God because of God's glory, God's expressive acclamation, God's joy. Yet the Christian community does not trust God because God is joy. Instead, the Christian community trusts their own attraction to God's joy because of God's absolute self-giving, including the absolute giving of joy, to human beings in Jesus Christ. In that God's joy has turned to human communities, they are drawn into their own lives as communities. Human beings, in order to be refreshed, satisfied, and delighted, must "be satisfied that the gracious God does the right."²⁴⁹ When they are satisfied, or become vulnerable to God's right action, they can and do correspond in action to God's self-giving. When they become satisfied with God's decision to belong to them, they have the power to belong to God in return. Barth writes, "the command . . . is itself the form of the grace of God, the intervention of the God who has taken the curse from us to draw us to Himself – the easy yoke and the light burden of Christ...and the assumption of which is in every sense quickening and refreshing. . . the man who . . . is not refreshed is not the obedient man."²⁵⁰ The incarnation - the self-giving of God - elicits joy because God "enters into . . . so complete a fellowship, that He Himself, God, takes his place, to suffer for him in it what man had to suffer, to make good for him the evil he had done, so that he in turn, man, may take God's place, that he, the sinner, may be . . . truly holy and

[Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984], 271-272). Barth's actualistic ontology allows him to say that the Gospel itself is a law that compels obedience. The history of Jesus Christ, as the revelation and impartation of God's life of self-giving, is its own power of movement. As Eberhard Jüngel writes, "In God's activity gospel and law are a single Word." (*Karl Barth: A Theological Legacy*, Trans. Garrett Paul [Philadelphia: Westminster John Knox Press, 1986], 119).

²⁴⁹ II/2, 579.

²⁵⁰ II/2, 586.

righteous . . . He is identical with Himself, and yet free to be another as well.”²⁵¹ In other words, God enters into a positional exchange – that exchange of position which supremely reveals the divine beauty, according to Barth in II/1 - that does not undo but confirms God’s unity. God’s self-giving is a command which draws joy because God remains unified in love even when God becomes another. God’s freedom draws joy because God’s pleasure has already been satisfied in substitution. Human beings are permitted to correspond to this substitution and so are refreshed – are satisfied by God’s own self-satisfaction in the creature.

God’s action in Christ provokes a common life because God’s pleasure is free enough to recognize unworthy human beings as objects of God’s pleasure. The corresponding action in which human beings are drawn is the law of love, the law of self-giving to God in and by self-giving to others.²⁵² Self-giving to God is self-giving to others and vice versa. Human beings love one another, and thus “build up . . . a common life,” because they follow the arc of God’s decision.²⁵³ Barth writes in commenting on Romans 12:

The command of God can be declared plainly and with binding force only when an appeal to God’s mercy is possible . . . The admonition . . . has as its essential theme that its hearers should present their bodies (i.e. their whole person, including all its elements, possibilities and functions) a living sacrifice, holy, pleasing to God (*Gott wohl-gefaelligen*). It is evident that this claim can be recognized and accepted as meaningful only where a man realizes that his life is a living and sacred gift, a sacrifice well-pleasing to God, and as such desired and claimed by God (*ein Gott wohlgefaelliges Opfer ist und als das von Gott verlangt und in Anspruch genommen wird*) . . . He, Jesus Christ, is alone the acting and directing, the offering and offered Subject of the reasonable divine worship which corresponds objectively to the real relationship between human beings and God.”²⁵⁴

²⁵¹ II/1, 663.

²⁵² II/2, 714.

²⁵³ II/2, 718.

²⁵⁴ II/2, 715/KD 799.

English translations make it easy to miss the integration of concepts built into Barth's use of language. God's *Wohlgefallen* and being *wohl-gefaellig* are intrinsically linked as source and result. The will of God is that human beings please God. But, they please God in loving one another. First and foremost, they become pleasing when they recognize that God has been, is, and will be pleased with their love. That is to say: Christ's worthy obedience substitutes for unworthy obedience - God's mercy is that God is pleased with their love in Christ alone. Christ's love for other human beings is the love that substitutes for their own lack of love. Yet, the church is a community of love for another because they are pleased with one another. That means that human beings, in participating in God's free decision to be pleased with unworthy creatures, *can also freely take pleasure in other human beings despite the unworthiness of others*. Unlike God, the church does not create the worth they love in others. But, the church recognizes – is pleased with – the worth that God creates in others by God's own pleasure. For they “know that Christ has received them; and therefore they have no option but to receive one another.”²⁵⁵ Thus, due to the gift of God's good-pleasure in Jesus Christ, the Christian community can take joy in one another, and thus can give themselves to one another.

Finally, the fellowship of the community is a common act of joyful hope, for it is always a “mediate” community, as Barth suggests. The community hopes that God would be pleased with their love of one another. But, also, the community hopes that their love of their beloved “will be able to overcome the evil which it encounters in him and strengthen the good.”²⁵⁶ For they love in the pleasure that God has for their beloved, as the beloved is first and foremost God's beloved. And God's pleasure makes the beloved

²⁵⁵ II/2, 716.

²⁵⁶ II/2, 719.

lovable. Just so, the Christian community's pleasure, insofar as it participates in God's pleasure in witness, forms its beloved into someone lovable. Thus, Paul and Barth are able to say of Christian love that "its hope will always rejoice."

Conclusion

Where have we been? In this chapter, I argued that one purpose of Barth's doctrine of glory in II/1 of the *Church Dogmatics* is to explain how human beings are drawn non-violently into a *de facto* participation in Jesus Christ's being and activity. In part one I did this by outlining how glory is set within Barth's overall ontology in II/1 and delineating the main lines of Barth's exposition of the doctrine of glory. In doing this, we also established a working vocabulary of glory, and paid attention to the way that Barth considers the church's growth to be a matter of the interpenetration of ordinary life and liturgical activity. This served two purposes. First, it prepared the reader to be able to see those concerns and concepts emerge in Barth's doctrine of election. Second, it prepares the reader to identify similar threads in the doctrine of reconciliation, discussed in the following chapters.

Second, I argued that, for Barth, human communities are drawn into a *de facto* (as opposed to a *de jure*) participation in Jesus Christ's being-in-act by communally bearing – living in common responsibility to – the glory of God's triune election in and through worship. Barth sounds the notes of the distinctions between *de jure* and *de facto* participation in his descriptions of God's glory in II/1, including the lines he draws around the concept of worship. In II/2, Barth depicts Jesus Christ as the one who fulfills the covenant by bearing the Triune election (in all its glory!) as a human being when he elects God in prayer. The Christian community, like Jesus Christ in prayer, is elected in

order to elect. In and with Jesus Christ, the Christian community elects God in Christ as a community in worship. Thus, for Barth, when Christian communities become both *responsive to* God's election and God's glory and *participants in* God's election and glory for the sake of the rest of creation, their gathered worship happens.

In part two, we noted that the doctrine of election was an important and vigorous object of inquiry for Barth and proved to be a turning point in his overall theology. I argued in part two that Barth's trinitarian doctrine of glory illuminates what drew Barth into a revision of the doctrine of election. I suggest that Barth used his configuration of the divine good-pleasure in II/1 to counteract, in II/2, what Barth considered to be problematic accounts of God's election in the Reformed Christian tradition. In light of Barth's use of his doctrine of God's good-pleasure in II/2, he attempts to make plain that many traditional Reformed accounts of election improperly decontextualize the doctrine of election from God's unique glory – that is, God's triune glory.

The purpose of this chapter was to enable interpreters of Barth's doctrine of reconciliation to come to grips with one of its key substructures. By neglecting attention to glory, which Barth refers to as "supreme predicate of the divine freedom," interpreters have missed its the substructural role in his Christology and ecclesiology, especially as his Christology provides an account of how God's action in Jesus Christ draws out, attracts and persuades ecclesial action.²⁵⁷ Attention to the doctrine of glory in Barth's doctrine of God remedies that neglect. Indeed, many of the ways that Barth utilized the divine glory for this purpose amounted to promissory notes for work that he does in the doctrine of reconciliation. In the next chapter, we begin our turn to the fulfillment of

²⁵⁷ II/1, 643.

those promises in our consideration of the first two installments of ecclesiology in the doctrine of reconciliation.

Chapter Two: Festal Attire: Ecclesial Growth in Barth's Doctrine of Reconciliation

The doctrine of election is the last or first or central word in the whole doctrine of reconciliation . . . But the doctrine of reconciliation is itself the first or last or central word in the whole Christian confession or the whole of Christian dogma. Dogmatics has no more exalted or profound word – essentially, indeed, it has no other word – than this: ‘God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself.’¹

To exist privately is to be a robber.²

God thinks it not robbery to be divine, that is, He does not hold on to the booty like a robber, but God parts with Himself.³

Introduction

In the last chapter, we examined Barth's doctrine of God in order to prepare ourselves for the claims that Barth makes about the church's growth and God's glory in his doctrine of reconciliation. We begin the exploration of this connection in this chapter. Barth considered God's work of reconciliation, which is “grounded in God's election,” to be “the meaning and purpose of all the divine work.”⁴ Barth noted that he treated God's election within the doctrine of God in order to indicate as early as possible within the *Dogmatics* that God is who God is because of reconciliation.⁵ A brief explanation of these claims before I introduce the thesis will orient us to the connections between Barth's doctrine of glory and ecclesial development.

First of all, for Barth, reconciliation is God's act of fulfilling God's election to be in covenant with creatures. Reconciliation, as an act, is a matter of God's being and life.

¹ II/2, 88.

² IV/1, 778.

³ Karl Barth, *Dogmatics in Outline*, 116.

⁴ II/2, 89.

⁵ II/2, 89, 91.

Barth writes, “He is who is He is, and lives as what He is, in that He does what he does . . . ‘God with us’ . . . is the attestation and report of the life and act of God as the One who is.”⁶ The theme of the doctrine of reconciliation is the identity of God insofar as God has elected something for God. For Barth, God’s act of reconciliation is the movement in which God fulfills his turning toward the creation – fulfills his election to be in covenant with the creation. In the act of reconciliation, God fulfills the covenant by becoming Immanuel, God with us.⁷ God is who God is because God reconciles.

Second, Barth exercises the “moral ontology” displayed in his doctrine of God. Since God is who God is in reconciliation – God with us – God’s being, life, and activity defines the identity of the creature as well. The act of reconciliation is what “unites God and us men.”⁸ Most concretely, reconciliation is itself Jesus Christ, the “One who actually unites the divine being, life and activity with ours.”⁹ The being and activity of Jesus Christ is the “common history” lived out between God and humanity.¹⁰ Since reconciliation is a *divine* act, is it also a *creaturely* act. For God reconciles the world to God’s self in and as Jesus Christ. Reconciliation, in that it happens in the person and history of Jesus, identifies both God who is in Christ and humanity who is in Christ. As such, it identifies a pattern of action on the part of both God and humanity.

Since the doctrine of reconciliation describes the unification of God and humanity in Jesus Christ, Barth makes a threefold division in his discussion of the doctrine of reconciliation. These divisions correspond to “aspects of His active person or His

⁶ IV/1, 6-7. Also: “The whole being and life of God is an activity, both in eternity and in worldly time, both in Himself as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and in His relation to man and all creation” (7).

⁷ IV/1, 6.

⁸ IV/1, 7.

⁹ IV/1, 18.

¹⁰ IV/1, 18. Paul’s Nimmo’s claim is thus apropos: “. . . while God acts in grace and love and freedom to establish the covenant, it is simultaneously true that God wills and expects and demands something from the covenant partner” (*Being in Action*, 11).

personal work which as such broaden into three perspectives for an understanding of the whole event of the atonement.”¹¹ The being, life and act of Jesus Christ is a unifying manifold that can be discussed in three modes: how God becomes human and shares that condescension with others (IV/1), how the man Jesus becomes united to God and shares that exaltation with others (IV/2), and how Jesus Christ is simultaneously both God and man in one subject and how he shares that personal unity with others (IV/3). The focus of this chapter is Barth’s ecclesiology as described in IV/2, with supplemental attention paid to his ecclesiology in IV/1.

For Barth, the second topic of the doctrine of reconciliation views the first movement of reconciliation – God becoming man – from another angle. So he writes, “. . . God . . . without ceasing to be God . . . became man (*Mensch*) in His Son: an Israelite . . . for the conversion of all men to himself . . . We must now turn our attention . . . to what was done for and to and with man (*Menschen*) when God did this, and what it means for man.”¹² What happens in Jesus Christ effects something not only for God and for the man Jesus Christ, but also for the rest of humankind – those who are elected to participate in Jesus Christ’s exaltation of human life. Indeed, see how Barth uses the word *Mensch* here. As happens elsewhere in the *Dogmatics*, Barth’s use of the term *Mensch* has five connotations – Jesus’ humanity, Israel, the Christian community, individual Christians and Jews, and all other individual human beings in Jesus Christ. Indeed, the term *Mensch* often implies all five connotations at once, or at least they consistently overlap in his usage.¹³ So, unless he has delineated otherwise, whenever Barth speaks of *man*, *a man*,

¹¹ IV/1, 128.

¹² IV/2, 6.

¹³ As Garrett Green puts it, Barth’s usage vividly demonstrates that Barth conceives of the human race “as one corporate person” in relationship to the “one personal God” (Garret Green, “Introduction: Barth as

and as is often the case, *the Christian*, he is often speaking about a corporate person. Thus, Barth asserts that Jesus Christ accomplishes both *de jure* (or, universal) and *de facto* (or, particular) sanctification. This chapter pays attention to just one layer in that corporate personality, the Christian community which is what it is because God in Christ enacts *de facto* participation in Christ's sanctification, while recognizing that it is only one layer in that ordered set.

My argument about the Christian community operates as follows. Most generally, I begin to articulate how Barth's doctrine of glory acts as a substructure within Barth's doctrine of reconciliation. More specifically, I aim to show that Barth uses a doctrine of glory to address two issues that confront a Christian theology of corporate subjectivity: self-engagement and growth. With regard to the first issue, I argued in chapter one that Barth used a doctrine of glory, but especially the pleasure of God's glory, to show how Jesus Christ is drawn into his own election and how human communities are drawn into their own election of God in Jesus Christ. We shall see that same pattern amplified in the doctrine of reconciliation. God's glory, understood as both God's form and God's joy, is part of the matrix of answers as to how the Christian community is self-engaged in its *de facto* participation in Christ – including its own growth. But the chapter focuses itself more directly on the ecclesial growth that results from the drawing power of God's glory: When God's glory operates in reconciliation, what is the communal growth that occurs? In sum, I argue that, for Barth, Christian communities grow as their worship - conceived as both liturgy and the day-to-day service of Christian communities – takes on a form that corresponds to the divine joy invested in Jesus Christ's accomplishment of reconciliation.

Theorist of Religion" in Barth, *On Religion: The Revelation of God as the Sublimation of Religion* [T & T Clark, 2007], p. x.).

I argue this in two parts. Part one begins to coordinate Barth's doctrine of the Holy Spirit within volume four of the *Dogmatics* with the concerns and purposes of his doctrine of glory. This helps us understand the relationship between Jesus Christ and the Christian community, since, for Barth, the Christian community is the work of the Holy Spirit. We will note how Barth lays the vocabulary of glory into his theology of the Holy Spirit. Part two directly considers the communal growth which results from the work of the Holy Spirit and the glory of God invested in Jesus Christ.

Part One: Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, Glory, and the Church

As I say above, in part one, I orient the reader to Barth's doctrine of the Holy Spirit in the doctrine of reconciliation, as it relates to glory and *de facto* communal participation. I do this by explicating elements of Barth's summary of his argument in paragraph 67 of IV/2, which is contained in the introductory survey of his doctrine of reconciliation at the beginning of IV/1. Barth summarizes paragraph 67 (entitled "The Holy Spirit and the Upbuilding of the Christian Community"):

The Holy Spirit of Jesus Christ is the life-giving power of the Word spoken by the servant who became Lord, and therefore of the divine direction which sanctifies sinful man. The work of the Holy Spirit as this life-giving power is the inner upbuilding of the community. When that direction is heard by men, these men are united in a common action, in a common action orientated by a commonly imposed obedience, and, we can and must also say, by a commonly given freedom. The community grows in rendering this obedience, or in this freedom. In it it gains consistency, it acquires order and form, it becomes capable of action. Its members are men who not only regard that direction as given and normative, but who love it for the sake of the One who has given it, who accept it because they see in it the love in which God loved the world and themselves in this special way . . . it is not by the obedience, the freedom, or even the love of these men that the Church is built up and lives. It lives wholly in the power of its Lord and His Spirit. In His power: the power of its Lord exalted as man to the right hand of God, who summons and draws it onwards and upwards as the community of His brethren, who transforms it into His image (2 Cor. 3^{18s}), by whom it is given to it to seek and to find that which is above, in whom it has already here and now a part in His resurrection and therefore in the future life of eternity. Because and to

the extent that He is mighty in the community by His Spirit, that which it does can and must be done with joy; its worship, its order, the fellowship of Christians, its mutual service, the celebration of the Lord's Supper, even its teaching and theology can and must take on the character of a festival; and in it all God can and must be thanked and worshipped. What we have to show is the fact and way in which the Church has never to look after itself, to build up itself, to rule and maintain and defend itself, but simply to live according to the direction of its Lord and His Spirit and in that way to be vigorous and active and truly alive.¹⁴

First, this quote shows us how Barth appeals to the Holy Spirit. Barth turns to the Holy Spirit in order to show that the Christian community is an effect of the incarnation. As he writes here, the Spirit is the "life-giving power of the Word." Thus, he writes, "...we are now looking especially at what is effected, and therefore actual, in this divine work."¹⁵ While "the history of all men is virtually enclosed and accomplished" in Jesus Christ, it is in the Christian community that that history is "actualized . . . in the history of a few, a small minority."¹⁶ The *de jure/de facto* distinction we utilized in the last chapter now parallels the work of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, respectively. What is accomplished on behalf of all in Jesus Christ (*de jure*, objective participation) is actualized by the power of Jesus Christ – the Holy Spirit - within the Christian community (*de facto*, subjective participation).¹⁷ This unity and distinction of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit ensures that objective participation is the "ground of the subjective form" and subjective

¹⁴ IV/1, 151-152.

¹⁵ IV/2, 614. See also IV/1, 648.

¹⁶ IV/1, 649.

¹⁷ Barth wants to avoid portraying Jesus Christ as the winner of a possibility that becomes actualized in the Christian community and Christian individuals. This is the portrait that Barth ascribes to Thomasius, Bultmann and, to a lesser extent, Von Balthasar (IV/1, 284-285). Or, at least, Barth believes that presenting the history of Jesus Christ as a possibility that becomes actual in the life of a Christian community leads to the idea that the history of Jesus Christ is "coincident with that of the believer, and vice versa" (IV/1, 767). Barth disapproves of this sort of move, the sort of move which makes the common life of the Christian community a "repetition" of Jesus Christ's "being and activity for humankind" (IV/1, 769). The chief worry here is that "Jesus Christ and His death and resurrection . . . cease to be . . . object and origin" (IV/1, 767). For, if the history of the Christian community and the individuals of the Christian community repeat the history of Jesus Christ, then it will be difficult to discern what Christ provides other than the pronouncement of reconciliation's feasibility. Even worse, Jesus Christ could become an idealized version of the community's aspirations and powers.

participation is the “consequence and goal” or “telos” of objective participation.¹⁸ In Jesus Christ, all human beings are already “obedient to God”, “saints of God,” and “true covenant partners with God.”¹⁹ Yet, it is only for the sake of their subjective participation in Christ that Jesus Christ accomplishes this on behalf of all.²⁰ It is the Holy Spirit’s work *in nobis* which distinguishes persons and communities who participate in Christ subjectively, as opposed to the objective participation in Jesus Christ that all human beings enjoy.

Also, by appealing to the Holy Spirit here, Barth ensures that the action of the Christian community not only depends on but refers or witnesses to the action of Jesus Christ. The action of the Christian community refers to Jesus Christ because it runs on the power of Jesus Christ’s self-expression: “. . . the Holy Spirit and His work . . . is the power in which Jesus Christ attests Himself, attests Himself effectively, creating in man response and obedience.”²¹ The point is not simply that Jesus Christ powerfully associates himself with other human beings. For Barth, Christology “includes within itself the fact (and with it quite simply ourselves, our participation in that event) that the turn from Jesus Christ to us has already been executed and is a fact in Him, that in and with Him, we, too are there as those for whom He is and acted.”²² In other words, the

¹⁸ Adam Neder, *Participation in Christ*, 17-18. Perhaps the clearest statement of the distinction in these terms is IV/2, 511. Nimmo makes a similar distinction (*Being in Action*, 173).

¹⁹ IV/2, 282.

²⁰ IV/2, 4-6, 518-519.

²¹ IV/2, 648. Cf. *Ibid.*, 128. In short, the Holy Spirit is “the one eternal God in his particular power and will so to be present to the creature in His being and activity . . . that it can recognize and embrace and experience Himself and His work” (IV/1, 148).

²² IV/1, 285. Barth also found that he could use the *munus triplex* of the “older Reformed writers” in order to perform a “removal of the distinction between two basic sections of classical Christology, or positively, the restoration of a hyphen which always connects them and makes them one in the New Testament” (IV.1, 133, 128). Since Christ’s being as the High-Priest, King and Prophet is itself the act of justifying, sanctifying and calling, then Jesus Christ has, in himself, fulfilled God’s election to reconcile the world to God’s self. The *munus triplex* is now reinterpreted by Barth’s actualistic ontology. To be a priest is to

Holy Spirit is the power in which Jesus Christ *refers himself, or turns to*, other human beings. As the power of the resurrection, the Holy Spirit is the “opening up of the fact (of the being of Jesus Christ) and the opening up of the human subject to receive it.”²³ The action of the Christian community signals Jesus Christ because the Holy Spirit is Jesus Christ in his act of self-giving, self-identification, and self-revealing to, with, and in the Christian community. When Jesus Christ shares himself with others, his being and action, including his self-declarative power, is not watered down by involvement with a sinful human community: “Where the man Jesus attests himself in the power of the Holy Spirit, He makes himself present . . . more than that, He imparts Himself; and those to whom he wills to belong in virtue of this self-presentation are able also to belong to Him.”²⁴ The Holy Spirit declares that the Christian community belongs to Jesus Christ because the Holy Spirit is Jesus Christ insofar as Jesus Christ gives himself to the Christian community. Barth does not simply affirm that the Holy Spirit effects the union between Jesus Christ and the Christian community; instead, the Holy Spirit is given to be that union itself.²⁵ Thus, the Holy Spirit effects a community whose action witnesses to Christ because the Holy Spirit is the power of Jesus Christ’s own self-witness. For the Christian community signals the self-impartment of Jesus Christ by its own corresponding self-impartment to Jesus Christ, as our summary quote above indicated. In the power of the Spirit, Jesus Christ turns, declares, and shares himself with the Christian community, and thus the Christian community becomes a witness to that event.

justify, to be a king is to sanctify, and to be a prophet is to call. The being of Jesus Christ is the pattern of those acts. The work of Jesus Christ just is the being of Jesus Christ.

²³ IV/2, 126.

²⁴ IV/2, 654.

²⁵ Barth believes in the *filioque*, both economically and immanently. See I/1, 479-483 and George Hunsinger, “Mediator of Communion,” in *Disruptive Grace* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 154-155.

In the last chapter, we saw that *de facto* participation with Christ brings with it correspondence to God's life. That logic is also repeated here. The church is a Spirited effect and thus its being "corresponds" to God's being.²⁶ The difference is that it is not only keyed to a correspondence to the divine life, it is keyed more directly to a correspondence to Jesus Christ himself, as the church is effected by the Holy Spirit.²⁷ Just what does Barth mean by correspondence? Paul Jones has recently defined correspondence within Barth's Christology as "Christ's active human iteration of God's reconciling action in the context of finitude."²⁸ This is as sturdy a definition as one can find, provided we modify it here for the sake of ecclesial being. Correspondence, in ecclesial terms, means: the Christian community's common iteration of Jesus Christ's reconciling action in the context of finitude. Thus, with regard to *de facto* participation, correspondence signals three things in the *Dogmatics*. First, it figures *de facto* participation as something authentically human, a reality that is not divine, albeit sponsored by the Holy Spirit.²⁹ Second, human action is indeed recognized by God, but only because God continues to give that likeness in giving God's self.³⁰ As Barth said,

²⁶ Barth writes, "When God reveals in Jesus Christ that from the very first He willed to be God for man...He also reveals that from the very first man is His man . . . 'You shall be my people' means that it is proper and required of you in your being, life and activity to correspond to the fact that in My being, life and activity for you I am your God" (IV/1, 42).

²⁷ IV/2, 296 : . "What is needed . . . is its (the being of Jesus Christ) attestation in a corresponding way of thought, direction of will . . . We have to do this because the being of Jesus Christ, and our being in Him, is irrefutably, incontestably and unassailably grounded in itself. How can His being, and ours in Him, fail to lead to a corresponding (the 'Christian') orientation and determination of our existence?" Cf. IV/1, 148, 103.

²⁸ Jones, *The Humanity of Christ*, 153.

²⁹ As John Webster notes, to act in relationship to God is "to enter into and act out an order which . . . receives and testifies to the generative action of God in Christ" (*Ethics of Reconciliation*, 80). See Nimmo, *Being in Action*, 136-168.

³⁰ Barth claims that "The grace of God wills and creates the covenant between God and man . . . It determines him to be the partner of God. It therefore determines his action to correspondence, conformity, uniformity with God's action . . . what is involved is that man and man's action should become the image of God: the reflection which represents, although in itself it is completely different from, God and His action; the reflection in which God recognizes Himself and His action . . . And this is the eternal life which

God can and does God give God's self without giving God's self away.³¹ God lends God's self, thus creating the Christian community's likeness to Jesus Christ.³² Third, as we have hinted, the term correspondence is meant to indicate that a likeness is possible only by virtue of the incarnation and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Since the issue is whether God can recognize God's action, God will have to become incarnate and will have to indwell the creation if God is to have a corresponding reflection in the creation. Thus, the church's being can correspond to God's own being because, in Jesus Christ, the church has been included in the being of God.³³

For our purposes, one of the ways that Barth plays out this correspondence is in the freedom or self-involvement of the Christian community in its own being and act. If human communities are to be witnesses to God's freedom and humanity's freedom in Jesus Christ, then their being-in-act must correspond to and participate in Jesus Christ's

he promised. Eternal life is God's own life, and the life of the creature when it is uniform with God's own life . . ." (II/2, 575).

³¹ IV/1, 185.

³² IV/1, 152.

³³ While correspondence first and foremost has to do with a reflection in which God can recognize God's self, there is no "abolition of 'the infinite qualitative difference'" in this correspondence (II/2, 577). Barth's point is that the correspondence to God's action is itself a gift, as I noted in the text. Negatively, Barth's target is the *analogia entis*, especially as it was formulated by Pryzwara, Sohngen, von Balthasar and others. Against what he understood to be an abstraction from Jesus Christ and the capacity of human action to control this relation, Barth came to refuse and repudiate the phrase *analogia entis*. As Keith Johnson has established recently, Barth dropped the polemic but not his objection. Still, Barth could affirm an *analogia entis*, but only if it explains that "what human beings are intrinsically is a function at every moment of the extrinsic relationship of God to them in Jesus Christ" (Keith Johnson, *Karl Barth and Analogia Entis* [T & T Clark, 2010], 202). Johnson's work is ground-breaking in lots of ways, but he sometimes seems to indicate that only Christians and Christian communities live in correspondence to God, whereas for Barth, to be human is to live in analogy to God in Christ – for all are reconciled (see Johnson, *Karl Barth*, 186–187, 218). As we see here, Barth did indeed want to talk about some sort of likeness that obtains between creature and creator in Jesus Christ. The language of correspondence is supposed to mark out that likeness without overburdening the discussion with the history of the phrase *analogia entis*.

own freedom.³⁴ Thus, the Holy Spirit is “the power to set us, the recipients of its witness, in a very definite freedom: the freedom to appropriate as our own conversion the conversion of man to God as it has taken place in Jesus Christ . . . the freedom . . . to set ourselves in the alteration accomplished in him . . . it is actually made our own.”³⁵ Barth must indeed do full justice to the free *de facto* participation of the church in reconciliation due to his claims about the identity and nature of the church. If the church’s being-in-act is to signal or correspond to God’s own freedom in election and reconciliation and to Jesus Christ’s own freedom in electing to be who he is in reconciliation, then the church’s life, too, must also be a free, self-involved communal life. Without such a life, its witness would not correspond to God in Jesus Christ.

Indeed, the terms witness, effect and consequence, as a parallel ways of talking about *de facto* participation, themselves indicate God’s freedom in reconciliation. These terms allude to his claim that reconciliation is effected solely by Jesus Christ.³⁶

Reconciliation happens in Jesus Christ, for the sake of all. It cannot be repeated by any community or individual.³⁷ God’s reconciliation in Christ is freely wrought by God, and freely given by God. However, the reconciliation of Jesus Christ induces a train of

³⁴ IV/2, 301, 303, 305. This also implies that the Christian community participates in Jesus Christ’s power to liberate others – that is its mission.

³⁵ IV/2, 305.

³⁶ “The humiliation of God and the exaltation of man as they took place in Him are the completed fulfillment of the covenant, the completed reconciliation of the world with God. His being as such . . . was and is the end of the old and the beginning of the new form of this world . . . What was lacking was only the men to see and hear it as the work and Word of God – the praise and thanksgiving and obedience of their thoughts and words and works. What was lacking was only their service of witness and proclamation.” IV/2, 132-133.

³⁷ “Jesus Christ was born and died and rose again for all. The work of atonement, the conversion of man to God, was done for all. . . . To that extent, objectively, all are justified, sanctified and called” (IV/1, 148). “Sanctification is the effect or work of Jesus Christ ascribed universally; the upbuilding of the church and the individual Christian’s love is the “subjective realization” (IV/1, 644). “...the history of Jesus Christ, in which the history of all men is virtually enclosed and accomplished, is actualized, in the first instance only in the history of few, of a small minority within the many of whom this cannot so far be said, but even in the history of the few typically for the history of many” (IV/1, 649).

individual and communal action which also freely witness to that reconciliation. The church is distinguished because its reception of God's universal atonement "stands vicariously for the rest of the world which has not yet partaken of the witness of the Holy Spirit."³⁸

Some interpreters, due to these distinctions, still follow Von Balthasar's claim that Barth reduces ecclesial being and action to cognition only.³⁹ Barth's claims about God's freedom in reconciliation means that "if every person has already been united to Christ, then not only ecclesial agency but also the work of the Spirit is reduced to the noetic sphere."⁴⁰ Put another way: Barth's "purely actualistic understanding does not give place to creaturely agency."⁴¹ The first problem with charges like this is that they simply ignore the ways in which Barth analyzes the shape of the Christian community's freedom, as we mentioned in the last paragraph. Indeed, is freedom merely noetic? The Holy Spirit's work is reconciliation – reconciliation is both *de facto* and *de jure* participation in Christ, and both are affected by Jesus Christ.⁴² The effect and consequence of the Holy Spirit's indwelling is that "they can see and hear, perceive and accept and receive all that God is for all."⁴³ The church's freedom is the freedom to "live as His servants, His friends, His children, the witnesses of the reconciliation of the world

³⁸ IV/1, 149.

³⁹ Von Balthasar, *Karl Barth*, 371.

⁴⁰ Michael Horton, *People and Place: A Covenant Ecclesiology* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008), 174.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 175.

⁴² See George Hunsinger's point: "Since Barth thought that reconciliation never occurred without revelation, nor revelation without reconciliation, no critique which presupposes their separation or fails to see their connection could possibly be of much interest, yet such critiques are commonplace." (George Hunsinger, "The Mediator of Communion: Karl Barth's Doctrine of the Holy Spirit" in *The Cambridge Companion to Karl Barth* [Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2000], 178)

⁴³ IV/1, 148.

with Himself.”⁴⁴ Servanthood, friendship, filial connection, and witness-bearing – actions that survey the whole of the church’s life – simply cannot be reduced to noetic acts.⁴⁵

The Holy Spirit is Jesus Christ’s own activating power – the power of Jesus Christ’s own self-witness in the Christian community, given as Jesus Christ’s witness to the rest of the world. To reduce the church to the noetic is to reduce the Spirit and Jesus Christ to the noetic as well. There is no ontological split between Jesus Christ and the Christian community. There is a difference between Jesus Christ and the Christian community for Barth, but not a bifurcation.

Secondly, these charges are best proffered by neglecting to connect Barth’s doctrine of the divine attributes, especially glory, to his ecclesiology. In his summary of paragraph 67, Barth chooses to use words like “summon” or “draw” in order to do justice to the character in which God provides for “active participation of man in the divine act of reconciliation.”⁴⁶ Barth writes elsewhere:

. . . the word power . . . stands in need of explanation. We have to distinguish the sense in which we use it from the idea of a power which either mechanically pushes, propels, thrusts or draws, or organically produces . . . the power of the transition on which the New Testament counts when it looks from the basis and origin of its witness in Jesus Christ to its goal in the existence of Christians is absolutely unique as the power of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is operative in the world, but not as one of its forces, either mechanical or organic. It is distinguished from them, and from human capacity, not only by the fact that it is miraculous and sovereign, but also by the definite character of its sovereignty and miraculous operation.⁴⁷

This text is part of a section in IV/2 which builds up the formal vocabulary that Barth believed described the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of Jesus Christ, the power of Jesus

⁴⁴ IV/1, 650.

⁴⁵ A host of other examples could be mentioned. Joseph Mangina’s *Barth on the Christian Life* provides a number of them.

⁴⁶ IV/1, 643.

⁴⁷ IV/2, 310.

Christ's resurrection. The question is not whether the Spirit draws the Christian community into its own freedom as much as a question of how the Spirit draws. The Holy Spirit's power is unique (in relation to any creaturely power) because the Spirit sustains and develops a certain kind of human subjectivity. The Christian community self-engages, through the Holy Spirit, in its own *de facto* reconciliation – that is what Barth means to indicate by the verbs “summons” or “draws.” As will see below, Barth's doctrine of glory is utilized as a substructure in order to show why the Holy Spirit draws out the freedom of Christian communities. Note that all of the categories of glory are at play in the summary that opened this section, and they are integrated into Barth's concern with the upbuilding – the progress – of the Christian community's life. Form, joy, drawing, worship are all present. What is different is that the Spirit shows up in the role that “God's glory” would fill in II/1. This is apropos, given Barth's concern to protect God's lordship over God's own being and act. If the Holy Spirit is to draw out Christian communities into their own free, participatory involvement in their reconciliation, then the Holy Spirit's power is further specified as the power of glorification. As we shall see in the following chapters, it is the Spirit's power to share God's glory which distinguishes the drawing power of God's Spirit.

In part two, the remainder of this chapter, we move from the Holy Spirit as the power of Jesus Christ who enables *de facto* participation in Jesus Christ to the Christian community's being and act. Even more, what role does the concept of growth inhabit in Barth's ecclesiology (as expressed in the doctrine of reconciliation)? How does Barth attach his ecclesiology – especially the church's growth – to his theology of the Spirit and doctrine of glory? In other words, what is the shape of the being-in-act of the community

that participates *de facto* in Jesus Christ's exaltation, his sanctification on behalf of all?

To these questions we now turn.

Part Two: The Growth of Christian Community

For Barth, the being of the Christian community which recognizes, acknowledges and confesses the actuality of God's reconciliation with the world is being gathered by God and is self-gathered. However, the church's gathering in thanksgiving also gathers in speed and intensity - it grows. That growth, in turn, corresponds to and participates in God's life. Our task in this second part of the chapter is to increase our sense of how Barth defines the Christian community's growth, as it relates to God's glory.⁴⁸ Just what sort of ecclesial growth is being drawn out by God's glory?

God's Joy, Ephesians 4 and the Ecclesiology of IV/2

First, God draws out *pleasing* growth. One of Barth's ways of expressing the central question of IV/2 as a whole is how human beings can be well-pleasing to God: "in and with His own abasement God has elected and achieved man's exaltation, that is the *telos* of this judgment, in which God took it upon Himself, can be only the redemption of man – and more than that, the creation and existence of the new man who is well-pleasing to God."⁴⁹ It cannot be overemphasized that Barth is talking about a corporate personality when he refers to the "new man who is well-pleasing to God." As he says, "the second element in that gracious saying of the Old Testament" is "'You shall be my

⁴⁸ As noted in the introduction, there has been work on character and growth in Barth, but not on ecclesial growth per se. On individual character and growth, see: Stanley Hauerwas, *Character and the Christian Life* (San Antonio: Trinity University Press, 1975), 169-179; Idem., "On Honour: By Way of a Comparison of Barth and Trollope," in *Reckoning with Barth*, Ed. Nigel Biggar (Oxford: Mowbray, 1988), 145-169. Nigel Biggar responds to Hauerwas in *The Hastening That Waits*, 123-145, as does Joseph Mangina in *Barth on the Christian Life*, 165-197.

⁴⁹ IV/2, 6.

people.”⁵⁰ The covenant partner of God, accomplished in the incarnation, is Jesus Christ as the “Lord of all men.”⁵¹ The covenant partner, insofar as Jesus Christ is the Lord and Representative of all men, is “humanity as such, the humanity for which every man is ordained and in which every part already has a part in Him . . .”⁵² He continues, “The relevance of His being and action is for ours, but also for that of others who are beside and around us in likeness with us.”⁵³ In Jesus Christ, all of humanity, even the entire cosmos, becomes well-pleasing to God.

Barth also says that “He is the Lord and Head and Shepherd and Representative of all men, but primarily of His own particular people, of His community in the world.”⁵⁴ As the one who is well-pleasing as, with, and for all men, he rules all men by linking himself with a particular community – the Christian community.⁵⁵ In short: “He does not act directly – without this people.”⁵⁶ Why? Since “. . . the elevation and establishment of man, of all men, as it has taken place in Jesus Christ . . . is the saving operation of the living Lord Jesus which did not conclude but began in His revelation on Easter Day, Barth concludes that “it is essential, and therefore necessary, to Him (Heb 13.8), to be not merely yesterday and forever, but today . . . today in this provisional representation, in the form of the true Church.”⁵⁷ Given that, in the resurrection, Jesus Christ is who he is, and the resurrection opens up the existence of the church, Jesus Christ is who he is

⁵⁰ IV/2, 5.

⁵¹ IV/2, 518.

⁵² IV/2, 519.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ IV/2, 515-516.

⁵⁵ Barth is in fact willing to say that “Jesus Christ who rules the world *ad dexteram Patris omnipotentis* is identical with the King of this people of His which on earth finds itself on this way and in this movement. He is revealed only and can be claimed only in the history ruled by Him” (IV/2, 622-623).

⁵⁶ IV/2, 622-623.

⁵⁷ IV/2, 621.

because of the church.⁵⁸ The church is Jesus Christ, in his “earthly-historical form of existence.”⁵⁹ Thus, the question is not only how the entire human family (as represented in Jesus Christ) can be well-pleasing, but how the Christian community can be well-pleasing in its particular history. For Jesus Christ is “in this action which is executed by God Himself, present in the person of His own Son, He is - inevitably – the man who is well-pleasing (*wohl-gefällig*) to God. He is the total recipient of the grace of God. At peace with Him, He participates in His peace.”⁶⁰

As God’s *Wohlgefallen* structures the whole of IV/2 (including Christ’s identity), just so Barth frames paragraph 67 of IV/2 (entitled “The Holy Spirit and the Upbuilding of the Christian Community”) within that whole around growth as a commentary on a series of texts from Ephesians 4. Barth notes at the end of his introduction to IV/2 that his account of sanctification is a “series of variations on the words of Ephesians 4.15: that we ‘may grow into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplies, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, increases the body unto the edifying of itself in love.’”⁶¹ The fact that Barth organizes the ecclesiology of IV/2 around this text and the surrounding context in Ephesians signifies that corporate growth

⁵⁸ David Demson has shown one layer of implication here. He follows Hans Frei’s way of depicting Jesus Christ’s history as an enactment of identity (assuming some sort of actualistic ontology). Within this frame the resurrection is the manifestation of Jesus Christ “in the fullness of his enacted identity, that identity which he had begun to enact in his ministry and conclusively enacted by his reception of suffering and death” (David Demson, *Hans Frei and Karl Barth* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997], 81). By comparing Frei and Barth’s summaries of Jesus Christ’s narrative, he shows that Barth recognized that Jesus Christ is “the One who specifically appointed, called and sent the apostles and . . . the Gatherer, Upholder, and Sender of those who come after the apostles” (Ibid., 5). Thus, Jesus’ identity is an identity in relationship to those whom he appoints, calls and sends. Jesus Christ is who Jesus Christ is in that Jesus Christ has a Christian community. Demson’s approach is quite deft, and confirms my analysis. But it does so at a remove from Barth’s doctrine of God and thus downplays the importance of the trinitarian being-in-act for Barth’s argument.

⁵⁹ IV/1, 661.

⁶⁰ IV/2, 29-30. Note also how this complements Barth’s reticence about a *logos asarkos* in IV/1, 66, 52-53.

⁶¹ IV/2, 20.

becomes an important theme. In paragraph 62 of IV/1, Barth established the existence of a church as an event that is being gathered by God and the church itself before Jesus Christ's coming. Now, in paragraph 67, which is the ecclesial section in IV/2, Barth asks how that church can be distinguished as the true community that is being gathered. Barth is taking both his answers and his questions in paragraphs 67 (and 68!) from Ephesians 4.15-16. Thus, he queries the true church as it arises from Ephesians 4.15, which mentions the community that speaks the truth in love. Barth uses the term upbuilding (or edification) as the leading term in paragraph 67 (which addresses the common *de facto* realization of sanctification) because Ephesians 4.16 identifies the true church by its self-edifying love.⁶² He discusses the church's growth in order to "explain the concept of this event of upbuilding, unfolding it in its most important dimensions."⁶³ In short, the upbuilding of the church mentioned in Ephesians 4 cannot be explained without analyzing growth. However, Barth does not simply restate Ephesians 4.15. Instead, he shows how it is possible for Ephesians 4.15 to be a reliable witness of what happens to Christian communities, given that the growth of the Christian community is linked somehow to God's glory. Given that one aspect of that history is its development, as we saw above, Barth is asking how it is possible for the Christian community's growth to be pleasing to God.⁶⁴

The Church's Being is its Visibility

Second, God's glory draws out a *visible* growth. Barth approaches the topic of the existence of the Christian community as, in part, a question about the Christian community's visibility. The being, and thus the visibility of the Christian community,

⁶² In paragraph 68 makes love the leading concept in the individual realization of that sanctification.

⁶³ IV/2, 641.

⁶⁴ IV/2, 20.

happens only by virtue of a participation in the life of God as offered in Jesus Christ. For Barth, the Christian church has its being and its visibility because it participates in God's power to be visible, to declare God's self, which is God's glory.

As I have been hinting, for Barth, just as God's being is a being-in-act, the Christian community's being is a being-in-act. Barth writes:

As the work of the Holy Spirit the Christian community, Christendom, the Church is a work which takes place among men in the form of a human activity . . . Its act is its being, its status its dynamic, its essence its existence. The Church *is* when it takes place that God lets certain men live as His servants, His friends, His children, the witnesses of the reconciliation of the world with Himself as it has taken place in Jesus Christ . . . the heralds of His future revelation in which the glory of the Creator will be declared to all creation as that of His love and faithfulness and mercy...the *communio* . . . is not the being of a state or institution, but the being of an event (*nicht das Sein eines Zustandes oder Institutes, sondern das Sein eines Ereignisses*), in which the assembled and self-assembling community is actively at work: the living community of the living Lord Jesus Christ in the fulfillment of its existence.⁶⁵

In other words, the church is a pattern of common action - a pattern of gathering and self-gathering in fellowship – that corresponds to the reconciling history of Jesus Christ. Just as God is who God is in act, Jesus Christ is who he is in act, and the Holy Spirit is who she is in act, just so the church is what it is in act. Thus, Barth declares explicitly here that the church is not an institution, but an event. It may coincide with an institution, but it cannot be identified as such. At least that is how it seems in this quotation.

Yet, Barth goes on to describe the church as an institution:

...a phenomenon of world history which can be grasped in historical and psychological and sociological terms like any other. There is, there takes place, a gathering and separation of certain men to this fellowship. This involves—in varying degrees of strictness or looseness—an ecclesiastical organization and constitution and order. In this gathering and separation there takes place its cultus, teaching, preaching, instruction, theology, confession, and all in definite relationships to the political and economic and social conditions and movements, to the scholarship and art and morality, of the surrounding world. It all self-

⁶⁵ IV/1, 650-652.

develops in and with this world, but according to its own laws, with a tradition which is in many ways related and in many ways differentiated, with its distinctive purpose and stamp, but with obvious connections and similarities and reciprocal actions in relation to other human phenomena and their history (*Alles in und mit dieser Umwelt, aber auch nach seinen eigenen Gesetzen sich entwickelnd, in mannigfach gegliederter und differenzierter Überlieferung, Alles in eigenartiger Absicht und Prägung, aber immerhin in deutlichen Beziehungen, Ähnlichkeiten und Wechselwirkungen zu den anderen menschlichen Phänomenen und ihrer Geschichte*). It is a specific and yet also an integrated, a distinctive and yet not a unique element in the whole of human culture, its achievements and its destinies. In all this—to use the term which has become classical—the Church is visible, *ecclesia visibilis*. It is one historical factor with others, asserting itself and immediately noticeable as such.⁶⁶

Instead, the church, in its distinctive activities – preaching, sacraments, drawing others, working for justice, etc. – just is the church insofar as it is visible to all. In other words, the church is an historical institution. Barth’s most fundamental warrant for this claim is that the church is given a share in God’s visibility in Jesus Christ. Just as God’s being becomes visible to the creation in Jesus Christ, just so God in Christ becomes visible to the creation in the church. As he says, it is not accidental to the church that it is visible and active in history, it is “essential” to it. For Barth, “The church is more than what is visible to the sociologist, historian of religion, and ethicist, but it is a worldly entity.”⁶⁷ As Barth argues, “Like begets like.”⁶⁸ Insofar as the church exists by the power of the Holy Spirit, the church becomes as concrete and enfleshed as Jesus Christ.

⁶⁶ IV/1, 652; KD 728. I have modified this translation.

⁶⁷ Horton, *People and Place*, 229.

⁶⁸ “Nor is it, as it were, accidental or *per nefas* that it is visible in this way. It is essential to it to be so; just as essential as that in another sense it should be invisible: *ecclesia invisibilis*. The work of the Holy Spirit to which it owes its existence is something which is produced concretely and historically in this world. It is the awakening power of the Word made flesh, of the Son of God, who Himself entered the lowliness of an historical existence in this world, who as very God became and is very man. Like begets like. The Christian faith awakened by Him is a definite human activity and therefore a definite human phenomenon. For all the peculiarity of his activity the Christian is an ordinary man with other men. Similarly the Christendom in which there are Christians is a human work and as such a human phenomenon which can be generally observed. Where there is this awakening, where the Church is born of the Word of God (Zwingli), itself “the mother which conceives and bears every Christian by the Word of God which it reveals and produces, enlightening and kindling the hearts so that they grasp and receive and cling and hold fast to it” (Luther),

Yet, how do we reconcile these two claims?⁶⁹ First of all, Barth simply recognizes that the church manifests a deep ingratitude for the grace of God accomplished in Jesus Christ at the same time as it is denominated by terms such as “the bride of Christ” or “the fullness of Christ.” As he writes, “It may become a beggar, it may act like a shopkeeper, it may make itself a harlot, as has happened and still does happen, yet it is always the bride of Jesus Christ.”⁷⁰ Yet, the body of Christ is “indestructible.”⁷¹ Despite the fact that the historical form of the church – its institutions – may depart from its own identity, it has historical form because it is sponsored by, participates in and provisionally represents Jesus Christ. That identity is the very condition of the impossible possibility of its becoming a harlot.⁷²

Second, and more fundamentally, Barth is responding to Schleiermacher’s definition of the church, which is, in summary: “a monotheistic form of faith related to the teleological direction of piety . . . connected with the redemption accomplished by Jesus Christ.”⁷³ Barth argues that this definition is “more or less correctly perceived. The only thing is that the third dimension, in which the Church is what it is, is completely

there there arises in some form a historical quantity which can be observed, which is at work and which can be calculated in historical terms” (IV/1, 652).

⁶⁹ See also IV/1, 673, 695, 717. In all of these passages, Barth is careful to say that the Christian community occurs institutionally, but that those institutions are not essential to it. The Christian community acts in common (i.e. is an event) “within institutions” (695).

⁷⁰ IV/1, 691.

⁷¹ IV/1, 689. Also, see IV/2, 618.

⁷² Barth departs from Calvin’s distinction between the invisible and visible church. Barth is careful not to suggest that this visible form is a vehicle for another invisible church. For Calvin, the invisible church is “all the elect from the beginning of the world” and the visible church is “the whole multitude of men spread over the earth who profess to worship one God and Christ” and engage in sacraments and preaching (*Institutes*, IV.1.7). Calvin claims the invisible church is visible only to God and that places limits on how far church discipline can identify and expunge “hypocrites.” The visible church tends to become a vehicle for salvation in the invisible church, since preaching and sacraments are modes by which the saving Gospel is shared and confirmed (*Institutes*, IV.1.5). As Herman Selderhuis puts it, “The church’s right to exist rests solely on the preaching of God’s Word” (Herman Selderhuis, “Church on Stage: Calvin’s Dynamic Ecclesiology” in *Calvin and the Church* (Grand Rapids: CRC Product Services, 2002), 51).

⁷³ IV/1, 656. See Schleiermacher, *Christian Faith*, 52.

absent.” Barth thought that Schleiermacher had given an accurate description of the Christian community’s existence as a common action which is visible to all human beings. However, the problem with Schleiermacher’s definition is that knowledge of the church would not require the kind of faith that knowledge of Christ requires.⁷⁴ As he writes, “No concrete form of the community can in itself and as such be the object of faith. Even the man Jesus as such, the *caro Christi*, cannot be this...”⁷⁵ If the church’s visibility participates in God’s visibility in Christ, then surely the full reception of the church’s visibility would require the same faith that fully receives God’s visibility in Christ.

In other words, God’s visibility in human action, both in Jesus Christ and the church, is twofold. First, God’s visibility is created historical action, visible to all. Jesus Christ is an historical figure that all can acknowledge to be a human being, even a remarkable and significant human being. Just so, all can acknowledge the Christian community to be a human community, remarkable and significant for human history. Second, God’s visibility occurs *in* created historical action, visible only to those with the faith sponsored by the Holy Spirit. This second visibility, which is invisible to all who do not participate in the common action of the church, is the church’s identity as “the earthly-historical form of existence of Jesus Christ himself.”⁷⁶ Those who participate in the whole common action of the church know that the church is the body of Jesus Christ,

⁷⁴ Barth appears to get Schleiermacher wrong on this score. For Schleiermacher, the invisible church is “the totality of the effects of the Spirit as a connected whole” and the visible church is “these effects, as connected with those lingering influences of the collective life of universal sinfulness” (*Christian Faith*, 677). This departs from Calvin, since he is able to say that the regenerate are “the most visible of all” (*Ibid.*). Schleiermacher’s point is that the regenerate are the most conspicuous, but those without faith cannot recognize their difference from the sinful world as due to the Spirit – “those who do not share our faith in Christ do not recognize the Christian fellowship in its antithesis to the world” (*Ibid.*, 527).

⁷⁵ IV/1, 658.

⁷⁶ IV/1, 661.

“created and continually renewed by the awakening power of the Holy Spirit.”⁷⁷ Those who have faith in Jesus Christ know the church as the existence of Jesus Christ himself. Those without that faith do not.⁷⁸

In the end, the question about the forms of the church’s being and visibility is a matter of God’s glory for Barth. For Barth, as a participant in the history of Jesus Christ, the Christian community is a participant in God’s glory. If God’s glory is God’s power to declare God’s self, then what is fundamentally made visible in the Christian community to those with Christian faith is God’s glory. Due to God’s self-election, the form of God’s existence is shared with the creation in Jesus Christ and is actualized in those who have faith. Note the role of God’s glory in the following extended passage:

To be sure, the confession *credo ecclesiam* does refer necessarily to a human society which exists concretely in history . . . but its true reference is to what this society *is* in its concrete historical form, and therefore to a character which is proper to it not in its general but its particular visibility, a character in which it is invisible without this particular visibility. In this character, notwithstanding its concrete historical form, indeed in this form as in everything declared by the Christian confession, the Church has to be believed . . . the being of the community as ‘the living community of the living Lord Jesus Christ,’ calls for the perception of faith . . . *The glory of Jesus Christ was hidden when He humbled Himself, when He took our flesh, when in our flesh He was obedient to God, when He destroyed our wrong, when He established our right. So, too, the glory of the humanity justified in Him is concealed. And this means that the glory of the community gathered together by Him within humanity is only a glory which is*

⁷⁷ IV/1, 661.

⁷⁸ Barth’s position differs radically from that of Kant, for example: “An ethical community under divine moral legislation is a church which, inasmuch as it is not the object of a possible experience, is called the church invisible (the mere idea of the union of all upright human beings under direct yet moral divine world-governance, as serves for the archetype of any such governance to be founded by human beings). The church visible is the actual union of human beings into a whole that accords with this ideal... The true (visible) church is one that displays the (moral) kingdom of God on earth inasmuch as the latter can be realized through human beings” (*Religion Within the Bounds of Mere Reason*, in Immanuel Kant, *Religion and Rational Theology*, Trans. and Ed. Allen Wood [Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1996], 6.101, p. 135). The invisible church is simply the regulative ideal for the visible church. It is invisible simply because the visible church – meaning, really, all well-intending human beings – has not yet achieved its goal.

hidden from the eyes of the world until His final revelation, so that it can be only an object of faith. What it is, its mystery, its spiritual character, is not without manifestations and analogies in its generally visible form . . . The men united in it and their action are in every respect generally visible. They are so as the elect and called of God, and their works as good works. But the being of the community in its temporal character is hidden under considerable and very powerful appearances to the contrary. There is no direct identity between what the community is and any confession, theology or cultus . . . The gathering and maintaining and completing of the community, as the mystery of what its visible form is on this level, is in the hand of God, and as His own work, a spiritual reality, its third dimension, it is invisible, it cannot be perceived but only believed. For in what its generally visible history is on that level it does not belong only to the creaturely world but actually to the world of flesh, of fallen man. It is always sinful history—just as the individual believer is not only a creature but a sinful man. Woe to it if what it is is directly identical with what it is as generally visible, or if it accepts as its being its concrete historical form, equating itself with it and trying to exist in it abstractly! . . . According to the will and in the power of the act of God, even in its visibility it can and should attest its invisible glory, i.e., the glory of the Lord justifying man and of man justified by the Lord. . . . Where the Holy Ghost is at work the step to visibility is unavoidable . . . only when we remember that the men gathered into the community and acting as such still stand in need of the grace of God, i.e., of their invisible Lord and His invisible Spirit; that it is He who controls the Church without in any sense being controlled by it.⁷⁹

Barth's argument is that the church is visible as the body of Christ only in faith. But, as he makes that argument he depends upon a full-fledged doctrine of glory. More concretely, he shows here that the power of God's self-declaration in justification is accessible only in faith. In other words, God's glory – the form and power of God's self-declaration – makes possible the identification of the Christian community as those who are justified in the humiliation of God in the incarnation. What does Barth mean? While Christology is slotted for the next two chapters, it helps to catch a glimpse of what Barth does here. Barth alludes to his reflections on the glory of God in self-humiliation and the justification it effects. Barth defines kenosis as "a renunciation of his being in the form of God alone" or a "taking upon Himself to be Himself in a way quite other than that which

⁷⁹ IV/1, 656-658.

corresponds and belongs to His form as God.”⁸⁰ For Barth, God the Son does not give up any aspect of his divinity, which is summarized as God’s glory, in becoming a human being. Barth expands, “God does not have to dishonor Himself when he goes into the far country, and conceals His glory . . . His glory is the freedom of the love which He exercises and reveals in all this.”⁸¹ As such, the humiliation of God effects a “perfect communion” of forms – the form of God’s life and the form of a servant’s life.⁸² Barth here exercises his claims from his doctrine of God in order to show that God’s essence is not altered in God’s humiliation. The form of God’s self-declaration – as the unity of identity and non-identity – refers to the form of God’s kenosis. God’s glory can accommodate the form of another – can identify with the form of a creature (i.e. the man Jesus) – because it is God’s glory which specifies God’s power to take on that form without altering the divinity of God’s life. In other words, if God’s joy is the power to be moved by God, then God has the power to move God’s self to take on the creaturely form of Jesus Christ. Because God is “enjoying” the form of God, he can take on the form of another.⁸³ Thus, the Christian community’s visibility requires faith because its justification happens by virtue of God’s kenosis in the incarnation, which is, in turn, a form of God’s free self-declaration. As such, it will require the power of God to unveil it, to unveil its glory.

Also, the glory of the church (the power of its visibility) is specified as being identical with the historical form of the Christian community. Barth simply emphasizes here that the glory of the church is not *directly identical* to its existence as a historical

⁸⁰ IV/1, 180.

⁸¹ IV/1, 188.

⁸² IV/1, 187.

⁸³ IV/1, 180.

body. But, Barth is not dividing the church. As Wolf Krötke has argued, Barth modulates Luther's theology of the cross in his ecclesiology: “. . . Gott enthüllt seine Herrlichkeit so, dass er sie zugleich verhüllt. Er verhüllt sie im Gekreuzigten.”⁸⁴ There is only one body, only one church. The Christological source and meaning of the church and its concrete history are “indirectly identical.”⁸⁵ The glory of the church – the self-declaration of its existence, its status, its actuality as a form of Jesus Christ's existence - is hidden to all without Christian faith. Put positively, the historical church is indeed indirectly identical to the body of Christ, just as the crucified Jesus is indirectly identical to the Son of God. Yet, God's glory is fully invested in Jesus Christ; in turn, the glory of Jesus Christ is invested in the Christian community. Thus, Krötke concludes with regard to the signs or events of witness that make up the Christian community, “. . . müssen solche Zeichen der Menschlichkeit entsprechen, in der Gott im Menschen Jesus seine Herrlichkeit offenbart hat.”⁸⁶ Since the community participates in the crucified glory – the crucified visibility - of God's life within the Triune life, it corresponds to the kind of visibility found in the cross, a visibility only penetrated in faith.

The Church Grows

Third, of course, glory draws out a *growing* growth! We have already encountered the language of glory: the church participates *de facto* in God's joy – is pleasing to God – as it participates *de facto* in Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit. In line with how we saw this language work in the last chapter, we would expect to see Barth talking about a *form*

⁸⁴ Wolf Krötke, “Gottes Herrlichkeit und die Kirche,” 446.

⁸⁵ “We say Jesus Christ and His community, Jesus Christ as the Head of His body, Jesus Christ in both heavenly and also His earthly-historical form of existence . . . The relationship between these two forms of His existence is not so much comparable as indirectly identical to the relationship between Himself as the eternal Son of God and His being as man” (IV/2, 59). Barth argues that “If the humanity of Jesus is the image of God, this means that it is only indirectly and not directly identical with God” (III/2, 219). For more on indirect identity within Barth's Christology, see Paul Jones, *Humanity of Christ*, 87-102.

⁸⁶ “Wolf Krötke, “Gottes Herrlichkeit und die Kirche,” 448.

that emerges as the church as God trains that pleasure on human beings in Jesus Christ. We will see that pattern emerge now, especially in the church's growth.

Just what is the growth in which the church is self-engaged? Barth notes that the church's growth is both quantitative and qualitative, so to speak. Kimlyn Bender points out that relationship between numerical and qualitative growth is "dialectical" for Barth.⁸⁷ He continues, "The true and primary growth of the community is therefore an increase in spiritual maturity, and numerical growth is dependent upon and secondary to such spiritual growth."⁸⁸ Indeed, Barth would not have the church aim at numerical growth; instead, what Barth calls "intensive, vertical and spiritual growth" (qualitative maturity) is "fulfilled for its own sake, and then – unplanned and unarranged – it will bear its own fruit."⁸⁹ Barth does not dismiss numerical growth.⁹⁰ The church would not be the church if it did not grow numerically, but only if the church orients toward qualitative growth.

What is this "intensive, vertical, and spiritual growth"? Barth defines this sort of growth concretely directly as ". . . a matter of the power in which the saints accelerate in the reception and in the exercise of the holy things entrusted and laid upon them: as *sancti* they accelerate in relation to the *sancta*, which are given to them in common and to

⁸⁷ Kimlyn Bender, *Karl Barth's Christological Ecclesiology*, 180.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 181.

⁸⁹ IV/2, 648.

⁹⁰ Neither does Calvin. Herman Selderhuis puts it this way: "God wants people on earth who praise Him. Thus the aim of the church is praise of God . . . When it concerns praise of God, the truth of Calvin's remark that church-growth is the best way to increase God's praise is evident: the more believers, the more praise" ("Church on Stage," 49). Selderhuis refers to Calvin's claim that "the name of God is never better celebrated than when true religion is extensively propagated, and when the Church increases, which on that account is called, 'The planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified,' (Is. 61.3) [Comm. Ps. 102.22].

which they are given in common.”⁹¹ Growth is a matter of an increase in a human community’s power, in the power to accomplish “holy things” (*Heiligen*). The reader should not be misled by the phrase “holy things.” Barth is using a convenient nominal form of *heiligen*, the German word for sanctify. “Holy things” are events, accomplished in a trajectory of provisional perfection. These events are the common actions which constitute, which are, the fellowship that occurs between Christians. These are the events in which common human action exhibits a freedom “to represent Him among all other men and to serve Him in what they are and do and suffer.”⁹² Barth lists a number of these events in which the Christian communion of saints occurs: confession, thanksgiving, penitence, joy, prayer, burden-bearing, service, prophecy. Above all, it is a matter of worship – a topic to which we shall return shortly. Thus, the two dominant ways of describing this growth are an intensification of order or form in the community’s witness to Jesus Christ and an intensification of the Christian community’s power to offer a witness to the reconciliation of Jesus Christ. He writes, “. . . it gains consistency, it acquires order and form, it becomes capable of action.”⁹³ Formally, then, growth is the development of form (confession, thanksgiving, etc.) and the development of capacity (the power to confession, thanksgiving, etc.). As the Christian community grows in its capacity to offer a witness as a community before God’s joy, the form of that community develops and intensifies (and vice versa). In other words, the growth of the Christian community’s capacities accompanies an institutional growth on the part of that

⁹¹ IV/2, 648. KD IV/2, 735 : “Es geht um die Kraft, in der die Heiligen zunehmen im Empfang und in der Betätigung des ihnen anvertrauten und anbefohlenen Heiligen: als sancti zunehmen in ihrem Verhältnis zu den sancta, die ihnen gemeinsam und denen sie ihrerseits gemeinsam zugewendet sind.”

⁹² IV/2, 511.

⁹³ IV/1, 151.

community. That is form by which the Christian community participates in God's good-pleasure.

The Christian community must grow in provisional representation of God's holiness. As Barth has it, the Christian community grows and perfects as a communion of saints. That is, the Christian community increases in its power to represent God's holiness. In his doctrine of God, Barth defines holiness to be God's freedom to be "true to Himself" in his turning toward creation.⁹⁴ Insofar as God is holy, God "contradicts and will resist everything which is unlike itself."⁹⁵ In other words, when God "receives" and "adopts" the creation in all its unworthiness, God's self-offering conveys its own effective counter-resistance to the creation's stupor.⁹⁶ God's holiness is irresistible; when the Triune God gathers the creation into the divine being, act and life, God's uniqueness is progressively manifested in that creation.⁹⁷

In Barth's doctrine of reconciliation (in IV/2), he calls attention to the fact that, in the Hebrew Scriptures, the sanctified creature is primarily God's people.⁹⁸ Thus, the church's holiness is a matter of a common life becoming *pleasing* to God insofar as it has a certain *form*. Barth writes:

Sanctification, the action of the God who is always holy in His mercy, the activity in which He crosses this gulf, does *indeed involve the creation of a new form of existence for man* in which he can live as the loyal covenant-partner of God who *is well-pleasing to and blessed by Him*. But these are far-reaching and pregnant words if we take them literally. They sound like "idle tales" (Lk. 24^{11s})—no less strange (since they refer to man and therefore to us all) than the report of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Where is man in this new form of existence, as the loyal covenant-partner of God? Who of us is this man? Yet less sweeping words (and even these words if we do not take them literally) are quite insufficient to

⁹⁴ II/1, 360.

⁹⁵ IV/2, 500; II/1, 368.

⁹⁶ II/1, 368.

⁹⁷ II/1, 368.

⁹⁸ IV/2, 500-501.

describe what is at issue in man's sanctification by God. Even if it is only a matter of creating a copy of His own holiness, its reflection in the world which is distant from Himself, the reality of this reflection can be no less than that of a man who is marked off from the rest of the world, not as a second God, but as a man who can live the life of a true covenant-partner of God, i.e., not disloyal but loyal, not displeasing but well-pleasing, not cursed but blessed, and in this freedom able to exist in a form which is different from that of all others.⁹⁹

When the church becomes holy, it becomes pleasing to God. But, how is that possible? Is it really in play? It is possible and actual by the incarnation. First, note that, we see here that Barth is using glory concepts to explain the relationship between God's holiness and the Christian community's holiness. He translates his doctrine of glory into his doctrine of *de facto* communal sanctification. For, when the Christian community becomes pleasing to God, it has a particular form. The church's increase in power is an increase in its power to develop its own form as it receives God's pleasure. A form is a unity of identity and non-identity. The unity of identity and non-identity is here the union between Jesus Christ and his community. As Barth claims, "We speak of His heavenly form of existence . . . when with the New Testament we speak of Him as the Head of the community. But we speak of His earthly-historical form of existence . . . we speak of the community as His body. And in both cases . . . we speak of the one man Jesus Christ. It is he who is both there and here . . ." ¹⁰⁰ The community is not identical to Jesus Christ's form of existence in heaven, yet it is a form of Jesus Christ's own existence. Jesus Christ is identical to the Christian community. God confronts the world, and shows his absolute uniqueness in the world, by means of a people that *is* Jesus Christ. Indeed, in these two forms of existence is "the whole glory of His being as the true Son of God and Son of

⁹⁹ IV/2, 513-514.

¹⁰⁰ IV/2, 653. "The community is not Jesus Christ. But He – and in reality only He, but He in supreme reality – is the community" (IV/2, 655). See also IV/2, 521-22

Man.”¹⁰¹ His people are capable of corresponding to God’s holiness (they are made “usable”) as God gives God’s glory, effecting their *de facto* participation in God’s holiness.¹⁰²

Barth positions himself against two of forebearers, Calvin and Schleiermacher. For Calvin, the church moves deeper and deeper into union with Jesus Christ – the union with Christ is not yet fully accomplished. He writes, “Not only does he cleave to us by an indivisible bond of fellowship, but with a wonderful communion, day by day, he grows more and more into one body with us, until he becomes completely one with us.”¹⁰³ For Calvin, the Holy Spirit creates a union with the Christian community so that Jesus Christ’s work would not be of “no value for us.”¹⁰⁴ The church’s enjoyment of its own salvation parallels the deepening extent of the union to Christ. For Schleiermacher, the church moves ever onward in its “approximations to the state of blessedness,” which includes, among other things, a feeling of absolute dependence.¹⁰⁵ The church, as a body, has a “common consciousness” which results from the Holy Spirit’s union with the body of the regenerate.¹⁰⁶ This is the means by which the influence of Jesus Christ increases in individuals and on the whole.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰¹ IV/2, 653.

¹⁰² IV/2, 501. Given that holiness happens as a divine and human activity, Barth concludes that “human holiness . . . cannot originally and properly be that of many, but only of the one man who on the human level is marked off from all others” (IV/2, 514). For “God alone is originally and properly holy” and since God has become human in Jesus Christ, the holiness of humanity must belong properly on the human level to Jesus Christ. Thus, if the people of God, and ultimately the rest of humanity and creation, are to be holy, it consists “in our participation in His sanctification” (IV/2, 517). Jesus Christ not only sanctifies; he is the one who is sanctified by God and thus does share God’s holiness with the church.

¹⁰³ *Institutes*, III.2.24.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, III.1.1. One way that Calvin unpacks this is that the church is an “external means” in order to originate and increase faith (*Ibid.*, IV.1.1). That is why he affirms that the church is “the common mother of all the godly” (Comm. Ephesians 4.12).

¹⁰⁵ Schleiermacher, *Christian Faith*, 365, 12-18.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 573, 569.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 560-565. Like Calvin, Schleiermacher considers the church’s growth to be a matter of aggregate individual growth in faith, which he will call the “powers that make for sanctification” (*Ibid.*, 652).

Barth's difference from the accounts of growth in Calvin and Schleiermacher become clear when we focus not only on the growth of the church as subject, but shift instead to the orientation of this growth. In paragraph 67, Barth develops his theory of the church's growth, as we saw above, as a kind of running commentary on Ephesians 4 and other texts in relation to Ephesians 4. Perhaps the most important aspect of that exegesis is his claim that the church is already the body of Christ – that this institutional event has already been undertaken by God in Jesus Christ. It is already the earthly-historical form of Jesus Christ. Thus, the progress of the church – its intensification over time – consists in an ever-developing and ever-renewed *demonstration* of this union of the Christian community with Jesus Christ. That is the form which corresponds to God's joy. He makes these claims as an extended commentary on Ephesians 4.12-16, which reads as follows (I include verse 11 for context):

(11) The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, (12) to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, (13) until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ. (14) We must no longer be children, tossed to and fro and blown about by every wind of doctrine, by people's trickery, by their craftiness in deceitful scheming. (15) But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, (16) from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body's growth in building itself up in love."

Commenting on verse 13, Barth writes:

The fulfilling of the *kaipoi*, which without Him would be empty, has already been brought about in Him. If the community for its part is the *pleroma* of Him who is Himself the *pleroma* of the cosmos, this means that in the full measure of its compass it will embrace no more, but no less, than the cosmos. In other words, the totality of the heavenly and earthly world has now no existence distinct from that of the community, which is the *pleroma tou Christou* . . . in this form, in this measure of its extent or compass, the community itself is absolutely future, just as Christ is absolutely future to it as the *aner teleios*, the One in whom all this is

comprehended . . . But it now looks and moves towards itself in this future form. It exists as an heir, being predestined . . . to magnify His glory as those who already hope in Christ, the *totus Christus* . . . it is for this that the community is already fitted – to look and move forward to Him in his future form, and therefore to itself in its future form, giving a provisional representation both of Him as the *pleroma* of all things and of itself as His *pleroma*.”¹⁰⁸

The logic is entirely eschatological. The ultimate goal of the Christian community is simple: to magnify God’s glory. Yet, that goal is achieved in two *forms* of the community’s existence. Ultimately, the Christian community progresses toward an identity with the entire creation.¹⁰⁹ When the Christian community absolutely fulfills the magnification of God’s glory – utterly pronounces the Triune life being, act and life of God in its entirety – it will be identical with the rest of creation and vice versa. The whole creation will be manifest as Christ’s body, and the Christian community moves toward that goal. But, penultimately, the Christian community has a form which provides a temporary representation of that ultimate goal. Penultimately, it represents its own future fullness as well as the absolute magnification of God in its fullness. Barth makes an important distinction between a proclaimed knowledge of this ultimate goal and a manifested knowledge of this goal.¹¹⁰ The Christian community knows that the fullness of Christ has come, but that fullness has not yet become manifest in itself or in the entirety of creation. As such, the Christian community moves into a more profound

¹⁰⁸ IV/2, 625.

¹⁰⁹ Schleiermacher takes election to mean God’s decision to foreordain “all belonging to the human race” to be “eventually taken up into having fellowship with Christ” and a foreordination to be caught up into that election, in accord with the outgrowth of providence (*Christian Faith*, 549-550, 551-553). In accord with this, Schleiermacher recognizes the consummation of the church to be a state in which “all opposition is so completely overcome that in the field of His activity nothing in time remains which is hostile” (Ibid., 697). One of the issues is that Schleiermacher, eschatologically, thinks of the difference between human being and Jesus Christ merely in terms of degree, such that he cannot detect any qualitative difference between the fully actualized God-consciousness of Jesus Christ and other human beings in the eschaton (Ibid., 530).

¹¹⁰ IV/2, 624.

proclamation of what has happened and will be manifest - the magnification of God and the salvation of creation.

This is all to say that the church's growth is also eccentrically driven by a *telos*. The church is communal progress toward a goal. He writes, "the progress of the Church . . . denotes in the New Testament primarily and predominantly, although not exclusively, spiritual progress; the progress of the *sancti* in their relationship to the *sancta*. Progress means that they go forward together on the appointed way from their origin to their goal. The New Testament sees that where there is the communion of saints this progress may be expected."¹¹¹ The communion of saints, in turn, "is an action in which on the basis of an existing union many human beings are engaged in a common movement towards the same union."¹¹² The Christian community is moving from its union with Christ to its union with Christ – that is the happening that is the Christian community, the "communion" which "takes place as this divine and human work is in train."¹¹³ The difference between the union with Christ as origin and the union with Christ as goal is that "as it moves from its origin in which it is already complete to its goal in which it will be manifest as such."¹¹⁴ The communion of saints constitutes itself as a communion of saints only insofar as it progresses in its ability to provisionally represent the exaltation of human life as it is fully accomplished in Jesus Christ. The Christian community does not progress in its union with Christ per se, as with Calvin and Schleiermacher.¹¹⁵ The

¹¹¹ IV/2, 650-651.

¹¹² IV/2, 641.

¹¹³ IV/2, 641.

¹¹⁴ IV/2, 641.

¹¹⁵ There is, of course, an important qualifier here. Schleiermacher does indeed think that the Christian community, insofar as it grows, grows in its capacity to image or give witness to Jesus Christ. This may mitigate his claim, noted in footnote 109 of this chapter, that perfected Christians do not differ in kind from Jesus Christ. However, appears not to be the case, since it takes a whole, universal community of sinners to

church's progress is, as a common activity, a pattern of intensifying action in provisional correspondence to the life of God in Christ.

The Christian community does not simply provide a provisional representation of its own future form, it has a *perfecting form* or "provisional form" because it must correspond to the *perfect form* of Christ's existence.¹¹⁶ More specifically, the Christian community provides a witness to Jesus Christ's reconciling rule in heaven. He comments on Ephesians 4:

"...as the Head of the cosmos and also the Head of the community, He is absolutely future, because not yet revealed, both to the community and the cosmos. And its own form as the *soma* and therefore the *pleroma* of this Head is still future, because not yet revealed, to the community. It believes in Him as its Head. It looks and moves towards Him from the depths and distance as to the One who exists in this heavenly form. And believing in Him it believes also in itself as His *soma* and therefore His *pleroma* . . . Of course, all this – the *totus Christus* – has not still to evolve or to be made. In accordance with the predetermination of God, He has been instituted as such once and for all . . . Thus, the community is his body, the *pleroma* without which He would not be that which He has been appointed by God."¹¹⁷

He writes about the perfecting form as indicated in Ephesians 4.15, "Christians are summoned . . . to grow up into Him who is the Head – Christ." How can Christians be summoned to something that is already accomplished? Barth writes: "it can do it because its growth is already taking place quite apart from its own action . . . Because He as the Head is present to it as His body, in virtue of His life and growth it too grows infallibly, demanding the consequence of human action but not compromised by the problematic nature of this action. It is not thrown back on its own resources in this action. It grows *ex*

bear image – as it grows over time – to one sinless "archetype and original" (*Christian Faith*, 580). When the community is perfected, that same rule does not necessarily apply.

¹¹⁶ IV/2, 657. Deep differences with Schleiermacher emerge here. For Schleiermacher, the mode of Jesus Christ's presence is not necessarily linked with the resurrection (as we will see in the following chapter). The mode of his presence is necessarily linked to the ascension, but not to the resurrection. For Schleiermacher, the Christian community would be dominated by Jesus Christ's personality and would not be an agential community without his absence (*Christian Faith*, 565-569).

¹¹⁷ IV/2, 659.

autou and therefore *eis autou*. It accomplishes its own growth – in virtue of His real presence.”¹¹⁸ In other words, since the church grows toward Christ’s own rule, it reveals Jesus Christ as the end toward which it moves. But, since Jesus Christ has his fullness in his body, the Christian community reveals the fullness of Christ’s body – itself! - as the end toward which it moves. In its movement, it reveals both its own future perfection and the perfection of Jesus Christ.¹¹⁹

It is important at this point to mark the connection with the visibility of the church we analyzed in the last section. The overall problem of paragraph 67 is to demarcate the communally realized sanctification that marks out the true church in the world. Also, since his theology of the church’s *de facto* participation in the exaltation of the man Jesus is an exposition of Ephesians 4.15-16, the true church is visibly identifiable insofar as it is involved in a progress towards the absolute representation of the *pleroma* of Christ. Given that the church’s goal in this time is to give a provisional representation of what has occurred, is occurring and will occur in Jesus Christ, the true church is identifiable – is visible - as the entity which is being fitted by God and the community to that goal. The leading concept of paragraph 67 is upbuilding or edification, but the goal of that upbuilding of the church is “fitting it to give a provisional representation of the sanctification of all humanity and human life as it has taken place in Him.”¹²⁰ Whenever

¹¹⁸ IV/2, 660.

¹¹⁹ IV/2, 648-649: “it is not just a step or two but a whole wide way from the lower to the higher, which in turns becomes a lower to that which is higher still, and so continually. Where do we not have to make this way from good to better faith and knowledge and confession, to better thought and penitence and joy, to better prayer and hope and proclamation and worship or another other sancta, in short from good to better communion of the saints in holy things? The power immanent in the community is the power of this history, and therefore the power to go this way (or these many ways) as we should, not as individual Christians but together as the community in which there is mutual admonition and encouragement and warning and comfort and assistance and support. It is as the community goes this way, or these ways, in its immanent power that it knows inward increase and extension and expansion – inward growth.”

¹²⁰ IV/2, 614. See also 620.

an entity is built up or fitted to that goal, it is visibly identifiable as the Christian community, it is the true church.¹²¹ Visible to whom? As we saw in the last subsection, we must keep in mind Barth's claims about the visibility of faith. The church's growth toward an absolute demonstration of God in Jesus Christ can only be recognized as such through faith. Yet, as we will see, Barth will say that its visibility to all as another sociological institution does have important effects in God's economy.

Barth thus comes to terms with the relationship of divine and human action. For, as Ephesians 4.16 has it, *the church* builds itself. The church is, for Barth, "in Wirklichkeit sowohl das Ereignis also auch das Werkzeug der Anrede."¹²² Barth, due to this phrase, must say at the outset of paragraph 67 that it is "dealing with a work done in common by a group of men within the race and its history when we speak first of the upbuilding of the community."¹²³ But, as he says, "it is this human construct, the Christian church, because and as God is at work in it by His Holy Spirit."¹²⁴ Barth practices here a transcendental-scriptural logic: He looks for the divine conditions of the human action. He even goes so far as to say that "we cannot look abstractly at what a human work seems to be in itself. This would not be a genuine phenomenon but a false. The real result of the divine operation . . . will never try to be anything in itself, but only the divine operation, the divine work of sanctification, the upbuilding of Christianity by the Holy Spirit of Jesus the Lord, by which it is inaugurated and controlled and supported."¹²⁵ At the core of its being, the church signifies God's life – it is the people of God, God's plant, the flock of Christ, the bride of Christ, the body of Christ, the pillar

¹²¹ IV/2, 619-622.

¹²² Jean-Louis Leuba, "Die Ekklesiologie Karl Barths," 81.

¹²³ IV/2, 615.

¹²⁴ IV/2, 616.

¹²⁵ IV/2, 616-617.

and ground of truth. If the church is to signify and declare, to provisionally represent the being and act of God in Jesus Christ, then its being and act must be continually conditioned by God's being and act. Thus, God's upbuilding conditions and issues in the church's upbuilding of itself.

Meaning this: the development of the Christian's community's fitness to represent the fullness of God and the creation in Christ is an act of free self-involvement. Barth makes clear that the "true Church...is savingly necessary" because "He is revealed only and can be claimed only in the history ruled by Him . . . *extra ecclesiam nulla salus*."¹²⁶ Thus, Barth writes, "As *His community* (His body), this cannot be merely a passive object or spectator of its upbuilding. It builds itself . . . as its upbuilding is wholly and utterly the work of God or Christ, so it is wholly and utterly its own work . . . every Christian, the whole community, is the subject of edification."¹²⁷ If the common life of the Christian community is to represent Jesus Christ this exclusively, then the freedom of its action must correspond to the freedom of God in Jesus Christ and the man Jesus' freedom. God's glory is, as we saw in the last chapter, an absolute freedom to give exhaustively of God's self: "...He is good in Himself only as He is good to man, actualizing his own glory only with man's salvation . . . He has turned wholly to man. He has even given Himself up to him. In a relentless compromising of His own cause, He has addressed Himself wholly to the cause of man."¹²⁸ The man Jesus' freedom, likewise, is the "free, spontaneous inward agreement with the will and decree and action of God" in his absolute self-offering.¹²⁹ The growth of the community cannot be partly God's act and

¹²⁶ IV/2, 635, 622.

¹²⁷ IV/2, 634-35. Italics mine.

¹²⁸ IV/2, 588.

¹²⁹ IV/2, 29.

partly the act of the community. It must be wholly God's act and wholly the act of the community. It can only be his body, the provisional representation of the exaltation of human life, when it acts in correspondence to God's free gift of God's self to the creation in Christ and the man Jesus' free corresponding obedience. Otherwise, the church's growth does not signify that freedom, and does not correspond to God's good-pleasure in its form.

All of this turns on the distinction between *de jure* participation in Jesus Christ and *de facto* participation in Jesus Christ. That is to say that this distinction issues in a very specific account of growth. Yet, Adam Neder argues, that, for Barth, "progress is not the best metaphor to describe the Christian life."¹³⁰ It is questionable whether Barth actually identifies a central metaphor for the Christian life, since the Christian life must be described in so many various ways throughout the doctrine of election and the doctrine of reconciliation. More fundamentally, Neder's comment misleads. Since Barth predicates his account of the Christian community's existence on this distinction, growth becomes *ever more necessary* as a descriptive term for the Christian community. While Neder wonderfully centralizes the distinctions and connections between *de jure* and *de facto* participation, he fails to notice that this distinction re-establishes both individual and corporate growth. Barth's Christology does indeed head off any account of justification or sanctification which depicts the Christian life as an individuals and communities winning for themselves a future that Jesus Christ makes possible. If there is a distinction between *de jure* and *de facto* participation and if *de jure* participation has as its telos *de facto* participation, then one has to address the difference between *de jure* and *de facto* participation in Christ. Growth just is one of those differences! It becomes an

¹³⁰ *Participation in Christ*, 26.

essential descriptor of the difference between *de facto* and *de jure* participation. Growth is a matter of individuals and a community increasing their actualized capacity to correspond in witness to what Jesus Christ has accomplished on their behalf. For example, the good works of an individual and the Christian community are an intensifying *de facto* participation in the covenant fulfilled in Jesus Christ. He writes:

. . . the good work of God itself assumes always a special form as good works done by man, and man's work declares the good work of God. What is meant by 'declare' but to participate in the annunciation of the history of the covenant in the Old Testament or its proclamation in the New, and, therefore because this history is the work of God, in the attestation of this work . . . insofar as this is possible for a human work it has a part in the divine work itself . . . The work of God which has taken place for them as for all men also takes place in them in the form of this illumination, with the result that as the men they are they have a share in it . . .¹³¹

The covenant is "God's history with men and among them."¹³² God directs creation "to a specific goal – His covenant with man, His own glory in this covenant and the salvation of man . . . it attains its goal in the fact that God Himself becomes man and as such performs that which is promised."¹³³ Since both God's history of being for humankind and humankind's history of being for God are actualized and finished in God's acts, Barth is quite comfortable with the claim that "to live a holy life is to be raised and driven with increasing definiteness from the centre of this revealed truth, and therefore to live in conversion with growing sincerity, depth and precision."¹³⁴ Good works accomplished by the Christian community have an intensifying history because God has a history with humanity that is finished. The Christian community's good works intensify as a part of a history of conversion, in which the Christian community advances in its declaration of

¹³¹ IV/2, 592.

¹³² IV/2, 589.

¹³³ IV/2, 588.

¹³⁴ IV/2, 566.

the “One who hears and does what God summons us to do.”¹³⁵ Its advance, the history of its conversion as exemplified in its good works, testifies to the achieved total conversion of Jesus Christ himself. The Christian community’s works, because God makes use of them to testify to the climax of the covenant’s history achieved in Jesus Christ, develop over time. They move toward a goal. *In moving toward a goal, the Christian community declares that goal* – the future, absolute revelation of the cosmic reconciliation accomplished in Jesus Christ.¹³⁶

Neder is on firmer ground when he states in a endnote that “Barth does not conceive of ‘progress’ in the Christian life as the acquisition or ‘growth’ of infused virtues, but rather as an increase in the constancy with which the actions of one’s life correspond to the truth of one’s objective being in Christ.”¹³⁷ Neder appears to bury this claim because he does not want Barth’s account of growth to be mixed up with another account of progress that he distinguishes from Barth: “The command of God confronts humanity in the context of this ‘inexorable Either-Or’ . . . There is nothing partial about this relationship. The idea of a partial righteousness implicit in the idea of progress is out of place in this description.”¹³⁸ “Partial righteousness” is indeed eliminated by Barth, but

¹³⁵ IV/2, 582.

¹³⁶ Barth writes that “we are speaking of the history in which it is unfit, but again and again becomes fitted, in and with its human thought and word and will and work to perform this provisional representation. To say it more precisely: the history in which God sets this people again and again on the way and in movement, shows it its goal again and again, and which gives it decisive direction (*... wir reden, aber nun even die Geschichte, in der es, das untaugliche, fort and fort tauglich gemacht wird, in und mit seinem menschlichen Denken und Reden, Wollen and Vollbringun jene vorläufige Darstellung zu vollziehen. Es ist, genauer gesagt: die Geschichte, in der Gott dieses Volk fort and fort auf den Weg und in Bewegung setzt, ihm fort and fort sein Ziel zeigt und die zu ihm führende Richtung anweist*)” (IV/2, 623/KD IV/2, 705. The translation is my own).

¹³⁷ Neder, *Participation in Christ*, 101.

¹³⁸ Neder, 27. In particular, Neder seems to pit “repetition” against “progress” in Barth. He writes, “By rejecting the idea that growth in the Christian life means a gradual increase in one’s own inward righteousness, Barth underscores the perfection and sufficiency of Jesus Christ’s righteousness for humanity. He does not . . . intend to undermine the urgency of obedience . . . Neither does he denigrate wisdom and maturity. Barth thinks that the urgency of unceasing obedience can be safeguarded just as well

not a provisional witness to that absolute righteousness achieved in Jesus Christ's life and death.¹³⁹ If human being and action is to have its own authenticity and if human being and action are to correspond to the history of Jesus Christ, then individual and communal growth must be essential components of Barth's theology of reconciliation. While sanctification is not accomplished by anyone other than Jesus Christ, growth in one's witness to Jesus Christ's sanctification is accomplished by those who receive it in the Holy Spirit. If Jesus Christ undergoes his own history of growth, then surely individuals and the Christian community, if they are to live in correspondence to that history, will also undergo and achieve a progress which corresponds to Jesus Christ's history.

The absoluteness of the Christian community's existence has to do with its *orientation*. For Barth, "the whole man with all his possibilities and experiences and attitudes is grasped by the object which takes and retains the initiative in relation to him, and turned right about to face this object, to be wholly orientated upon it."¹⁴⁰ In other words, individual human beings and the Christian community have an absolute orientation to Jesus Christ. There can be no finding fault with an apparent contradiction in Barth's work between Barth's commitment to the fact that human beings "are in this

with the concepts of repetition and perseverance as it can with that of progress" (28). This way of interpreting Barth suggests that progress is an optional category for Barth, something that would be redundant vis-à-vis repetition.

¹³⁹ Calvin is one obvious example, among more than one could count: "this restoration does not take place in one moment or one day or one year; but through continual and sometimes even slow advances God wipes out in his elect the corruptions of the flesh, cleanses them of guilt, consecrates them to himself as temples renewing all their minds to true purity" (*Institutes*, III.3.9). What is particularly telling is the progressive cleansing of guilt that Calvin mentions, since Calvin will also say later that "justified by faith is he who, excluded from the righteousness of works, grasps the righteousness of Christ through faith, and clothed in it, appears in God's sight not as a sinner but as a righteous man" (III.11.2). Barth might ask: Is guilt removed through sanctification or justification? G.C. Berkouwer notes that the Reformed tradition has wanted to affirm that the grace of sanctification denotes more than simply the Spirit's work, but has not successfully agreed on how to discuss that "something else" which increases (G.C. Berkouwer, *Faith and Sanctification*, Trans. John Vriend [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1969], 83).

¹⁴⁰ IV/3.1, 220.

act of theirs”¹⁴¹ and his claim that “there is no action that does not have the marks of sloth or can be anything but displeasing to God.”¹⁴² As we shall see in more depth in chapter five, Barth’s claim is always made in relationship to Jesus Christ’s identity as the Victor, which is to say that it is an eschatological claim. For Barth, the triune life convinces human beings that their resistances are futile and draws them into an orientation to its future goal because he is revealed in his present glory as one who “will achieve the goal.”¹⁴³ That goal is, of course, a new display of the glory of the Triune God in Jesus Christ when he returns. But, it is the provisional display of God’s triune glory in Jesus Christ which draws individuals and communities into a certainty of that concluding glory.

The growth of the Christian community is the result of the Christian community being drawn into the growth of Jesus Christ. In our following chapters, we will address in more detail what it is about Jesus Christ that draws them into that growth. For now, we recognize that the growth of the Christian community is a *form* which results from the power of Jesus Christ’s presence. Barth’s interpretation of Ephesians 4.15-16 is meant to uncover the unity of identity and non-identity that holds between Jesus Christ and the Christian community. The Christian community is indirectly identical to Jesus Christ and to its own future form because its growth is a form which is indirectly identical to the completed growth of Jesus Christ. That is the “whole glory” of Jesus Christ, as we saw above.¹⁴⁴

The Church Fulfills its Creaturely Calling and Gains Resistance to Sloth

¹⁴¹ Neder, *Participation in Christ*, 85.

¹⁴² CD IV/2, 528.

¹⁴³ IV/3.1, 263.

¹⁴⁴ IV/2, 653.

God's glory draws out a creaturely and sin-resistant growth.

The Christian community is to enact "mutual edification" before God.¹⁴⁵ In enacting this, the Christian community provisionally represents the communal fulfillment of created capacities – an entire human community that is free to live for God and as such is free to live for one another.¹⁴⁶ Human beings are created in Christ as beings-in-fellowship, entities which only exist insofar as they encounter, confront and affirm their unity with and difference from other human beings – because God has elected to covenant with humanity in Jesus Christ. "That the covenant between God and man is the original of that between man and man means . . . that the latter covenant may and should be lived out in human action; and it means . . . the being of man in encounter is a being in correspondence to his determination as the covenant-partner of God."¹⁴⁷ Christian existence fulfills this created determination provisionally without that determination conditioning Christian existence.¹⁴⁸ But provisional fulfillment is a real fulfillment, a fulfillment of communal existence that is lived with, in and before God's being, act and life.¹⁴⁹

This is why Barth says that the Christian community provisionally represents the exaltation of human life in Jesus Christ:

These men need to be brought together, to be constituted, established and maintained as a common being—one people capable of unanimous action. For as men they are not in the first instance a common organism, but a heterogeneous collection of individuals who even if they do not conflict do not cooperate. By no

¹⁴⁵ IV/2, 640.

¹⁴⁶ III/2, 221-222.

¹⁴⁷ III/2, 323.

¹⁴⁸ IV/1, 8-9, 20.

¹⁴⁹ Note Paul Nimmo's statement that "what enables the ethical agent to transcend her created nature is her particular calling by the Word of God and does not reside in her own possibility" (*Being in Action*, 101). Cf. John Webster: "'creation' is not to be thought of as the necessary grounds of the other works of God, a ground which is complete in itself and can be defined without reference to the history of redemption" (*Barth's Ethics of Reconciliation*, 64).

natural or historical ties can they be what they have to be in the service of the one Father, as disciples of the one Lord Jesus Christ and in obedience to the one Holy Spirit . . . Union in brotherhood is a solid union, but it is a union in freedom, in which the individual does not cease to be this particular individual, united in his particularity with every other man in his. In this context, therefore, upbuilding and therefore integration does not mean the erection of a smooth structure with no distinctive features, but of one in which the corners and edges of the individual elements used all fit together in such a way that they are not merely aesthetically harmonious but also exercise their technical function of mutual dependence and support. The establishment of a wholly positive relationship, in which the different pieces are fitted together, is thus the main problem in the construction of this building. It is love (for one's neighbour) which builds the community. If this does not do it, the community will not be built. Thus the upbuilding of the community consists concretely in the fact that there is mutual love between the members of the community which is loved by God, by Jesus as its Lord . . . love as the brotherly love of Christians . . . consists in the fact that, integrated by God, by Jesus, they mutually adapt themselves to be one organism which can be used in the world in His service. Without this integration and mutual adaptation, there can be no reciprocal dependence and support. And without this the community will inevitably fall apart and collapse. It cannot then be the provisional representation of the humanity sanctified in Jesus Christ . . . What it has to do in its life and teaching and especially its worship must be done in the mutual dependence and support which have this integration as a presupposition. As it integrates itself in this way, or rather allows the Holy Spirit to exercise it in self-integration, it is the true Church, prepared to look and move forward, to give this provisional representation, and thus to offer the witness which is the meaning of its existence in world-history."¹⁵⁰

The integration of the Christian community must take place because individual human beings, without the action of Jesus Christ, would not have a common life.¹⁵¹ But, more positively, he is talking about the pattern of activity that occurs between human beings as they offer themselves to one another. The Christian community cannot be a provisional representation of the singular love of God – the love of God between the members of the Trinity into which the creation is brought into fellowship – without the integration of the community into a common “organism” and “structure.” Human beings have their own

¹⁵⁰ IV/2, 635-36.

¹⁵¹ Schleiermacher affirms this as well (*Christian Faith*, 582). He seems to say that while human beings can spread sin, it is sin which disintegrates common human action (Ibid., 321). The Christian community enacts a life with such commonality that it is simply impossible to abstract specific individual influence from the whole (Ibid., 520).

unique structure insofar as their sociality is “oriented towards” bearing a likeness to the Triune fellowship.¹⁵² As Barth writes, “God exists in relationship and fellowship . . . Because He is not solitary in Himself, and therefore does not will to be so *ad extra*, it is not good for man to be alone . . .”¹⁵³ Even more, the church’s unity testifies to the unity of God and the singularity of God’s love in electing creatures to an exaltation, to being sanctified in Jesus Christ. The Christian community is fitted for its task when its members are fitted to one another to act in unison, particularly in gathered worship. Also, the last sentence of the block quotation in this paragraph shows once again that the act of God in Jesus Christ, as effected by the Holy Spirit, is co-extensive with the act of the Christian community in fitting itself. The common action of the church, if it is to be freedom, must be an act assignable to the Christian community as the Christian community. In other words, he cannot say that the common action of the church is simply a result of God’s action. It must simultaneously, without any rivalry, be describable as a free act of the Christian community. Otherwise, it does not fulfill its central task – a provisional representation of the exalted essence of humanity accomplished in Jesus Christ.

Glory not only draws out the communal orientation of created life, it draws out the joyful orientation of creaturely life. As Barth wrote in II/1, “. . . God’s glory is His overflowing self-communicating joy. By its very nature it is that which gives joy.”¹⁵⁴ In Barth’s ethics of creation, the joyful structure of responding human beings emerges clearly. In creatures, joy has to do most particularly with their temporality - human beings

¹⁵² III/2, 319.

¹⁵³ III/2, 324. See also III/1, 191-206. It is not quite this bald, of course. Keith Johnson nicely points out that the *analogia relationis* is, in fact, a whole series of correspondences in and through “the action of Jesus Christ” (*Karl Barth and the Analogia Entis*, 206). See Johnson’s summary of this series on page 197-198.

¹⁵⁴ II/1, 653.

hatch plans, work toward their accomplishment, and then often accomplish their plans.

Joy has to do with the accomplishment of a goal: “Man has joy when for once he has reached his goal, or at least one goal.”¹⁵⁵ Yet, joy is not simple self-congratulations. Joy receives as a gift the accomplishment, despite all of the creaturely that goes into a task. Joy is, thus, “gratitude for an effected fulfillment.”¹⁵⁶

Also, joy does not simply emerge in the accomplishment of a goal - it is experienced in anticipation of the accomplishment. Barth diagnoses those who do not experience of anticipatory joy : “To be joyful is to expect that life will reveal itself as God’s gift of grace, that it will be present and offer itself in provisional fulfillments of its meaning and intention as movement.”¹⁵⁷ Those who do not experience anticipatory joy act as though they can control the outcome of their own movements, that they can corner joy with their efforts. But, joy is “hope for receiving,” not “a covetous glance at a grasping.”¹⁵⁸ This happens on three levels. Properly speaking, joy is only given by God, and one can only expect it as a gift, along with the event or accomplishment that one enjoys. As Joseph Mangina explains, “. . . our will to joy is bounded by the fact that we do not ultimately know in what our joy consists.”¹⁵⁹ Second, all of the small fulfillments we do enjoy are simply provisional experiences of “eternal life . . . the revelation of union with God’s eternal life.”¹⁶⁰ Thus, he writes, “Everything here and now is the great prelude to what will one day be revealed and constituted the goal.”¹⁶¹ Third, true joy

¹⁵⁵ III/4, 376.

¹⁵⁶ III/4, 377.

¹⁵⁷ III/4, 378.

¹⁵⁸ III/4, 378.

¹⁵⁹ Mangina, *Karl Barth on the Christian Life*, 149.

¹⁶⁰ III/4, 385.

¹⁶¹ III/4, 385.

comes “in the shadow of the cross.”¹⁶² Human beings will not experience joy unless they recognize that life’s sorrows can allow us the deepest joys because they allow us to anticipate the final, future revelation of God’s suffering on the cross. For faith is “what clings to what has been accomplished as the future in every present and therefore to God himself, who is the source of every good thing.”¹⁶³ If our joy is to reflect God’s joy, it proves itself to be also a “capacity for suffering.”¹⁶⁴ Joy comes, then, with eschatological faith, oriented toward the absolute revelation of God’s reconciliation in Jesus Christ.

As we saw in the last chapter, God’s joy draws out human joy. As it draws it human joy, it draws out a community. For, as Barth claims, “joy is also a social matter.”¹⁶⁵ Given the communal structure of human life as covenanting creatures, human beings cannot live joy alone. If they live joy alone, they degrade themselves. They pretend that their freedom and work can be accomplished in isolation. They fool themselves into underestimating their own finitude. Since joy is a gift from the covenanting God, it is a gift meant to be shared with all of the objects of God’s covenant. To draw a community into joy is to draw a community into its own proper identity as a creature.

Joy also overcomes sin’s resistance to its creaturely determination in Christ. As Barth hints above, in representing the fullness of Jesus Christ, the church’s integration resists and overcomes acts of disassociation, which are manifestations of human sloth for Barth. The church does not merely begin with a neutral set of individuals that must be

¹⁶² III/4, 383.

¹⁶³ III/4, 385. Barth is not making claim along the lines of what Calvin can say : “whenever we are afflicted, remembrance of our past life ought immediately to come to mind; so we shall doubtless find that we have committed something deserving this sort of chastisement” (*Institutes* III.8.6). As Mangina says, “The point is not that God stands against in suffering . . . the point is that God is with us even in the midst of suffering” (*Barth on the Christian Life*, 150).

¹⁶⁴ III/4, 384.

¹⁶⁵ III/4, 379.

integrated; it must overcome a history of disassociation, or a history of common sloth. Sloth, like every kind of sin, is identifiable for Barth only in light of Jesus Christ. We can identify human beings as “inhuman” because “the royal freedom of this one man consisted and consists in the fact that He is wholly the Fellow-man of his neighbors . . . In Him he (humanity) gives glory to God alone, but in so doing sees and affirms and exalts the dignity and rights and claim of the other man. In Him he does not live only in fellowship with God, but in so doing he also lives in fellowship with other men. In Him, in this man, God Himself is for all other men. This cannot be said of any other.”¹⁶⁶ Just because God in Jesus Christ is God Himself for all other men, we can know that human beings “remain in isolation and seclusion and self-will and unwillingness . . . in our inhumanity.”¹⁶⁷ The exaltation of humanity in Jesus Christ consists in the co-existence and mutual orientation of one human being to another. Sin in this case is not so much a refusal to participate in that exaltation as it is a failure to act altogether, a failure to obey. It is a manifestation of sloth. It is a failure to orient one’s self toward a fellow human being for whom God is a neighbor. It is a failure to follow the arc of God’s election, creation and self-determination for all of humanity. It is simple inactivity or indifference.

When Barth discusses inhumanity, which simply means “to be without one’s fellows,” he pays particular attention to how inhumanity occurs within a regressive historical pattern.¹⁶⁸ It has “the character of power” because its “development is along a line which moves from its origin to a definite end.”¹⁶⁹ He develops the point:

It begins with the omissions and actions of an indifferent association with one’s neighbour to which there can be no juridical and hardly any moral objection. It

¹⁶⁶ IV/2, 432-33.

¹⁶⁷ IV/2, 433.

¹⁶⁸ IV/2, 434.

¹⁶⁹ IV/2, 436.

then becomes the secret or blatant oppression and exploitation of one's fellow . . . The final upshot is what we call actual transgression: stealing and robbery; murder in the legal sense; and finally war, which allows and commands almost everything that God has forbidden . . . Society may not see it in this light. Nor may a less well-instructed Church. But in the judgment of a conscience enlightened and sharpened by God, the hard and relentless citizen (perhaps a public prosecutor or judge) who keeps within the bounds of what is customary and decorous is in exactly the same boat as the flagrant criminal judged and condemned by him . . . The man has yet to be found who does not bear murder in himself, who might not become a murderer even though he never does so. How dangerous is this inhuman life, which is the life of us all, is seen at the end of the line in the outbreak of strife and global warfare. But this only gives it palpable expression. It consists decisively in the fact that it is life on the steep slope which leads in different ways to this end. And its real menace, like that of stupidity, lies particularly in the fact that it is so supremely infectious. It has such great powers of reproduction . . . One man imposes on another by the power won and exercised through great or little inhumanities because by its exercise he raises the question why the other is so simple as not to exercise it himself. Is he not just as capable of doing so as anyone else? Indeed, when he is the accidental or intentional victim of someone else, he is given a legitimate reason to exercise it. Why should he be the fool? Why not repay like for like: indifference for indifference; threat for threat; pressure for pressure? . . . And in this way an endless series of aggressions and reprisals is initiated, as happens no less in the small sphere of personal relationships than in the greater of world-politics. Yet we cannot understand how irremediable is what we all do to one another and ourselves, but can know only a superficial and ineffective horror at it, unless we are aware of the root in which we are inhuman, and necessarily do sacrifice to inhumanity, and ourselves become its victim. It is there in the root—in the fruits too, but not primarily—that as sin it is the wasting and destruction which impends and falls. It is there where it consists so insignificantly in the fact that man does not follow the movement initiated for him by God, but evades it and lets himself sink and fall into the isolation in which he deludes himself that it is grander to live without his neighbour (as well as without God) than in the fellowship with him in which he is bound and committed to live if he is himself to be a man.¹⁷⁰

This is a striking series of statements. First, the end of the history of disassociation is death and warfare. Inactivity in relation to those who are mutually constituted in Jesus Christ spirals towards a history of death and warfare. It is difficult to know what kind of historical claim Barth makes here, but at the very least he is saying that inactivity is a pattern that intensifies over time. Human beings tend to become more and more

¹⁷⁰ IV/2, 436-437.

inattentive to the dignity of fellow human beings, and that tendency develops toward a history of warfare if left to itself. Second, one mode by which this history of death develops is through accusation, recrimination and reprisal. This is sin by self-victimization. While Barth is not claiming in any way that victims do not exist and that the protection of life does not include punishment, he is claiming that victims re-victimize themselves or deny their own dignity when they fall into a pattern of strict reprisal. When victims seek strict reprisal at all costs, they act as though their attackers have an existence apart from Jesus Christ and themselves by extension. Third, this intensifying common lack of activity is itself a deferral of a response to Jesus Christ. Barth's view is that this communal pattern happens because human beings are dependent on Jesus Christ to exalt them - human failure to associate depends on the prior act of Jesus Christ in exalting human life to a common life. Disassociation is resistant non-resistance to the history of Jesus Christ; a counter-history to Jesus Christ's involvement in human life.

Part of the resistance to Christ is anxious resistance to the joy given in Jesus Christ, which depletes and guts communal life. Anxiety happens when one "can only look and move forward to his future with the deep unrest of one who is discontented with his finitude."¹⁷¹ Anxiety sets up for itself "the fantasy of a hopeless death." It has two forms. In its active form, it measures itself and others by success, by acquisition, by accomplishment. In its passive form, it is the avoidance of labor and simple pursuit of pleasure. In both cases, anxiety atomizes human life. For the anxious, the "expectation from others is that they will help him against the threat under which he stands."¹⁷² But

¹⁷¹ IV/2, 471.

¹⁷² IV/2, 477.

those cares and anxieties have nothing to do with others; they render the subject isolated since their anxieties multiply beyond what they or anyone else can damage. Even more, their fabricated needs will begin to conflict, and will compete for resources. Thus, “two or three million grains of sand, however tightly they may be momentarily compressed, can never make a rock. Anxious man is a mere grain of sand.”¹⁷³ This sin simultaneously resists the gift of joy in Jesus Christ and can be overcome by that same gift. More particularly, anxiety is a counter-movement to the joy involved in Christ’s death. Likewise, if we can participate in the resurrected Christ’s self-giving power, we can have “the freedom to rejoice as we arrive at our end and limit. For he is there. He lives there the life which as eternal life includes our own.”¹⁷⁴ Since Christ is the victor in his very death, we can rejoice at the limit of our life. Human beings do not have to subject each other to their unique, multiplying, anxieties. Temporality can be joyful.

Thus, Barth’s claims about communal sloth and anxiety imply many things about the intensification of the church’s upbuilding. First, the pattern of mutual integration overcomes the history of dissociation that Barth mentions. Instead of finding ways to neglect or instrumentalize other human beings, integration is a matter of fitting one another to a common task – the proclamation of Jesus Christ’s fullness. Second, the mutual integration must have a pattern of intensification that outpaces the spiral of dissociation that Barth describes as inhumanity. It must grow in a way that absolutely resists the infectiousness of reprisal. It must present a kind a developing vibrancy that can withstand, confront and overcome recrimination and accusation. Third, which brings us to our next point, it must somehow take place as a common act which is referred to God

¹⁷³ IV/2, 476.

¹⁷⁴ IV/2, 468.

in Jesus Christ. It must disseminate from a common act that is referred to God in Christ, because inhumanity or communal sloth, happens in dependence on the exaltation that occurs in Jesus Christ. As we argue in the next subsection, the communally intensifying act which, above all, integrates the Christian community's witness to God is gathered worship.

The Church Worships

God's glory draws out liturgical growth.¹⁷⁵ What happens when the Christian community self-develops in its provisional representation of the supreme exaltation of the creation in Jesus Christ? Many things. But, Barth highlights one event in which the Christian community increases its power to represent the future manifestation of reconciliation: "Above all, of course, it takes place as the fellowship of their proclamation of the Gospel, of the Word by which they are gathered and impelled and maintained. For this reason, and because it takes place as the fellowship of prayer, it takes place as the fellowship of divine service – a liturgical fellowship. And in and above all these things it takes place as the fellowship of worship, of the silent or vocal adoration and praise of God."¹⁷⁶ The Christian community's growth is a matter of an increased power to praise and adore God, to perform liturgies.

First, Christian worship fits within Barth's description of Christian works in his theology of sanctification. God praises works and human works can and do praise God. But, that act of praise, on the part of both God and human beings, assumes God's

¹⁷⁵ My use of the word liturgy follows Geoffrey Wainwright's usage: "liturgy . . . is here used of the public worship of the Church, with liturgical (and cultic) as convenient adjectives. Liturgy leaves room within itself for those spontaneous or extemporaneous forms of worship which some Protestants favor as an alternative to what they class as 'liturgical'" (Geoffrey Wainwright, *Doxology* [New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1980], 8). Liturgy is then interchangeable with "gathered worship" in the text. Although liturgy does tend to name the "form of the church service" (Karl Barth, *The Knowledge of God and the Service of God According to the Teaching of the Reformation* [Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2005], 198).

¹⁷⁶ IV/2, 643.

pleasure in good works. God praises that which God beholds in pleasure. Barth writes, “Primarily it is God who is at work . . . the works of God are good. It is said primarily and properly of God Himself that ‘He saw everything he had made, and behold, it was very good’ (Gen. 1.31).”¹⁷⁷ Barth continues, “If they were not good . . . they would not be praised by God, nor praise Him. If he praises them, this includes the fact that He finds pleasure in them as good works. And if they praise Him, this includes the fact that as good works they are adapted and able to do this (*dass sie als gute Werke dazu tauglich und brauchbar sind*).”¹⁷⁸ Barth’s concrete shorthand for “the good” is that which actualizes “glory of God and the salvation of men.”¹⁷⁹ Even more concretely, the “good” refers to the history of the covenant achieved in the fact that “God Himself becomes man.”¹⁸⁰ God benefits God’s self - God glorifies God’s self – in that that God achieves a covenantal unity between a God and the creation in Jesus Christ: “. . . He is good in Himself only as He is good to man, actualizing his own glory only with man’s salvation . . . He has turned wholly to man. He has even given Himself up to him.”¹⁸¹ One aspect of that salvation is the exaltation of human works to be adapted or fitted to the declaration of the history of the covenant.¹⁸² Thus, if the Christian community’s works are to be pleasing to God, if they are to be good, then they must definitively “declare the occurrence of the good work of God” – the history of the covenant achieved in Jesus Christ.¹⁸³

¹⁷⁷ IV/2, 587.

¹⁷⁸ IV/2, 585.

¹⁷⁹ IV/2, 588.

¹⁸⁰ IV/2, 588.

¹⁸¹ IV/2, 588.

¹⁸² IV/2, 590.

¹⁸³ IV/2, 589.

Bringing these threads together, the work of human beings please God in that are fitted to declare that good work. That does not mean that their good works oblige God to praise. Instead, it is God's pleasure which makes human works good.¹⁸⁴ It is God's pleasure which fits or adapts them to a declaration of Jesus Christ.¹⁸⁵ This means two things: "The work of God which has taken place for them as for all men also takes place in them in the form of this illumination, with the result that as the men they are they have a share in it – only as its witnesses, but as such a real share."¹⁸⁶ God's pleasure centers itself on Jesus Christ's work, which substitutes for all. But Barth is also subtly showing the reader that the good-pleasure which appears to be preceded by the goodness of God's work in Genesis 1.31 is in fact a good-pleasure that precedes and conditions the form and shape of Christians and Christian communities. In other words, because God is already pleased with the creation in Jesus Christ, the creation can possess a corresponding form. Left to themselves, good works of those who are Jesus Christ do not provoke God's good-pleasure. Due to the incarnation and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, God's good-

¹⁸⁴ One of the fundamental difference from Schleiermacher emerges here, since Schleiermacher wrote that "the object of good-pleasure is only that element in them which is an activity of faith and an expression of our living fellowship with Christ . . . it is therefore quite right to say that it is really only the person, and the person only as God regards him in Christ, that is the object of divine good-pleasure" (*Christian Faith*, 520-521). Schleiermacher's point is that all actions come from mixed motives – in his language, a human person can be motivated from something approaching absolute dependence and by something approaching dependence on finitude. So, the expression of that mixed motive is not, finally, pleasing to God. Only that layer of its origin which comes from a feeling of absolute dependence (or which approximates it) can be pleasing.

¹⁸⁵ See also the following quote: "He will offer it and leave it to him, just as he does himself, so that he would receive and forgive his work as it is sinful, that he would sanctify it, that he would steer him and order him where he needs it and give him the character of a service performed for him and well-pleasing to him, which the human actor cannot offer him. That he does something distinctive with any one of his works, such that he can put God under an obligation, procuring for himself God's grace and pleasure - that is something not one of God's actual saints can ever imagine" (*Er wird es ihm anbefehlen und anheimstellen, dass er wie ihn selbst, so auch dieses sein Werk in Vergebung dessen, worin bestimmt auch es Sünde ist, annehme und nun eben, dass er es heilige, d.h. dass er ihm, indem er es braucht, in die Reihe stellt und lenkt, den Charakter eines ihm geleisten, ihm wohlfälligen Dienstes gebe, den sein menschlicher Täter ihm nicht geben kann. Dass er mit irgend einem seiner Werke in dem Sinn etwas Besonderes tue, dass er sich Gott damit verpflichten, seine Gnade und sein Wohlgefallen sich damit verschaffen könne, das sollte keiner der wirklichen Heiligen Gottes jemals meinen können*). IV/2, 594; KD IV/2, 672.

¹⁸⁶ IV/2, 592.

pleasure provokes and forms human work as good work. Good works performed by those who are elected in Jesus Christ are, among other things, forms of life which God induces by God's good-pleasure.¹⁸⁷

The central form of communal life which is induced by God's good-pleasure is worship. It is in gathered worship, Barth says, that the community "edifies itself" in response to God's pleasure.¹⁸⁸ He also distinguishes and unites gathered worship and worship as obedience in ordinary life, in accord with what we saw in II/1. Barth is quite careful to note that Christian individuals and communities are not built up solely by gathered worship, but he does claim that "if it does not take place here, it does not take place anywhere."¹⁸⁹ Indeed, it is this relationship between gathered worship and worship in ordinary life that concerns him.

Worship is a place where the community integrates itself "as hearers and doers of the Word of God."¹⁹⁰ The worship of Christian communities forms communities *as communities*. As we saw above, the church's self-building in the Spirit is a matter of individuals adapting themselves to one another, so that they can provisionally represent

¹⁸⁷ Stanley Hauerwas argues that "by describing the Christian life primarily in terms of command and decision, Barth cannot fully account for the kind of growth and deepening that he thinks is essential to the Christian's existence . . . Barth's exposition of the Christian life is not so much wrong for what he says, but for what he does not say. If Barth had used the idea of character he would have been able to explicate in a much fuller way the growth characteristic of God's sanctifying work." (Hauerwas, *Character and the Christian Life*, 176). First, Barth's description of the Christian life is first and foremost communal, whereas Hauerwas' point centers on the individual Christian's history. Second, Hauerwas has also missed that the "command" simply is God's self-giving, described in an ethical register, as we saw in the last chapter. Third, Hauerwas' real argument is not really targeted at the lack of growth in Barth, for Barth describes the continuity of the Christian life and Christian common life throughout the *Dogmatics*. Hauerwas indeed quotes Barth to this effect. Hauerwas' real disagreement has to do with whether character can be described as a habit that is self-possessed by an individual human being. Hauerwas seems to think that free human action that intensifies cannot be described without the ascription of such a possessed habit. Hauerwas is correct that Barth does not affirm this way of describing free human action.

¹⁸⁸ IV/2, 639.

¹⁸⁹ IV/2, 638.

¹⁹⁰ IV/2, 639.

the absolute revelation of reconciliation. Here, that happens as “all are turned to all in a basic equality of receptivity and spontaneity” as they listen to and obey God’s Word in and through one another’s witness to that Word. Everyone, in Christian worship, is responsible to listen for and perform the Word of God; thus, everyone within that community becomes dependent on one another for a witness of that Word. As all of the members of the community are responsible for the church’s worship, those members fit themselves to one another.¹⁹¹

But, that is not Barth’s main concern when he says that the church edifies itself in worship. Worship does more than build a community who can perform gathered worship. He writes:

In all its elements, not merely in the administration of the Supper but in its goal in communion, Christian worship is the action of God, of Jesus, and of the community itself for the community, and therefore the upbuilding of the community. From this centre it can and should spread out into the wider circle of the everyday life of Christians and their individual relationships. Their daily speech and acts and attitudes are ordained to be a wider and transformed worship. It is, however, at this centre that communion as the essence of Christian worship takes place in its primary and gestating form (*in ihrer primären . . . aber auch tragenden Form*), affecting, engaging and claiming, but also supporting, all individual Christians in common. And it is again at this centre that the community—not a collective but the living community of living Christians—is unitedly at work and necessarily visible as such both by individual Christians and the outside world. It is here that it edifies itself, and it is here that it decides whether and in what sense it edifies itself elsewhere, outside, in the wider circle of everyday life; whether and in what sense it will finally demonstrate to the world that it is a provisional representation of its reconciliation, justification and sanctification as they have taken place in Jesus Christ. If it does not edify itself here, it certainly will not do so in daily life, nor in the execution of its ministry of witness in the cosmos.¹⁹²

¹⁹¹ Both Calvin and Schleiermacher resemble Barth on these grounds. Calvin thinks that the distribution of gifts is a way that “God guards and preserves the mutual conjunction among us” (*Comm. Eph* 4.7), for with a distribution of gifts comes mutual need of one another. Schleiermacher affirms the increase in mutual adaptation as part of the church, because it is a community that “seeks to persist” – if there is not mutual adaptation, it cannot perpetually endure (*The Christian Faith*, 561-562). However, neither Calvin nor Schleiermacher link this adaptation to a logic of imaging or correspondence to the Triune life.

¹⁹² IV/2, 639/KD 723. Translation is modified.

Christian worship does not merely forge a community out of individuals. Barth claims that Christian communities, as communities, disseminate the character of gathered worship as they collocate a common obedience in gathered worship. Barth argues for this on the basis of the language of Romans 12.1, which translates (with interpolation) into German as “Ich ermahne euch, Brüder, um des Erbarmens Gottes willen eure Leiber darzureichen als ein lebendiges, heiliges, Gott wohlgefälliges Opfer (θυσία) und damit eure λογικὴ λατρεία (zu vollziehen)/(I beseech you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice (θυσία), holy, pleasing unto God, and thus (render) your λογικὴ λατρεία).”¹⁹³ For Barth, the text is talking about “the totality of Christian existence,” but it does so using the “worship concept” (*gottesdienstlichen Begriff*) of sacrifice.¹⁹⁴ In accord with this, Paul refers to his vocation among the Gentiles in Romans 15.16 as offering the Gentiles “als eine Gott wohlgefällige, weil durch den Heiligen Geist heiligte Opfergabe.”¹⁹⁵ The conclusion Barth draws is that gathered worship and day-to-day life are “two concentric circles of which worship is the inner which gives to the outer its content and character.”¹⁹⁶ The ordinary life of the Christian community outside worship becomes transformed in worship, “so that their whole life becomes worship.”¹⁹⁷ He continues, “it is to divine service that all come in a common physical meeting, and therefore in worship that the Christian existence as a whole takes place and is revealed as it were *in nuce*.”¹⁹⁸ The church’s growth, or in this context its

¹⁹³ KD IV/2, 723/CD IV/2, 639. English translation modified.

¹⁹⁴ KD IV/2, 723.

¹⁹⁵ KD IV/2, 723.

¹⁹⁶ CD IV/2, 640.

¹⁹⁷ Colm O’Grady, *The Church in the Theology of Karl Barth* (Washington-Cleveland: Corpus Books, 1968), 289. Cf. Friedemann Merkel, “Karl Barth und der kirchliche Gottesdienst,” *Jahrbuch für Liturgik und Hymnologie* 30 (1987), 37: “Er ist die zentrale Mitte, das wirkliche und wirkende, Gemeinschaft stiftende und sie erhaltende Ereignis.”

¹⁹⁸ IV/2, 639.

self-edification, just is gathered worship spreading out into the ordinary life of the Christians gathered in worship.

Why does Barth say this? Barth's justification of these claims is not simply a matter of quoting and linking some proof-texts. The Christian community is Jesus Christ's earthly historical form of existence, and thus it reflects "His particular history."¹⁹⁹ Worship reflects the *history of* Jesus Christ because worship, and the Christian community, is "an event" just as Jesus Christ's history is an event.²⁰⁰ The Christian community's institutionality cannot correspond to Jesus; the Christian community corresponds to Jesus Christ only as an event within the institution – that is, within gathered worship first and foremost. Also, worship reflects the *particular* history of Jesus Christ because "it exists and acts in concrete actuality and visibility as the congregation . . . that they may realize the *communio sanctorum* in a definite form."²⁰¹ In other words, gathered worship reflects the history of Jesus Christ because it is a communal event in which the community members "are gathered together in the name of Jesus."²⁰² In perhaps in his strongest language about the gathered worship of the Christian community, he writes, ". . . on its journey between the resurrection and the return the community achieves in it this representation provisionally but in concrete reality, so that it is only here that it exists in its true form."²⁰³ If it is true, as we have seen, that "the visible and the invisible Church are not two Churches" and that "the one is the form and the other the mystery of one and the self-same Church," then Barth has now said that the

¹⁹⁹ IV/2, 696.

²⁰⁰ IV/2, 696.

²⁰¹ IV/2, 698.

²⁰² IV/2, 698.

²⁰³ IV/2, 698.

true form of the visible church happens in the gathered worship of the Christian community.²⁰⁴

Note, of course, the language of glory pervading Barth's argument. The church offers itself in worship in a way that is well-pleasing to God through the Holy Spirit. Thus, it is to offer itself in the rest of life in the same way. The joy which glory provokes becomes visible in worship. Barth made particular mention of festivals in his comments about the creaturely determination to joy in III/4: "Festivals are foreseen joys . . . Assuming that joy is really foreseen, why should they not be planned, prepared and arranged?"²⁰⁵ Christian worship fulfills that creaturely determination, since in worship the Christian community "exchanges its working clothes for its festal attire."²⁰⁶ The joy in temporality can come to communal expression in worship, as Jesus Christ presents himself in his glory to Christian community. Its end becomes a matter of celebration. Barth also uses the language of form, since form corresponds to God's good-pleasure. Gathered worship is the "primary" and "gestating" form of Christian communion. In other words, gathered worship identifies the Christian community, gathered worship is its identity, the chief layer of its being-in-act in correspondence to the full disclosure of reconciliation at the end of time: "Assembling for divine worship is self-evidently the centre and presupposition of the whole Christian life, the atmosphere in which it is lived."²⁰⁷ As such, it reveals how Christians can live in obedience in the rest of their lives and shapes them into that effort. Christian worship is a forming form, a form which

²⁰⁴ IV/1, 669. Kimlyn Bender comments that, for Barth, "the Word is to the flesh of Christ, and as Christ is to the community, so also is worship to the other activity of the church" (*Barth's Christological Ecclesiology*, 214). As we will see more below, Bender needs to consider the following claim by Barth: "its Head is the One in whom God took the world to Himself, and therefore the everyday life of all men and of Christians" (IV/2, 697).

²⁰⁵ III/4, 379.

²⁰⁶ IV/2, 697.

²⁰⁷ IV/2, 640.

accomplishes something by “affecting,” “engaging,” “claiming,” and “supporting” individual Christians as well as their relationships. Gathered worship gestates, gives birth to, Christian existence in the rest of ordinary life.

How does this happen? Perhaps the key verb is “decides.”²⁰⁸ It is from worship – from the theo-anthropic act of worship – that the community decides how it is to be edified in ordinary life, according to Barth. This verb alludes to Barth’s description of church order, where Barth is most articulate about how the church’s worship has a self-forming form in the power of the Holy Spirit. The order of the church has to do with “the form in which there is accomplished the upbuilding of the community.”²⁰⁹ The upbuilding of the church “is controlled by a very definite form and aims at the application, representatation and vindication of this form.” What is being formed by this definite form? He answers, “nothing more or less than the whole human being and action of the Christian community as a provisional representation of the sanctification of humanity as it has taken place in Jesus Christ.”²¹⁰ It involves many relations and connections within that body, including the responsibilities of individual members, discipline, exercising the unity of congregations, and the relationship to the civil government. But, above all, he writes, “it is a matter of the order of the particular event in which the existence of the community finds not merely its most concrete manifestation but also its central point, namely, public worship.”²¹¹

²⁰⁸ IV/2, 639.

²⁰⁹ IV/2, 676.

²¹⁰ IV/2, 677.

²¹¹ IV/2, 678.

Barth is emphatic: The church mediates its own growth, insofar as it orders itself to its worship, thereby ordering itself to be a provisional representation of Jesus Christ.²¹²

But, why? How?

We should be clear about the problem. For Barth, the church is and must be ordered because of the presence of Jesus Christ. The definite form, to which the community conforms itself, is Jesus Christ. He writes, “. . . Jesus Christ . . . gives them, not only their faith and confession and prayer and proclamation, but also the form of their life, the law and order of all that they do . . . In its relationship to Him He is its living law . . . A true inquiry concerning what is right in the Church will always an inquiry concerning His ordering and commanding and controlling, and the corresponding obedience.”²¹³ While biblical and ecclesial traditions may give a witness to Jesus Christ, they are not fundamentally “the starting-point of canon law.”²¹⁴ Church order comes together as the church listens to the direction of Jesus Christ. All other sources for the church’s law and order are mediations, or witnesses, of Jesus Christ as its law.

This is why biblical and extra-biblical historical sources do not witness to any absolutely enduring form of ecclesial order. So, when the church orders its communal life “it (the Church) must always orient itself by the life of the Lord in the Old and New Testament community as the first and original form of the ‘brotherly Christocracy’: not in

²¹² This is not to say that Barth doesn’t also follow the Protestant tradition, including Calvin and Schleiermacher as noted above, in recognizing the ministries of the church as participants in the origination and nurturing of human assent and trust. For example, for Calvin, the sacraments are like visible sermons of promise, which nurture faith that originates in preaching (Institutes, IV.1.4, IV.14.17; Ronald Wallace, *Calvin’s Doctrine of the Word and Sacrament* [Tyler, TX: Geneva Divinity School Press, 1982; reprint 1953], 83). Schleiermacher makes no such division between the effect of preaching as regeneration and the effect of sacraments as encouragement for continued repentance. All church ministries, for Schleiermacher, are about the mutual influence of believers, as they mediate the influence of Jesus Christ in the Spirit. Thus, preaching and sacraments do the same thing in a different way (*Christian Faith*, 612). Barth tends to follow Calvin on this score (see IV/2, 700).

²¹³ IV/2, 682.

²¹⁴ IV/2, 678.

order to reproduce it in the same form; but in order to be induced by it to know Him there and then, yet also here and now, as the Lord Himself living and acting in His community.”²¹⁵ In other words, the church follows the biblical church in only one thing: attending to the present direction of Jesus Christ as the law of its community. No definitive church order can be gained from the New Testament, nor can “perfect form” of church order be attained at any point.²¹⁶ The question of any church order, in any given situation, is “whether the Lord has not spoken and been heard.”²¹⁷ Barth’s approach to church order is to not outline what any particular community should have as its order, but to provide the questions or orientation by which an particular manifestation of the Christian community might order itself. The orientation is simple: What is the “voice of Jesus Christ”?²¹⁸

Yet, given this orientation, Barth is able to say that “Church law has an original connexion with the particular happening of Christian worship. It is here that it has its original seat. It is in the act of worship that it is originally found and known. It is to worship – as the order of divine service – that it is originally applied. It is from this point that it embraces and orders the whole life of the community.”²¹⁹ Worship he says, “is the true act of upbuilding.” How can he make such claims when Jesus Christ is the living law? Have we not muddled the waters with this mediation? Why not simply say that

²¹⁵ IV/2, 683.

²¹⁶ IV/2, 717.

²¹⁷ IV/2, 718.

²¹⁸ IV/2, 682. Kimlyn Bender mentions the two “false alternatives” which Barth tries to avoid (*Barth’s Christological Ecclesiology*, 216). On the one hand, he avoids a “ecclesiastical docetism” which attempts to avoid juridical decisions and larger questions of the church’s patterns of life entirely (IV/2, 712). On the other hand, he avoids practices that “identify revelation and concrete church law,” which Bender must “undoubtedly” refer to “Roman Catholicism” (Bender, 217).

²¹⁹ IV/2, 695.

worship is simply one area of the church's life to which the law is applied? How can it be "the original seat" of church law, which in turns orders the whole life of the community?

Barth's meaning emerges as we consider how he summarizes gathered worship in the following passage:

Where two or three are gathered together in the name of Jesus, i.e. by the fact that the name of Jesus is revealed to them, He Himself is with them and among them (according to Mt. 18.20). The saying has unmistakeable reference to the gathering of the community . . . they have not met by accident, or gathered together arbitrarily, but have been brought together by the revelation of His name . . . Because and as He, the righteous one, is present in their gathering, there takes place in it that which is right and lawful for these men . . . It is quite out of the question that the community assembled for public worship can exalt itself in this action . . . They are only His people; worthy only as He makes them worthy to be witnesses in their activity to His presence . . . that He Himself is the right or law which underlies and shapes and orders this event of divine service, is the secret of this action which makes it the original seat of all their law.²²⁰

Barth notes two sets of actors: Jesus Christ and a community of at least two or three.

Jesus Christ self-reveals and self-presents. The community gathers and witnesses. In other words, wherever Jesus Christ presents himself, two or three will be gathered around him in worship – "It could and indeed necessarily was the case that where He was . . . two or three of them would be gathered."²²¹ The possibility of any gathering for the sake of worship in the name of Jesus Christ just is the presence of Jesus Christ – or the Holy Spirit. Expressed conversely, and perhaps with more power, wherever Jesus Christ presents himself, the church appears as an institution – a community of people who worship God in Jesus Christ. *Since Jesus Christ presents himself in worship, worship forms the totality of Christian life.* Barth is not saying that worship controls the Holy Spirit, such that to worship is to constitute Jesus Christ's turning to the Christian

²²⁰ IV/2, 699.

²²¹ IV/1, 267.

community – the worship of the Christian community cannot, on its own power, unveil its identity as the body of Christ. Barth is saying that worship provides the Christian community with a “witness to its own being.”²²² Simple obedience through ordinary life cannot give a direct witness the identity of Jesus Christ as the Head of this body. Gathered worship can.

But, how? What does this summarize? And, in what way is the Christian community said to be active in this formation – in what way does it perform a self-formation? Barth speaks of “four concrete elements in which, in spite and even in defiance of all the imperfection and corruption of the human action of Christians, Jesus Christ and therefore the law of the *communio sanctorum* . . . is really present.”²²³ Those elements are: confession, baptism, the Lord’s Supper, and prayer. While it might seem, from Barth’s comments about Jesus Christ as formative power of Christian worship, that the church common activity does not participate in that formation, that is simply not the case. Instead, note how he opens his description of confession, “. . . where two or three are gathered in his name, they speak with and to one another in human words.”²²⁴ Of course, Barth will first say that Jesus Christ “impels the two or three to make this common confession.”²²⁵ But, he also carefully adds, “But they also owe this response to one another: for the mutual ratification and confirmation, consolation, correction and renewal of their knowledge and faith and love and hope . . .”²²⁶ As Barth says earlier in paragraph 67, “He does not act directly – without this people.”²²⁷ That means, of course,

²²² IV/2, 698.

²²³ IV/2, 699.

²²⁴ IV/2, 299.

²²⁵ IV/2, 699-700.

²²⁶ IV/2, 700.

²²⁷ IV/2, 623.

that Barth will then have to say that Jesus Christ presents himself as the Christian community confesses Jesus Christ together. If the confession of the Christian community self-forms its own power to confess Jesus Christ, then it must participate in Jesus Christ's own power of self-presentation. For, as we have seen, only God can give access to God's own reconciliation in the world. And, we have just that kind of statement: ". . . It is constituted as a fellowship of confession . . . because He Himself is present where they are spoken and heard."²²⁸ To offer a common confession is not simply to respond to the Word of God in Jesus Christ, it is to participate in and thus mediate the power of the Word of God to create communities that confess together.

The same pattern occurs in the other three elements. I will consider only Barth's comments on the Lord's Supper. Also, it is here that Barth writes explicitly about the connections between God's glory, joy or desire, and the taking of a particular form. Barth opens his discussion of the Lord's Supper, ". . . where two or three are brought together in the name of Jesus, it is in order that they may be unitedly strengthened and preserved to eternal life. Eternal life is their human life, but as their true life, hidden and glorified with God. They assemble . . . to be prepared for the attainment of their life in this form."²²⁹ So, who does the preparing, strengthening and preserving of the community for its ultimate glorification? Who performs this sort of growth? Yes, of course: "He constitutes Himself their preparation to attain this."²³⁰ But, we see that the Christian community participates in this preparation by the ritual activities of the Lord's Supper. Barth writes:

²²⁸ IV/2, 700.

²²⁹ IV/2, 702.

²³⁰ IV/2, 703.

They go and come to the Lord's Supper. In so doing, they do the very thing which they also do for the strengthening and preservation of creaturely life; just as when they talk with and to one another they do something which is ordinarily done by men when they meet . . . But . . . it is not a question of the nourishment of one here and another there . . . but of the eating of the one bread and the drinking from the one cup . . . because it is He, Jesus Christ, who brings them to it, who invites them, who is the Lord and Host, who is Himself, indeed their food and drink.²³¹

As their eternal life is a creaturely life such that it is "glorified with God," the Lord's Supper must include the presence of Jesus Christ in whom that glorification is achieved and shared in the power of the Holy Spirit. Only God in Christ gives access to the glorified life. Thus, only God in Christ can strengthen the Christian community to be prepared for a glorified life, a life fully receptive of God's glory. The resurrected Lord prepares the Christian community for a glorified life by becoming present in his glorified life in the Holy Spirit. When the Christian community mediates that preparation, it too must participate (*de facto*) in the presence of Jesus Christ.

On one level, what is happening is that Jesus Christ's self-giving and self-expressing in the Lord's Supper elicits a desire for a future life with Jesus Christ:

They know the truth about human life – their own life too, and especially their own. They know that it is the wonderful gift of God the Creator, to be enjoyed in thankfulness and lived out by man in daily prayer and labor . . . But they also know that it is a life which is inflexibly ordained to be eternal life; life in concealment and glory with God and therefore true life . . . And so they go and come to Him as they go and come to the community, concretely participating in its assembly. They seek the answer to this question of the attainment of eternal life; the answer which is given in Him, which is He Himself. They hunger and thirst to be prepared, to be strengthened and preserved, for the eternal life which in defiance of the frailty of the present form of their life is His work, and can only be His work . . . (*Sie wissen, wie es um menschliche Leben – auch um das ihrige, gerade um das ihrige! – bestellt ist: dass es Gottes, des Schoepfers wunderbare Gabe is, in Dankbarkeit zu geniessen, in taeglicher Bitte und Arbeit vom Menschen zu betaetigen . . . Sie wissen aber wiederum um sein unbeweglich Bestimmung, ewiges Leben zu sein: Leben in der Geborgenheit und Herrlichkeit bei Gott und so wirkliches und wahres Leben . . . Und so gehen und kommen sie zu Ihm, indem sie in die Gemeinde gehen, zu Gemeinde kommen, indem sie an der*

²³¹ IV/2, 703.

*Realisierung ihrer Versammlung konkret Anteil nehmen. Sie begehren nach der Beantwortung der Frage nach dem Erlangen des ewigen Lebens, die in Ihm gegeben, die Er selber ist. Sie hungern und duersten nach der Zubereitung dazu, nach dem Gestaerkt – und Erhaltenwerden zum ewigen Leben, das – der Hinfaelligkeit der jetzigen Gestalt ihres Lebens zum Trotz – sein Werk ist und nur sein Werk sein kann.)*²³²

It is the promise of a glorified life which transmutes the satisfaction with creaturely life into a desire for that life to be transformed.²³³ Indeed, the Christian community knows the goodness of created life and its perfection as eternal life precisely as its members “are brought together” in Jesus Christ’s presence.²³⁴ In other words, it is the glory of God, insofar as that glory is invested in Jesus Christ is to be shared with all of humankind, that elicits the practice of the Lord’s Supper. As a result, for Barth, we can and should say that the glory of God as invested in Jesus Christ elicits the community’s mediation of the promise of eternal life in the Lord’s Supper. For, it is the desire of the Christian community to be fed and strengthened for eternal life that draws the Christian community into a practice whereby they must not only eat, but feed one another.

How do we make sense of this elicitation of desire in the Christian community?

One recent Reformed author, James K.A. Smith, has recently propounded an theologically informed anthropology in order to come to terms with the shaping power of liturgy. For Smith, “human persons are intentional creatures whose fundamental way of ‘intending’ the world is love or desire. This love or desire . . . is always aimed at some vision of the good life . . . what primes us to be so oriented . . . is a set of habits or dispositions that are formed in us through affective, bodily means, especially bodily

²³² IV/2, 703/KD IV/2, 796.

²³³ Bender does mention that “the worship of the community is the source of the law of the community precisely because in the divine service the Lord of the community is present and active” (*Karl Barth’s Christological Ecclesiology*, 215). But, there is no analysis of the way that the worship is the source of law, in a way that empowers the Christian community into its own self-ordering. Bender generally follows O’Grady in this regard (O’Grady, *Church in Karl Barth*, 301).

²³⁴ IV/2, 703.

practices . . . that grab hold of . . . our imagination.”²³⁵ Liturgies are bodily practices which are temporally and spatially thick enough to tip our desires toward a certain version of the good life, and thus in habituates towards actions that anticipate that teleology.

Barth can affirm one aspect of Smith’s description of liturgy’s power. Smith claims that “the rhythms and rituals of Christian worship . . . are themselves an ‘understanding’ implicit in practices – an understanding that cannot be had apart from the practices.”²³⁶ In other words, desire can intend the world. Desire is not simply self-expressive grasping, but a means to inhabit the context of being. Smith’s work, in one sense, parallels Joseph Mangina’s argument that, for Barth, affections “intend God and are not their own object.”²³⁷ Affections are not simply “random gusts of emotion”; instead, they “take the form of definite judgments about God, the world, and the self.”²³⁸ Affections are one form of human participation and correspondence to Jesus Christ, as the Holy Spirit shares the life of Jesus Christ with the Christian community. As such, they intend their object in the power of that object. Indeed, Mangina, in one paragraph, mentions briefly that joy corresponds to glory as an example of affection-correspondence.²³⁹

Yet, Barth has little time for such a vision in its entirety. First, the issue is how one can describe the reception of the Holy Spirit. The Christian community has continuity only insofar as it can possess and cannot control the Holy Spirit. Among other things, a habit is a self-possessed, settled, and fulfilled capacity to accomplish some end.

²³⁵ James K.A. Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 62-63.

²³⁶ *Ibid.*, 69.

²³⁷ *Barth on the Christian Life*, 128.

²³⁸ *Ibid.*, 126. Mangina uses the work of Jonathan Lear and Don Saliers to develop this point.

²³⁹ *Ibid.*, 135.

For Barth, the overflow of God's good-pleasure in Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit enacts the church's faith. Barth writes with regard to Christian works, "That he does something distinctive with any one of his works, such that he can put God under an obligation, procuring for himself God's grace and good-pleasure - that is something not one of God's actual saints can ever imagine . . . It can only be given by the God who elects and calls him, and grasped in faith. But in faith he can and may and will grasp it . . . He does is in the same way as a good tree (to use a favorite New Testament comparison) produces and bears good fruit."²⁴⁰ Barth's argument is twofold. First, strictly speaking, God's good-pleasure does not grow by virtue of human action that is not enclosed in Christ's own action. As we shall see more clearly in the following chapters, God's good-pleasure is constant – constantly intensifies – insofar as it is trained on God's own humanity in Jesus Christ. Second, individuals and communities self-develop because their growth must correspond to the sanctification which occurs for all in Jesus Christ. He writes, "Paul presupposes in 2 Thess. 1¹¹ that in the community we can count on the occurrence of the ἔργον πίστεως, and therefore, as we have seen, on an εὐδοκία ἀγαθωσύνης (on the divine good-pleasure in the good which takes place). Yet this does not prevent but seems to cause him to pray for the fulfillment of this ἀγαθωσύνη and ἔργον -as though it were a vessel which had still to be filled-and therefore for the glorifying of the name of Jesus Christ in the community."²⁴¹ But, if the Holy Spirit capacitates human beings to participate in God's life, and the result of this self-giving of the Holy Spirit is a habit, then it is far too easy to make the claim that a habit warrants the human beings participation in God's life (and thus God's good-pleasure). Barth frames the dilemma in

²⁴⁰ IV/2, 594-595.

²⁴¹ IV/2, 595.

this way: either God gives God's self away such that human beings can make their own claim to inclusion in God's life or individual human beings do not control their own power to be included in God's life. If the Christian community's growth in receiving the good-pleasure of God is to correspond and refer to the name of Jesus Christ, then its growth in receiving that pleasure must declare the name of Jesus Christ. The chief way that happens is through prayer. The Christian community's good works grow in receiving God's good-pleasure because they occur in the context of petitionary prayer. Barth's point is not to eliminate growth, but to predicate growth upon a lack of presumption in God's continuing good-pleasure. Thus, God develops human beings and human communities only as those individuals and communities petition God for that sanctification which has already been promised. Fundamentally, growth happens in the responsiveness of prayer which dilates into the promise of *de facto* sanctification already fulfilled in the *de jure* sanctification of Jesus Christ. For Barth, habits are simply incompatible with the responsiveness found in petitionary prayer and the self-giving of God in Christ. In chapter four, we will return to the question of habits when we address Barth's account of Christ's humanity.

Second, Smith's anthropology trains itself on making sense of liturgy and its formative power.²⁴² For Barth, the entire project derails at precisely this point. For Barth, making sense of the formative power of liturgy cannot proceed from the liturgy itself, but from the *content* of the liturgy - the presence of the crucified Christ in his resurrected glory. Smith proceeds to build the mechanisms of formation apart from the humanity of Jesus Christ as interpreted by Scripture because he does not need that material. He is describing a human social practice, nothing more. For Barth, the liturgy draws Christian

²⁴² Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 40.

communities into a desire for a future form of life because human beings are who they are in Jesus Christ and God is who God is in Jesus Christ. Creaturely capacities are oriented to reconciliation, but they do not condition reconciliation – including *de facto* reconciliation – in any way. For Barth, there is no generic human nature apart from Jesus Christ, and thus no set of formative practices which can explain the power of liturgy. Human being-in-action, including the being-in-action which emerges in liturgy, is a being-in-action which overflows from the Triune God. One layer of that overflow is the glory of God. The church opens itself to its future because God's glory opens itself.

Third, for Barth, Jesus Christ's presence in liturgy is not simply a matter of individuals within community. Smith's work concerns itself primarily with individual persons, who are formed by communal practices. Similarly, Barth scholarship which has addressed growth in Barth has not really been concerned with the community as a community, but with individuals who grow in the context of community. I have been proceeding as though it were possible to take wholesale these accounts of desire and joy in this work. Mangina's work in particular can be used in this way, simply because the structure and mode of Barth's work.²⁴³ However, is there any way to come to terms with the difference between the agency of the Christian community and individual Christians? Barth never addresses this question directly, but his claims make it an important distinction. For Barth, the partner of Jesus Christ is the community in its relationship to the individual and vice versa.²⁴⁴ Thus, the Christian community is more than simply

²⁴³ For example, before Barth discusses the Christian community in volume 4, he discusses the work of Christ as it is ascribed to but not realized in Christian communities and individuals (along with a general description of corresponding human sin). That makes his comments in those sections (Paragraphs 60-61, 65-66, 70-71) viable for use in describing the Christian community.

²⁴⁴ "In the Old Testament the partner of Yahweh was the people Israel as it existed, of course, in the totality of those who belonged to it. In and with Israel the individual Israelite was also the partner of Yahweh, but only as the representative of his people. So, too, the partner of Jesus Christ attested in the New Testament is

“context of conformity” for the individual.²⁴⁵ For Barth, the Christian community, as a community, has its own agency.

Perhaps one set of distinctions from another Reformed author can assist. Nicholas Wolterstorff has recently provided an account of social agency as a way to fill out his ontology of rights. Rights belong to entities which are said to have life, and social entities are said to have a particular kind of life – a life that differs from individual human life.²⁴⁶ Since social entities have a kind of life, they have a kind of worth, and thus enjoy rights and obligations attached thereto.

Nicholas Wolterstorff asserts that “social entities are capable of . . . rational agency.”²⁴⁷ That is, they not only act, they “have the capacity to do things for reasons.” Mudslides (his example) do things as well, but we cannot assign mudslides rational agency. Yet social entities enact rational agency, as do individual human persons. The difference between individual rational agency and social rational agency is that social entities are “always dependent on the agency of human persons; it is never basic.”²⁴⁸ Wolterstorff subdivides social entities’ dependence on individual rational agencies. First, certain social entities have “count-agency” in which someone performs some actions that count as the whole organization doing something. For example, when a bank announces a new lending policy, it is traceable back to one person’s issuing of such a directive. That

the community which, of course, exists and is seen in the faith of its individual members . . . not a Christian individual who is not as such, or is merely subsequently and incidentally and not primarily and essentially, within the community. It is not a matter of the higher value of the collective as compared with the individual, but if we like of a definite order and sequence. We can put it this way: the collective is the purpose and the individual the form of the subjective admission of reconciliation by the work of the Holy Spirit. The two terms can be used only when we relate them to a single point. If we take them to indicate two competing realities then they can only prevent us from understanding the point at issue. The community lives in Christians, Christians live in the community, and in this way Jesus Christ lives in the world. In this way they are holy in Him and with Him” (IV/1, 688).

²⁴⁵ Nimmo, *Being in Action*, 160.

²⁴⁶ Ibid., 366-367.

²⁴⁷ Nicholas Wolterstorff, *Justice: Rights and Wrongs* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 2008), 363-364.

²⁴⁸ Ibid., 364.

person's agency counts as the organization's agency. Second, other social entities have "causal agency."²⁴⁹ This happens when the members of a group combine their energies or resources into a common task. A small church needs to set a beam into the frame of house, in order to set its rafters. It cannot be lifted by one, but only all of the members at once.

Returning to Barth, does either or both of these ways of describing communal agency apply to the church? We answer this by observing a fourth difference from Smith's account of liturgy's formative power. The glory of the Lord's Supper does not simply draw out the church's desire, the Christian community imitates and models itself upon the Supper.²⁵⁰ Given that the Lord's Supper is an act of Jesus Christ and the community for its preservation to eternal life, the community forms its own ordinary life in the Lord's Supper. Barth writes:

. . . the eternal life to which the community is strengthened and preserved in the Lord's Supper is the glorification of the whole of human life. Thus the Church order to be derived from the eucharistic action will necessarily embrace, protect and claim the life of the community and its members as it is now lived in its totality and therefore at one and the same time in its physical and spiritual nature. It will aim at the living fellowship of Christians in both spheres. In each respect it will make the strong responsible for the weak, the healthy for the sick, the rich for the poor. It will make Christians answerable for one another and for the continuance of the community, outwardly no less than inwardly. It will claim the help of all in both spheres. And it will promise help to all in both spheres. It will remind the community that what is lawful and right in the Lord's Supper is lawful and right everywhere: fellowship in heavenly and therefore also in earthly things; the *communio* of the *sancti* in and in respect of the *sancta*.²⁵¹

²⁴⁹ Ibid., 365.

²⁵⁰ On this count, Smith's practice is better than his theory. Smith's whole endeavor is to try to see how liturgy can inform university education, creating analogous practices in Christian pedagogy (*Desiring the Kingdom*, 215-230). But, this sort of work does not simply happen on the level of "noncognitive" desire (although Smith describes desire as intending the world, he also tends to de-rationalize it at certain points in the text) [Ibid., 57].

²⁵¹ IV/2, 708.

Since eternal life is the glorification of all of creaturely life, as promised in Jesus Christ, the Eucharist spills out into ordinary life. Or, it is not so much that the Eucharist spills out into ordinary life. The promise of a glorified life in Jesus Christ is for all of life to be glorified. Thus, when the community engages in the Eucharist, it desires that the entirety of its life be ordered to the end of its life, or its glorification. That desire, however, is part and parcel with acts of discernment, acts in which the Christian community discerns how to do outside of the liturgy what it does inside the liturgy. In other words, Barth's ecclesiology, on one level, centers on group causal agency. The Christian community makes judgments about its own way of life. It makes the Eucharist a law for its own ordinary life. The healthy are responsible for the weak in the Eucharist, and thus they are responsible for the weak outside of the Eucharist. "There is no distinction of persons in the distribution of the bread and wine," and thus Christians are answerable to one another outside of the Eucharist. In other words, what is lawful and right in the Eucharist is lawful and right for the community at large. The Christian community grows in its capacity – moves itself - to provisionally represent the glorification of ordinary life insofar as it becomes the reality that the Eucharist is, in the presence of Jesus Christ.

Yet, Wolterstorff's "count-agency" is never far from Barth as well. Indeed, this distinction helps center all of Barth's work. The origin of all discernment in the Christian community is "the lordship of Jesus Christ over His body" and thus all liturgical growth has its seat in Jesus Christ's glorious presence.²⁵² The agency of no human being other than Jesus Christ can count for the whole of the Christian community. Yet, Barth would not be satisfied with such a claim. There is a true sense in which the Christian community as a whole can also be a "count-agent" on behalf of Jesus Christ, even though it does not

²⁵² IV/2, 713.

originate its own activity. That is, the Christian community is to represent, in its growth, that “Christ did not sanctify Himself for his own sake, but for the sake of humanity.”²⁵³ The Christian community has a being in mission, and its growth counts, in witness, for the mission of the Triune God in the world. But, we will return to that in chapter 5.

Conclusion

What have we done? For Barth, the central issue of the communal realization of the exaltation of the man Jesus is whether and how the self-development of corporate worship would be pleasing to the Triune God. Part one showed how the doctrine of the Holy Spirit is the ground in which Barth nurtures the lordship of the Jesus Christ in the Christian community. The Holy Spirit, as the power of Jesus Christ, effects both *de facto* participation and correspondence to his life. Barth’s concern for an empowering, non-violent account of Jesus Christ’s agency re-emerges as he considers the Spirit in the doctrine of reconciliation, which overlaps with Barth’s purposes for his doctrine of glory in II/1.

In part two, I called attention to the way in which two types of discourses are united with the Barth’s discourse of the Holy Spirit: the discourse of growth and the discourse of glory. Barth considered growth in both quantitative and qualitative terms, but he considered quantitative growth to be a byproduct of qualitative growth. Barth’s account of qualitative growth centers on the act of gathered worship, insofar as gathered worship shapes and forms the whole of the Christian community’s existence (also a form of worship). For Barth, the Holy Spirit, as the power of Jesus Christ’s self-giving, draws the Christian community towards its goal – its ultimate *de facto* participation in Jesus Christ’s resurrection and the future life of eternity. As such, Jesus Christ, in the Spirit,

²⁵³ IV/2, 719.

empowers the Christian community to edify itself as a provisional representation of that cosmic goal. In the reception of the Holy Spirit, the community forms and orders itself to Jesus Christ in its gathered worship and its worship in day-to-day existence.

I exhibited how the two core concepts of God's glory, joy or God's good-pleasure and form, infuse Barth's ecclesiology, especially his account of the church's growth. Insofar as the Spirit is shared with the Christian community, the community has a *form* which increases in coherence and is accompanied by *joy*. Form and joy are equally primordial here because both of them result from the gift of Jesus Christ's power, the Holy Spirit. The community has a particular form, a unity of identity and non-identity, because it acts in joy. Conversely, the community acts joyfully, it has the power to be moved and altered by God, as its being-in-act has a particular form, a particular unity of identity and non-identity. The central act which manifests the glory of God in the Christian community is worship, meaning both the obedience of the Christian community in its ordinary life and its liturgical enactments. The Christian community pleases God – or, even better, enters the preceding pleasure of God - in that it has the form and joy expressed in gathered worship. As that worship forms the ordinary life of the community, the Christian community intensifies its own provisional representation of Jesus Christ's return and the future shape of glorified human life.

Our broadest task in this chapter was to consider the ecclesial growth which is induced by Jesus Christ. Our next task is to consider in more detail the presence of Jesus Christ as the resurrected Lord, insofar as the resurrection glorifies the life and death of Jesus Christ. Our next two chapters, following Barth's presentation, will consider how the resurrection glorifies Jesus Christ's death (IV/1) and glorifies Jesus Christ's life as it

propelled toward death (IV/2). In other words, it is time to make due on the promise to see in more detail how Jesus Christ's own history – as it is the history of glory in the creation – draws out the growth of the Christian community. To do that, however, is to see the reconciling work and identity of Jesus Christ woven together as a history of God's own triune glory. To that task we now turn.

Chapter Three:
New Beginnings: The Resurrection and God's Glory in *Church Dogmatics* IV/1

The will of God towards us is the purpose of this sacrifice, and His good pleasure towards us is its end.¹

The Christian community is the Easter community. Our preaching is Easter preaching, our hymns are Easter hymns, our faith is an Easter faith. We not only have a *theologia crucis*, but a *theologia resurrectionis* and therefore a *theologia gloriae*, i.e., a theology of the glory of the new man actualised and introduced in the crucified Jesus Christ who triumphs as the Crucified; a theology of the promise of our eternal life which has its basis and origin in the death of this man.²

Introduction to Chapters 3, 4, and 5

In the last chapter, I analyzed the ecclesial growth which results from the triune God's acts of reconciliation in Christ, according to Barth. In chapters three, four and five, our focus shifts to the triune God's acts of reconciliation – i.e. acts which result in self-involved ecclesial growth. How does the Triune life make it possible for the Christian community to grow itself? These chapters show that reference to God's glory is part of how Barth answers that question within the doctrine of reconciliation. In these chapters, we turn away from the communal reception of God's glory and instead turn toward God's glory as that glory is presented and revealed to the Christian community – to God's glory as an object sustaining the church as subject, as Barth has it in his doctrine of reconciliation. In the last chapter, I showed that the Holy Spirit is the power in which Jesus Christ turns himself to other human beings and in which they turn to Jesus Christ as their Representative before God and one another. But, the focus of that discussion was the second moment of turning – of the turning of a human community, the Christian community, to Jesus Christ. In this chapter and the following chapters, in order to

¹ IV/1, 282.

² IV/2, 355.

identify God's activity as the primordial condition of corporate self-development, I focus on that first turn – of the turning of Jesus Christ to other human beings. For Barth, the life and death of Jesus Christ opens itself to the Christian community most decisively in the event of the resurrection. When the Holy Spirit enters the Christian community, the Spirit acts as the power of the resurrected and crucified Jesus Christ.

Thus, in these chapters, our overall question in this dissertation is reformulated according to Barth's *modus operandi*: for Barth, how does the history of Jesus Christ draw the Christian community into its own growth? Together, these chapters show that in the event of the resurrection, the triune God glorifies Jesus Christ's life and death, drawing the Christian community into its own growth. For Barth, in the event of the resurrection, the triune God draws the Christian community into its own self-development by investing God's triune glory – the same glory which empowers and is embodied in Jesus Christ's life and death - in the rest of creation, beginning with the Christian community. Since Barth divides his Christology into three parts, he also takes three runs at the resurrection in the doctrine of reconciliation. In IV/1, the doctrine of the resurrection concerns participation in Christ's priestly office, or the Christian community's participation in its own justification. In IV/2, as we saw in the last chapter, the doctrine of the resurrection concerns participation in Christ's kingly office, or the Christian community's participation in its own sanctification. In IV/3, the doctrine of the resurrection concerns participation in Christ's prophetic office and the unity of Christ's personhood, or the Christian community's participation in its own vocation. This chapter focuses primarily on IV/1, and chapter four on IV/2, and chapter 5 on IV/3. Chapter 5 also attends to the Christian community, because the Christian community participates in

the mediation of Jesus Christ to itself and the rest of humanity. For Barth, since God's draws the church into a participation in God's glory, the church mediates that glory to itself and the rest of creation in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Introduction to Chapter 3: The Question of the Resurrection in IV/1

We noted at the beginning of the last chapter that reconciliation fulfills election. Election has a universal scope for Barth insofar as Jesus Christ is elected by God and elects God as the head and representative of all human beings. What happens to Jesus Christ happens *de jure* to all of humanity (and the rest of creation).³ Yet, again, it is simply not the case that, for Barth, the resurrection and ascension "are not new events in

³ IV/1, 287. Barth's doctrine of resurrection in volume 4 can be located in five basic ways, which I identify here in order to explain why certain authors appear in the text and notes as dialogue partners. Barth's comments at this point in IV/1 are directed explicitly against Lessing. Although the resurrection unifies the rest of history to Jesus Christ, Barth explicitly avoids the modern way of posing this question initiated by Lessing, such that the historical location of Jesus Christ appears to preclude the certainty required by a rational faith. Barth's disagreement with Lessing is that Lessing allows epistemological reflection as a subcategory of anthropology to proceed prior to and apart from Christological reflection, and then attempts to find a way to link them. This is not to say that Barth's approach is anti-modern as such. The second way to locate his views on the resurrection is against other modern attempts to answer the problem that Lessing sets forth. For instance, Barth agrees with Bultmann that eschatology is not simply about the future, which is one way in which both of them disagree with Schleiermacher. What David Fergusson notes with regard to the I Corinthians commentary goes also for Barth's approach in volume 4: "Bultmann approves Barth's claim that eschatology is not the doctrine of the last things. It concerns rather the radical determination of life and death by the word of the cross, and demands a response shaped by the theological virtues of faith, hope and love. Eschatology is primarily for the present rather than for a deferred future" (David Fergusson, "Barth's Resurrection of the Dead: Further Reflections," *SJT* 56.1 [2003]: 69-70). Lessing presents a modern problematic that theologians in the train of Bultmann and Barth seek to confront (and overturn!). Third, Barth's doctrine of the resurrection can be located in relationship to Pietist challenge that Eberhard Busch has highlighted (*Karl Barth und die Pietisten* [Munich: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1978]/ET: *Karl Barth and the Pietists*, Trans. Daniel Bloesch [Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2004]). This emerges more clearly in IV/2 and IV/3, given that Eberhard Busch points out that the *de jure/de facto* participation distinction is a challenge to the Pietists, along with the cosmically missional identity of God and the Christian community (*Karl Barth and the Pietists*, 299-300). Fourth, his doctrine of the resurrection is also aimed at the claim made most forcibly by Von Balthasar and G.C. Berkouwer, on behalf of Roman Catholic and traditional Reformed concerns, that the doctrine of election leaves human history and the Christian community in the lurch of eternity's completion of creation, reconciliation and redemption. In the following chapters, I have elected, for the sake of space, to highlight Berkouwer and others who hue more closely to traditional Reformed approaches since the concerns overlap to a great extent, while a more complete consideration of the doctrine of the resurrection would also have to consider Roman Catholic concerns about the Christian community in relationship to the resurrection. Fifth, there are a host of sympathetic interpreters who have appropriated layers of Barth's doctrine of the resurrection, and I take Hans Frei and T.F. Torrance to be helpful examples.

the history of Jesus Christ and therefore of the elect community, which includes all people” or that “the resurrection simply *reveals*” God’s election in Christ.⁴ For Barth, the resurrection overcomes the “great gulf between ‘Jesus Christ for us’ and ourselves as those who in this supremely perfect word are summoned to regard ourselves as those for whom He is and acts.”⁵ In perhaps the most comprehensive (and brief) statement of the problem, Barth says that the resurrection addresses “how far and in what way the being and action in the Christological sphere can actually have effects, results and correspondences in this surrounding sphere of our own history and that of man generally.”⁶ The primary problem of the resurrection for Barth is a problem posed by the incarnation itself, in that the incarnation provides the contours of *de facto* justification, sanctification and vocation.⁷ If justification, sanctification and even vocation have been accomplished in Jesus Christ, what does it mean for *de facto* participation to occur?

⁴ Michael Horton, *People and Place*, 173.

⁵ IV/1, 286.

⁶ IV/3.2, 276.

⁷ Thus Barth writes, “the meaning and purpose of the atonement made in Jesus Christ is that man should not cease to be a subject in relation to God but that he should be maintained as such, or rather – seeing that he has himself surrendered himself as such – that he should be newly created and grounded as such, from above” (IV/1, 89). As John Webster puts it nicely: “created human being is in so far as it participates in the covenant with God which is established in the irreplaceable history of Jesus Christ” (*Barth’s Ethics of Reconciliation*, [Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1995], 86). See also Kenneth Oakes, “The Question of Nature and Grace in Karl Barth: Humanity as Creature and As Covenant Partner,” *Modern Theology* 23, no. 4 (October 2007): 595-616. Oakes presents a long overdue reading of Barth in CD III/2 which shows that Barth “became more comfortable speaking of humanity’s capacities for grace, provided that we consistently move from the one concrete history of redemption to these capacities and not vice versa” (610). Against Betz and Milbank who claim that Barth’s refusal of the *analogia entis* entails Barth’s refusal of a natural desire for the supernatural, Oakes includes two very telling quotes from Barth: “man is oriented towards that for which he is determined. Even when he sins, he can deny and conceal but he cannot remove or destroy the fact that he is oriented in this way” (III/2, 319); “man in the Bible is the being for whom whether he knows it or not, it is necessary and essential to desire God; and he is the being who by his creation is capable of this” (III/2, 413) [Oakes, 611]. Oakes also points to Barth’s recognition in 1962 at Princeton Seminary that a covenantal, Christological *analogia entis* is a form of an *analogia relationis* (605). If we pull all of this together with regard to the resurrection, we come up with T.F. Torrance’s claim: “The resurrection is the actualization of human reality” (Thomas F. Torrance, *Space, Time and Resurrection* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976], 79).

But, this immediately gets Barth into another thicket of issues. Barth asks the question of the *de facto* relationship between the Christian community and Jesus Christ within the narrative flow of the biblical portrayal of Jesus Christ. He asks: In that narrative flow, what is the question or problem to be answered by the resurrection? The problem is this: "...that God has given Himself in His Son to suffer the divine judgment on us men does not mean that it is not executed on us but that it is executed on us in full earnest and in all its reality . . . That Jesus Christ died for us does not mean, therefore, that we do not have to die, but that we have died in and with Him, that as the people we were we have been done away and destroyed, that we are no longer there and have no more future. . . ."⁸ The problem is the cross.⁹ The death of Jesus Christ and the rest of humanity is a problem because it is an end: "Death is death. End is end . . . In His person, with Him, judgment, death and end have come to us ourselves once and for all."¹⁰ "End" here means cessation by destruction. The cross is a problem because, in the cross, the world ceases to exist because God has had it destroyed (and thus needs a future). On the cross, Jesus Christ, as a human being with all other human beings, is destroyed in judgment. Sinful humanity, as human beings who live in space and time, are destroyed at the cross. Barth opines, "The relationship between Himself and His creation might have

⁸ IV/1, 294-295.

⁹ Dale Dawson, in *The Resurrection in Karl Barth*, often highlights this: "the problem of the relation to God to the human creature is particularized in such a way that it becomes the problem of the distance between the crucified Christ and others in their contrary and opposed anthropological sphere" (Dale Dawson, *The Resurrection in Karl Barth* [Ashgate, 2007], 84). Dawson's narrative is perhaps the most accurate and comprehensive summary and analysis of Barth's theology of the resurrection and parallels my own work here in multiple ways. While Dawson recognizes that divine glory is an important backdrop for IV/3, he does not recognize its usage throughout all three of the resurrection accounts in the doctrine of reconciliation and breezes over Barth's claim that the resurrection is a form of Jesus Christ's "self-transcendence" (IV/3, 81, 103), which we consider in this and the following chapters.

¹⁰ IV/1, 296.

been regularized by depriving it of its perverted actuality.”¹¹ Thus, without some further act on God’s part, humanity is finished. For, as Barth asks, “Is there something beyond this death, this conclusion, this end of man . . . to the men we are as those who have a place with Jesus Christ, who in fact do belong to Him because He belongs to them. . . ?”¹² Thus, it is not enough to know and recognize that Jesus Christ’s being and act are for us. God is for us by delivering humanity to its own destruction on the cross.¹³ For, if God has us destroyed on the cross for the sake of undoing our sin, “how can we live before Him and with Him?”¹⁴ If we die in Jesus Christ, how is it possible for us to live before God who had judged us unto our death in Jesus Christ? How can human beings live before God and know they live before God if they have been destroyed? The cross is not the last word, but, for Barth, it very well could have been.

The last word, for Barth, is the resurrection. Without a resurrection, the creation would simply have ceased to be. Also, since the issue is the cross of Jesus Christ, the resurrection is a subtle event that happens within the Trinitarian life in encounter with the creation. For Barth, the resurrection is an “a movement and action which took place not merely in human history but first and foremost in God Himself.”¹⁵ As a result, when we focus on that first turn from Jesus Christ to other human beings, we will find Barth discussing it as a Trinitarian activity. When he addresses the inclusion of other human

¹¹ IV/1, 306.

¹² IV/1, 348.

¹³ IV/1, 294-295, 293.

¹⁴ IV/1, 290. Note also that Barth, in off-hand ways, discusses the fear of human beings as a fear of their own salvation, of giving up a way of living that does not correspond to the self-offering of Jesus Christ (291-293). This is his way of countering the dialectics he could find in someone like Calvin, who wrote that “the pious mind . . . sees him [God] to be a righteous judge, armed with severity to punish wickedness . . . and through fear of him restrains itself from provoking his anger . . . for the pious mind realizes that the punishment of the impious and wicked and the reward of life eternal for the righteous equally pertain to God’s glory” (*Institutes* I.2.2).

¹⁵ IV/1, 304.

beings in the exaltation of human life achieved in Jesus Christ, Barth asks how the triune God, *as the triune God*, can make it possible for human beings who are not God to be included in God's being and act, i.e. God's life. Thus, Barth's argument in his three approaches to the resurrection in volume four has an inalienably Trinitarian shape. The titles themselves suggest this: "The Verdict of the Father" (IV/1), "The Direction of the Son" (IV/2), and "The Promise of the Spirit" (IV/3).

This chapter focuses on "The Verdict of the Father," Barth's treatment of the resurrection in IV/1. My overall goal is to establish Barth's doctrine of glory as substructure in his presentation in IV/1, as it is related to the church's being-in-act. For Barth, the awakening of the Christian community happens because God's life is a life of self-giving, including the self-giving of God's glory. God gives God's self. God's self is glorious, and glory is invested in Jesus Christ. Thus, the glory of Jesus Christ – the glory invested in Jesus Christ and invested through Jesus Christ - will awaken a Christian community's participatory response to Jesus Christ without violence. But, how does this work for Barth? First, I argue that the substructure of glory appears as Barth frames the resurrection as an intratriune activity between the Father and Son, such that the Father issues his joy upon the Son in the resurrection and thus the Son can and does begin his own resurrected appearance to the Christian community. Second, the resurrection is also a sharing of the Triune God's own good-pleasure with the Christian community, such that history and the Christian community has a new beginning in God's own beginning – God's joy in God's own life, which enacts God's election to be God for the creation. In sum, I argue that, for Barth, in the resurrection, the Father shares his good-pleasure in the Son's self-offering on the cross, thereby initiating a temporal field for the activity of the

Christian community.¹⁶ My procedure will be as follows. First, in part one, I will consider Barth's treatment of Jesus Christ's life and death as a function of Jesus Christ's priestly office. Since the cross is the question the resurrection answers (and thus shapes its contours and meanings), we would be remiss if we did not consider briefly Jesus Christ's life and death in IV/1. Second, in part two, I will offer a close reading of "The Verdict of the Father" in accord with the above theses.

Part One: The Wilderness Temptations, Gethsemane, and the Priestly Work of Jesus Christ

In part one, in order to prepare for the following section on Barth's doctrine of the resurrection in IV/1, I consider briefly Barth's presentation of Jesus Christ's identity as the judged judge who atones by substituting himself on behalf of a sinful humanity. I do not offer a full scale analysis of this subsection, entitled "The Judged Judge in Our Place." I simply offer an introduction to it, and relate its contents to the substructure of glory, which in turn relates it to the treatment of the resurrection that follows. My procedure will be to introduce Barth's thesis and summarize its content, and then consider the two excurses which conclude this subsection. The first concluding excursus concerns Jesus Christ's wilderness temptations and the garden of Gethsemane passages in

¹⁶ Each discrete treatment of the resurrection in the doctrine of reconciliation narrates a type of historical progression, like the progress of a shadow cast in a sundial. It is this structure which informs how I have organized my analysis of Barth's theology of the resurrection in part I. Barth's discussion of the resurrection in IV/1 is an introduction to the purposes of and constraints for thinking about the resurrection, such that the cross and resurrection are shown to be discrete events which follow one another, given the differing purposes the triune God has for each event. However, the discussion in IV/2 and IV/3 are essentially divided in half. The first half in each discussion is dedicated to the showing that the resurrection glorifies the cross. But it also acts as introduction to the following section in which Barth describes the Holy Spirit as the power of the resurrection that is shared with the Christian community. Thus, below, I have structured my analysis in this way, with a slight projection of the later two part structure in Barth's discussion of the resurrection in IV/1 (which will be justified below). In other words, as Barth does in each of his treatments of the resurrection in volume 4, I address the resurrection as it glorifies the cross (I.A. below) and as it glorifies the Christian community by imparting the Holy Spirit (I.B. below).

the Gospels. The second concluding excursus deals with the cultic or sacrificial metaphors in which Barth re-modulates the content of this subsection.¹⁷

Barth's Thesis and Approach to the Judged Judge

The justly famous title of sub-section 59.2, "The Judged Judge in our Place," contains layers of wordplay. Judgment happens on various levels for Barth. God in Christ judges. Human beings judge. Both God and human beings are judged. What does Barth mean by judgment and why does judgment happen in the being and activity of Jesus Christ? Judgment, for Barth, is the act of pardoning and condemning. But, those acts of pardoning and condemning have both vertical and horizontal purposes. God pardons and condemns in order to create "order and peace . . . which indicates a favor, the existence of One who brings salvation."¹⁸ For Barth, the fundamental problem that human beings create for themselves, as they fail to respond to Jesus Christ, is that they think of themselves as their own judges. Thus, they fail to have order and peace between one another. They consider themselves - in a counter-movement to Jesus Christ - to be able, apart from subjection to Jesus Christ, "to know what is good and evil."¹⁹ In effect, human beings seize the right to judge themselves righteous and others guilty. Judgment, thus, is a means of self-enclosure and protection. By considering themselves to be their own judge, human beings have a "safe stronghold, a trusty shield and weapon in relation to ourselves, our neighbours and God."²⁰ Thus, if God is to create order and peace within and between human beings in their concrete identity, God will have to "destroy" their capacity to judge. God finds a way to condemn and destroy that also pardons and

¹⁷ My reading of this subsection, along with the corresponding reading in chapter 4, amounts to two extended footnotes on Paul Jones' *The Humanity of Christ*, especially chapters 3 and 4 of that work.

¹⁸ IV/1, 217.

¹⁹ IV/1, 231.

²⁰ IV/1, 231.

sustains. God judges “in the exercise of His kingly freedom to show His grace in the execution of His judgment, to pronounce us free in passing sentence, to free us by imprisoning us, to ground our life on our death, to redeem and save us by our destruction. That is how God has actually judged in Jesus Christ.”²¹ The cross destroys human self-judgment so that human beings might order their lives peacefully and be rightly ordered toward the Triune God.

How does God’s judgment on the cross effect peace? Perhaps the best summary of what Barth undertakes is the following: “It came to pass that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, as man, took our place in order to judge us in this place by allowing Himself to be judged for us.”²² God in Christ judges by being judged *by God himself* and *by humanity*, for the sake of humanity. He writes, “God Himself encounters man in the flesh and therefore face to face in the person of His Son, in order that He may pass on the one who feels and accepts himself as his own judge the real judgment which he has merited.”²³ But, in order that the sentence of death saves and frees human beings, “it was the Judge who was judged, who let Himself be judged.”²⁴ The cross is “a matter of the divine judgment being taken out of the hands of Jesus and placed in those of His supremely unrighteous judges and executed by them upon Him.”²⁵ Overall, Barth pictures the cross as a way of disposing of the destructive power of nothingness. In Christ, God judges

²¹ IV/1, 222.

²² IV/1, 228.

²³ IV/1, 221. Barth notes how the two parts to the Gospels contain these two dynamics. Jesus Christ announces and embodies judgment on Israel and others; and then he undergoes the judgment he pronounces. See the excursus in IV/1.59.2, pages 224ff.

²⁴ IV/1, 222. In explaining this, Barth uses the logic of capacity, similar to what one would find in Anselm. Since Jesus Christ was a human being, he was able to be judged as other human beings are to be judged. Since Jesus Christ was the Son of God, “he had the competence and power to allow this to happen to Him” (IV/1, 223). Yet, Barth’s description of judgment does not derive the possibility of judgment from these capacities as much as these capacities are derived from the act of judgment. Since God loves, God is free to love. Likewise, for Barth, since God judges, God is free to judge. In other words, this is another way in which Barth’s ontological claims derive from the biblical narrative.

²⁵ IV/1, 271. Cf. IV/1, 226, 239, 258, 268, 269

humanity's incapacities to judge good and evil by destroying humanity and the power of nothingness to which they are bound. Fittingly, God delivers up humanity to the destructiveness of nothingness – he allows nothingness to consume humanity. But, since Jesus Christ is the victim of that attack, nothingness also “met with a prey which it could not match and by which it could only be destroyed as it tried to swallow it.”²⁶ As Paul Jones puts it, “God hereby draws *das Nichtige*, and with it human sin, into God's own being, where its elemental truth as nonexistence can be re-realized, where its limited ontological force is outbid by God's originary self-differentiation (*for love, against evil*), where God re-rejects what God has eternally rejected.”²⁷ Nothingness breaks itself upon the resistant receptivity of Jesus Christ, and thus consumes itself. Humanity and the power of nothingness that humanity constantly ratifies in its own being and act is destroyed and defeated on the cross.

In other words, the judgment enacted in Jesus Christ is an act of substitution. Jesus Christ substitutes himself for the rest of humanity in the face of God's judgment. Barth explicates this substitution in four moves. First of all, Jesus Christ takes the place of humanity as judge. The rest of humanity can no longer judge itself, for Jesus Christ is now its judge. Second, Jesus Christ burdens himself with the plight of sinners, although

²⁶ III/3, 362. The clear link to these ideas in III/3 is on IV/1, 253. See also IV/1, 306: “the occurrence of Golgotha which is complete in itself consists ultimately in the fact that Jesus ‘bowed his head.’ What does this mean? In obedience to the will of God? Before God as Father? His obedience consists in the fact that He commends or offers up His spirit, that is, Himself-He delivers up Himself. To whom? To God His Father, to His decree and disposing? Naturally, and this is emphasised in the saying handed down in Lk. 23⁴⁶: ‘Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit,’ myself . . . It is therefore to death that He bows His head and commits Himself. In and with the fulfilment there of the will of God it is nothingness which can triumph over Him-and in and with Him over the whole of the human race represented by Him. According to the disposition and in the service of God death and nothingness are brought in and used for the reconciliation of the world with God, as instruments in His conflict with the corruption of the world and the sin of man-but death and nothingness in all their evil and destructive power. It is also to the wrath of God which permits this force and judges evil by evil that Jesus commits Himself and in and with Himself the world and the individual sinner. The reconciliation of the world with God which took place in Jesus Christ had therefore the meaning that a radical end was made of Him and therefore of the world.”

²⁷ Jones, *The Humanity of Christ*, 209-210.

he himself achieves an obedience no other human being can match. Jesus Christ represents all other sinners and bears the consequences of their sin. Third, Jesus Christ fulfils the judgment of God in his suffering and death in that these events consolidate the divine judgment which happens in and through ungrateful human judges. Fourth, and perhaps most important, Jesus Christ obeyed the Father by surrendering himself to the judgment of God.

It is this last move which most engages Barth, and which gives another way to see the substructure of glory at work in his theology of the cross. Jesus Christ substitutes for other sinners because he is the only human being who is obedient to God. Barth writes, “As the Son of God obedient to the Father in fulfilment of this action of God He lived and acted as one man obedient to God.”²⁸ Yet, Barth does not expend his energy on this somewhat abstract affirmation. He is interested in the concrete mode of Jesus Christ’s obedience. Jesus Christ substitutes his own obedience in the place of other human beings insofar as “He willed to take our place as sinners and did, in fact, take our place.”²⁹ In other words, Jesus Christ’s substitution ought to be described in two registers. First, following the first three modes of substitution, he substitutes himself as the judged judge, accomplishing for humanity what it cannot accomplish for itself. But, secondly, Jesus Christ’s act of substituting himself is itself the fundamental act of obedience which propels the story Barth tells here. The problem with the rest of humanity is that they want to be their own judge and that “he will not accept that he is the rebel against God that he

²⁸ IV/1, 257.

²⁹ IV/1, 258. Barth takes substitution language as far as he can. For Barth, Jesus Christ takes on a sinful condition and is thus able to substitute his own obedience, defeating the condition that human beings create for themselves. Jesus Christ “defeated temptation” in this sinful condition and thus “reversed the fall” (IV/1, 259).

is.”³⁰ For Barth, Jesus Christ obeys God in the very act of substituting himself as a rebel and as a penitent.³¹

Gethsemane: Jesus Christ's Obedience and the Father's Good-Pleasure

A fascinating excursus on Gethsemane occurs “at the climax of 59.2’s progressive description of Christ and judgement,” providing both support for the claims he makes in the entire subsection and also substantially deepening their angularity.³² As a matter of biblical interpretation, Barth juxtaposes Gethsemane with the wilderness temptation narratives and Hebrews 5.8 (“Son though he was, he learned obedience from what he suffered”). We consider it briefly because of its connection to the doctrine of glory, its description of the growth of Jesus Christ, and its relationship to the final excursus in 59.2.

In this excursus, Barth argues that Jesus is tempted in the wilderness to be someone who does not substitute himself and that, at Gethsemane, Jesus discerns an event of “nearly unimaginable proportions,” recognizing somehow that God’s action will coincide with the work of the tempter he had been resisting and defeating.³³ For Barth, in the wilderness temptation stories, Jesus Christ learns that the power of the world, personified as Satan, “can only overwhelm and crush Himself and other men.”³⁴ Gethsemane, for Barth, depicts Jesus Christ affirming, accepting and praising God for the gracious triumph, despite Jesus Christ’s knowledge of what Satan can and does do. That is, he knows that Satan will find a way to kill him and that Jesus’ own death coincides with God’s judgment. Yet, he “learns obedience” as he “forged” human

³⁰ IV/1, 258.

³¹ “The one great sinner, with all the consequences that this involves, penitently acknowledges that He is the one lost sheep, the one lost coin, the lost son (Lk 15.3f), and therefore that as the Judge He is the One who is judged. In this way He was obedient to God.” (IV/1, 259).

³² Jones, *Humanity of Christ*, 229.

³³ *Ibid.*, 46.

³⁴ IV/1, 266.

acknowledgement and obedience, which becomes “transposed into an utterly startling and novel form” – that is, he “willingly propels himself to his own death.”³⁵ Barth claims that Jesus Christ does not fear his own death as such. He fears his own death insofar as it is “the coming concealment of the lordship of God under the lordship of evil and evil men.”³⁶ He fears his own death insofar as it is God’s judgment on him on behalf of the rest of humanity. He fears God judgment, God’s No, God’s “no answer.”³⁷ For Barth, Jesus Christ fulfils God’s judgment at Gethsemane by being ready to pronounce judgment on himself, in the act of submitting to the cross.³⁸ As such, he ratifies and becomes enabled to “execute the divine judgment.”³⁹ The final confrontation with God’s will at Gethsemane gives Jesus Christ the freedom to bear the judgment of the world, in the face of that very world.

We have seen many times now that the two aspects of glory – joy and form– emerge at many important points in the *Dogmatics*. Barth makes use of both aspects to explicate his description of Jesus Christ’s growth in obedience. We focus on his use of joy here, and his use of form in the following chapter. In this excursus, he claims that Jesus Christ’s acts of repentance and acceptance of God’s judgment qualify Jesus Christ as one who is “obedient to God.”⁴⁰ That obedience, that form of life we might say, is the reason that Jesus Christ is “the One in whom God was well pleased as His beloved Son (*der Eine, an dem Gott als an seinem lieben Sohn sein Wohlgefallen hatte*)...”⁴¹ On the one hand, Barth makes it clear that Hebrews 5.7-8 indicate that his freedom to obey the

³⁵ Jones, *Humanity of Christ*, 234-235.

³⁶ IV/1, 269.

³⁷ IV/1, 268.

³⁸ Jones, *Humanity of Christ*, 239.

³⁹ IV/1, 271.

⁴⁰ IV/1, 259.

⁴¹ IV/1, 259

Father “was not by any means self-evident.”⁴² On the other hand, Barth does not strictly say that God’s good-pleasure predicates itself upon Jesus Christ’s obedience. Instead, Barth claims that Jesus Christ’s “venture” into temptation and successful resistance itself relies upon the good-pleasure of God: “It was to encounter these (demons) that He was led there and kept His fast there. For Him as the Son, the One in whom God was well-pleased, this had to be the case (*Für ihn, als den Sohn, an dem Gott Wohlgefallen hat, muß es so sein*).”⁴³ Just so, Barth says that Jesus Christ “remained the One in whom God is well-pleased (*blieb er der, an dem Gott Wohlgefallen hatte*)” when he describes the third wilderness temptation.⁴⁴ God’s good-pleasure is not competitive with human action – including the action of Jesus Christ – because it is an action that draws and summons human action. It is the good-pleasure of God which makes it possible, determines, and pre-actualizes the obedience of Jesus Christ. The Father is not pleased with the Son because of his self-offering, instead the Son can offer himself because the Father is pleased with him. At Gethsemane, Jesus Christ “rendered that obedience which is required of the covenant partner of God, in that way found His good pleasure.”⁴⁵ That is what Barth packs into the word “to remain” (*bleiben*). Due to God’s good-pleasure, or God’s power to be moved by an obedience that is yet to be offered, Jesus Christ remained in that same good-pleasure. Jesus Christ does not need to gain more of God’s good-pleasure, but since he is a human being he needs to “find” that pleasure, he needs to learn it.

⁴² IV/1, 260.

⁴³ IV/1, 260/KD IV/1, 287. I take the point about Jesus Christ’s obedience as venture from Paul Jones, *The Humanity of Christ*, 226-227.

⁴⁴ IV/1, 264/KD IV/1, 290.

⁴⁵ IV/1, 94.

How does this work? For Barth, the third wilderness temptation is not about Jesus Christ's open display of his own identity as the Messiah. Instead, the third wilderness temptation concerns Jesus Christ's self-assurance of "His relationship with God."⁴⁶ Satan appears as one who tempts Jesus to confirm his own pious certainty in God's presence. Thus, Barth writes, "For Adamic man reaches his supreme form in 'religious' self-sacrifice as the most perfect kind of self-glorification, in which God is in fact most completely impressed in the service of man, in which He is most completely denied under cover of the most complete acknowledgment of God and one's fellows (*Wenn es der Mensch auf der Linie Adams aufs höchste bringt, dann eben zu solcher «religiöser» Selbsthingabe als der vollkommensten Form der Selbstverherrlichung, bei der Gott in Wirklichkeit aufs Vollkommenste in den Dienst des Menschen gestellt und eben damit unter dem Schein des vollkommensten Bekenntnisses zu ihm samt dem Mitmenschen aufs Vollkommenste verleugnet wird*)."⁴⁷ In other words, Jesus Christ is tempted by self-sacrificial piety, by taking his own death into his own hands in order to force God's hand. The temptation is to lure God into self-validating action, so that God might prove God's worth and provision to Jesus Christ by validating the self-sacrificial worship of his most faithful servant. In particular, the temptation is to lure God out of concealment, the concealment which reaches its fulfillment in the cross and confronts Jesus Christ at Gethsemane.

More specifically, the trouble with God's good-pleasure in Jesus Christ's self-offering is that while it is available to Jesus Christ as he ratifies his own freedom at Gethsemane and beyond, it is also concealed until the resurrection. God's pleasure in

⁴⁶ IV/1, 263.

⁴⁷ IV/1, 263-64; KD IV/1, 290. The translation is modified.

Jesus Christ's self-offering is concealed at the cross. Thus Barth writes about Gethsemane and the cross, "Jesus does not in fact receive any answer from God, any sign from God . . . He has 'the sign of Jonah' (Mt 12.39ff) . . . God will give His answer to the prayer only in this inconceivable, this frightful event, and not otherwise. The event of the resurrection lies beyond the answer. It is the disclosure of its meaning."⁴⁸ God answers, or at least reveals his answer to Jesus Christ's obedience, with an ontological, historical act: the resurrection.

The difference between Jesus Christ and other human beings in this context is that Jesus Christ does not cling to his life through self-sacrificial worship, which is an act of remarkable self-domination. Jesus Christ does not ask God to show himself to Jesus Christ, to show God's own glory to Jesus Christ in order to declare Jesus Christ's relationship with God. Barth has Jesus Christ rejecting the desire and satisfaction for *securing* a relationship with God. Jesus Christ can reject that desire because he accesses another desire. That other desire is God's good pleasure, God's *Wohlgefallen*. Again, while Barth does not redefine God's pleasure here, we can see that his use of it is consistent with earlier uses. The man Jesus can be moved, can be absolutely overcome by the activity of God which acts as a command, because he shares in God's capacity to be moved by the form of God's life – which, in this context, is the "ceaseless unity of the One who disposes and the One who complies."⁴⁹ Since the Son delights in the active and differentiated unity of the Father and the Son, he can overcome his own human temptation to lure God out of concealment. The Son's capacity to be moved by the patterns of that union allow him to remain a substitute penitent for the rest of humanity.

⁴⁸ IV/1, 268.

⁴⁹ IV/1, 209-210.

Excursus on Jesus Christ's Sacrifice: The Temptations of Prayer

Barth's appeal to God's good-pleasure in the excursus on the wilderness temptations and Gethsemane prepares the reader for the mode in which Barth refers to God's good-pleasure in his excursus on Jesus Christ as the substitute sacrifice. We visit this final excursus briefly because it is here, in relationship to the wilderness/Gethsemane excursus, that Barth focuses his thoughts on Jesus Christ's worship, especially as his life and prayer become a substitute sacrifice on behalf of humanity.⁵⁰ We will again see the categories of glory, especially God's good-pleasure, arise.

In the final excursus Barth recognizes that the New Testament uses many tropes to express how Jesus Christ's life and death substitute for the rest of humanity. But, he also recognizes that, next to judgment, cultic language "stands apart . . . with sufficient distinctness and importance to merit a special appraisal."⁵¹ Cultic language merits a special appraisal because it is used so frequently in the Bible and "it would be quite possible to put our whole presentation within the framework of this standpoint."⁵² Barth argues that judgment and law are better controlling metaphors because the cultic is so far removed from modern experience and substitution is more clearly expressed in forensic terms. Yet, he acknowledges that he would be remiss if the four categories of substitution he outlines would not also be present in the cultic language of the New Testament. In brief, Barth argues that the New Testament depicts Jesus Christ as the Priest who substitutes for all other priests, as the offering which removes sins (which combines the

⁵⁰ Thus, one of the deep flaws in Matthew Boulton's argument in *God Against Religion* is an inattention to Barth's work in this subsection, especially as it is modulated through this final excursus. If liturgy, at its very core, is a sinful endeavor which limits authentic encounter with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, then it is difficult to come to grips with the fact that Jesus Christ is "achieving the salvation of the world" through petitionary prayer (Paul Jones, *Humanity of Christ*, 187).

⁵¹ IV/1, 274.

⁵² IV/1, 274.

second and third categories above) and the one who finally offers a “perfect sacrifice (*vollkommene Opfer*).”⁵³

First, Barth argues that Jesus Christ is the one and only priest who “crowded out and replaced . . . every other human priest,” just as he replaces all human judgment. The chief problem that priests seek to overcome is that a human community “cannot really sacrifice or pray for itself” or needs “access . . . to its god.”⁵⁴ Barth rehearses aspects of Hebrews 7 in order to show that only Jesus Christ can provide access to God; only Jesus Christ is truly a priest, the Priest. The chief problem seems to be that a priest cannot make “satisfaction” (*Genugtuung*) that reconciles the world to God.⁵⁵ A priest is “unsatisfying (*ungenügende*)” because he cannot create human individuals and communities who are truly covenant partners with God, who can act in correspondence to God’s act.⁵⁶

Also, just as Jesus Christ was judged on behalf of sinners in his suffering and death, so Jesus Christ offers himself as the one and only sacrifice in order to remove human sin. Barth makes the case that the Levitical sacrificial system does not accomplish the purpose of a sacrifice, which is “to order the encounter of a sinful people with God in the way which God Himself has instituted.”⁵⁷ In the face of human sin, the sacrificial system, as with the priesthood, is meant to offer “the possibility and actuality of a communication and communion of Israel and the individual Israelite with God which, if

⁵³ IV/1, 281/KD IV/1, 309.

⁵⁴ IV/1, 275.

⁵⁵ IV/1, 276; KD IV/1, 304: “Er ist aber Priester ‘nach der Ordnung Melchisedeks,’ d. h. er ist ein Fall priesterlichen Tuns ganz für sich, nirgendswoher ableitbar, unter keiner Regel stehend, als unter der, die eben damit aufgerichtet und offenbart wird, daß dieser eine Fall eintritt. Und er ist der Fall effektiv priesterlichen Tuns, der keinen neben sich hat, weil dieses Tun in ihm ein vollendetes ist, der nicht Symbol ist für eine über ihm stehende Allgemeinwahrheit, der Fall, in welchem die *Genugtuung*, d. h. das zur Versöhnung der Welt mit Gott *Genügende* schlechterdings geschehen ist - *satis fecit* - und nur als geschehen, und also gerade aus keinem Oberhalb dieses Geschehens als notwendig geschehen, begriffen werden kann. In keiner Satisfaktionstheorie also, sondern nur in der Anschauung und im Begreifen seines faktisch-praktisch vollbrachten *satis facere*!”

⁵⁶ KD IV/1, 304.

⁵⁷ IV/1, 277.

they do not do away with that gulf, do at least temporarily bridge it.”⁵⁸ Thus, sacrifices are “gifts from the sphere of his most cherished possessions which represent or express his will to obey, which symbolize the life with has not in fact been offered to God.”⁵⁹ Yet Barth acknowledges that the Levitical sacrifices are not simply expressions of primal religion which are meant to cope with guilt or provide a fulcrum of manipulation. He acknowledges that Israel is “summoned to bow beneath the divine judgment, but also to hold fast to the divine grace.”⁶⁰ In the end, the Levitical sacrificial system does not succeed in achieving “an Israel which has been really and finally judged by God, that is, put finally in the right, effectively and definitively subjected to His will and therefore well-pleasing to Him.”⁶¹ Israel, as covenant partner, continues to break the covenant – the sacrifices do not provide Israel with a common will subjected to God’s will. Why cannot God be moved by those sacrifices such that they fulfill the covenant? What would satisfy God? In short, humanity itself, as opposed to an animal, must die. Second, the pride, ingratitude, sloth, and falsehood of the individuals and communities who offer them are not destroyed. Humanity, as it is this sinful in these and many other ways, must die. Lastly, the death of sinful humanity cannot simply be an end. It also must be a new beginning. Only that recipe will satisfy God. That is why only Jesus Christ’s offering satisfies what God requires for the removal of sinful humanity.

All of this brings Barth to the final category. Jesus Christ does not simply provide a way of disposing of sinful humanity. Jesus Christ also provides, in himself, a new

⁵⁸ IV/1, 277-278.

⁵⁹ IV/1, 278.

⁶⁰ IV/1, 278. See also: “Sacrifice in the Old Testament cannot bring to an end the state of things between God and His people, replacing it by a new state. . . It can only leave open and in the air the disturbed and broken relationship between the two, making a common existence at least bearable and possible. But the alteration which is brings about is only temporary and incidental. Things are made easier and better until next time. There is promise, but no fulfillment. There is truth, but not actuality.” IV/1, 278.

⁶¹ IV/1, 279.

humanity. He obeys and in his obedience the rest of humanity obeys. As he writes, “It is now learned how to do good. Regard is now had for the right.”⁶² In other words, Barth is now recontextualizing the obedience that Jesus Christ learned at Gethsemane as an offering or sacrifice – the perfect liturgical act. He makes this connection to his previous remarks on the wilderness and Gethsemane, “In the person of His Son there has taken place . . . the rendering of obedience, humility and penitence . . . the Priest . . . who as as a Son ‘learned obedience by the things which he suffered’ (Heb 5.8).”⁶³ It is this obedience, then, which Barth now describes in this way: “Thanks is brought to God, and in this way vows are paid to the Most High. In the day of need He is now called upon, that He may redeem man and that man may praise Him (Ps 50.14ff).”⁶⁴ The Gethsemane excursus is now re-contextualized as about prayer *as prayer*. When Jesus Christ is empowered by the good-pleasure of God to obey, that power is exercised and learned in the act of prayer. In other words, Jesus Christ “received . . . His freedom to finish his work” as one who prays obediently.⁶⁵

Indeed, Gethsemane is precisely a temptation concerning prayer. Jesus Christ is tempted to pray disobediently. He is tempted to pray in a way that is ungrateful for concealment of God’s pleasure in the act of judgment. He is tempted to pray, finally, for a way that avoids the cross. He is tempted to pray for an escape. Or, to put the point in question form: Why is that Barth is able to say that Jesus Christ learns obedience unto death in this prayer? Is there not something about this obedient prayer, *as a prayer*, that empowers a freedom to execute the divine judgment? In other words, is it not because

⁶² IV/1, 281.

⁶³ IV/1, 282.

⁶⁴ IV/1, 281.

⁶⁵ IV/1, 271.

prayer is engaged obediently that Jesus Christ is empowered to execute his obedience as the event of the cross unfolds?

If so, then Barth's account of Jesus Christ's learning his own freedom to obey turns on his account of the nature of prayer. In other words, how is it that obedient *prayer* empowers Jesus Christ to continue to obey the Father? Barth does make brief comments that help us here. For instance, he notes that "It is only with reservation that we can call the prayer in Gethsemane a conversation with God. In the texts there is no mention of any answer corresponding to and accepting the address of Jesus."⁶⁶ At its heart, prayer for Barth is a certain kind of request. Notice, for instance, how he describes Jesus Christ's initial plaint: "Jesus prays that God should not give . . . Jesus prays that God will so order . . . Jesus prays that for the sake of God's own cause and glory the evil determination of world-occurrence . . ."⁶⁷ In other words, prayer is petitionary. Prayer is request to God for some particular act.

But, what kind of petition? Barth writes:

He only prays. He does not demand. He does not advance any claims. He does not lay upon God any conditions. He does not reserve His future obedience . . . He prays only as a child to the Father, knowing that He can and should pray, that His need is known to the Father, is on the heart of the Father, but knowing also that the Father disposes what is possible and will therefore be, and that what He allows to be will be the only thing that is possible and right.⁶⁸

Following a common Barthian dialectic, Jesus makes requests which do not make a claim on God. First and foremost, Jesus Christ receives, accepts, acquiesces, unreservedly opens his act and being to the heart of the Father.⁶⁹ Jesus Christ enacts this absolute

⁶⁶ IV/1, 268.

⁶⁷ IV/1, 269.

⁶⁸ IV/1, 270.

⁶⁹ See Jones, *Humanity of Christ*, 237-238.

receptivity through petition and vice versa. Jesus Christ practices a “readiness for the act of obedience.”⁷⁰ Put more closely in this context, prayer is the practice in which human beings are readied for obedience. Perhaps this could be called an act of listening, but only if our concept of listening includes the act of petition. Obedient prayer is petitionary prayer in which the subject receives the will of God by opening herself fully to the heart of God. Jesus prays obediently in that he opens himself fully to the heart of the Father through petition.

At this point we can now see how the cultic language of offering or sacrifice lends itself to what Barth is saying about Jesus Christ’s obedience. Barth describes Jesus’ acceptance of God’s judgment in the excursus on Gethsemane as “an expression of the supreme and only praise which God expects of man and which is rendered to Him only by this One man in place of all, the praise which comes from the knowledge that . . . His way . . . is holy and just and gracious.”⁷¹ In other words, Barth was simply incorrect when he said that we can see the matter of Jesus Christ *pro nobis* more clearly simply as a matter of God’s judgment. Jesus Christ offers what God is due and what God is due is praise or prayer – the offering or sacrifice that the book of Hebrews says is prefigured in the Levitical sacrificial system. He fulfills the covenant with humanity cut with Israel, and that includes the sacrificial system connected to it.

At the same time, Barth’s commentary on the cultic meaning of Jesus Christ shows how important the category of God’s good-pleasure is for expressing Jesus Christ’s substitutionary work. For instance, Barth writes in the cultic excursus, “There is now offered to God the sacrifice which pleases Him and which He will not despise, that

⁷⁰ IV/1, 270.

⁷¹ IV/1, 271.

of a broken spirit and a contrite heart (Ps. 51.19). Ears are open to Him; there is a desire (*Lust*) to do His will; His law is in the hearts of men (Ps 40.7ff).”⁷² When Barth says that Jesus Christ is the fully just man on behalf of all other human beings, he is trying to say, in part, that Jesus Christ offers himself to God without reserve so that he can die under God’s judgment.⁷³ One way to express the fullness of Jesus Christ’s self-offering is to discuss desire or pleasure. Jesus Christ offers not only his body, but his very desire. Jesus Christ offers his own desire; he allows it to follow the course of God’s will despite (because of!) Jesus Christ’s pause at Gethsemane. In other words, Jesus Christ simply cannot be a just man unless he offers his desire to God, as Psalms 51 and 40 indicate to Barth in these comments.

This, of course, brings us back to God’s glory, given Barth’s claim in II/1 that “God’s glory is also the answer awakened and evoked by God Himself, of the worship offered Him by His creation . . . But it is only in the light of this beginning, center and end of all God’s works, of Jesus Christ . . . that there does exist this divine-creaturely worship.”⁷⁴ God’s glory here is, among other things, is the glory that God “is pleased to accept at a distance . . . through the creatures.”⁷⁵ God is pleased by God’s glory, which is why the worship that human beings offer only insofar as they participate in God’s very glory in their worship. God can only be moved or pleased by God’s glory or that which participates in God’s glory, i.e. human worship. As Barth writes in his cultic excursus, “With his sacrifice He has left the sphere of that which is improper and provisional and done that which is proper and definitive. His offering was that which God affirmed,

⁷² IV/1, 282. KD IV/1, 310.

⁷³ IV/1, 280.

⁷⁴ II/1, 667-668.

⁷⁵ II/1, 668.

which was acceptable and pleasing (*wohlgefällige*) to Him, which he accepted.”⁷⁶ Thus, in relation to Jesus Christ’s sacrifice, we should not be surprised to find talk of Jesus’ worship linked to categories of glory. And, it is here as much as anywhere, that those links are found. Thus, given that God’s glory plays such an important role in how Barth describes God and humanity, it must be stressed that Jesus Christ does not do justice to God unless he glorifies God in worship. He is just in that he pleases God in worship. For Barth, without pleasing God, Jesus Christ is not the just man who fulfills God’s judgment.

Of course, Barth is as careful here as anywhere when he works to avoid any indication that Jesus Christ earns some sort of approval or that God becomes a blood-thirsty ruler who lacks the resources to forgive apart from some sort of compensatory blood offering. Then, Jesus Christ would be merely the greatest sacrifice among all other sacrifices, offerings which are meant to force God’s hand. As we saw above, Barth has been careful to show that Jesus Christ rejects the offering-as-manipulation model of atonement as false worship, as we saw in his description of the third wilderness temptation. God does not demand an absolute offering – including the human desire to follow the will of God - from humanity represented in Jesus Christ because God needs some sort of compensation or needs to find a way to placate his own nature. Instead, God simply demands what he himself brings and that demanding gift draws Jesus Christ into his own obedience. The vocabulary of good-pleasure helps him express this point. As Barth writes, “. . . of God we have to say that this perfect action which He Himself did not need has in His merciful good-pleasure taken place for us . . .”⁷⁷ He continues,

⁷⁶ IV/1, 281; KD IV/1, 309.

⁷⁷ IV/1, 282.

“What he had done He has done in order that being done by Him it may be done by us; not only acceptable to God, but a work *already accepted* by him, a work *already pleasing* (*wohlgefälliges*) to Him . . .”⁷⁸ As it is God’s pleasure to offer God’s self in Jesus Christ and that pleasure is shared with humanity in Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ can offer himself to God in correspondence to God’s pleasure. God demands an offering of desire because God has offered God’s own desire to humanity in Jesus Christ. As God opens himself completely to humanity in Jesus Christ; just so humanity opens itself completely to God in Jesus Christ. Just as God desires and accomplishes his desire to glorify another in Jesus Christ by giving all of God’s self, humanity desires and accomplishes its desire to glorify another in Jesus Christ by giving itself without reserve. Jesus Christ is the covenant partner who finally, exclusively, meets God’s glory with God’s created glory.

Our brief consideration of Barth’s version of substitutionary atonement, in both its forensic and cultic modalities, prepare us for the doctrine of the resurrection in two ways. First, the Father’s good-pleasure – one of the categories of glory – operates in this atonement theology as that which pre-actualizes Jesus Christ’s obedience, especially as that obedience is learned in prayer. In other words, we see the dynamic of glory brought forward in the last chapter with regard to Barth’s doctrine of election re-imagined by Barth within his doctrine of reconciliation, as the doctrine of reconciliation fulfills and enacts the election performed in and through Jesus Christ. The prayer of Jesus Christ to which Barth alludes in the doctrine of election, in which Jesus Christ elects himself and humanity in himself, becomes scripturally localized and transparent at the Garden of Gethsemane and thereafter. Thus, Jesus Christ’s election – the mode in which he finds the good-pleasure of the Father, as we saw in the last chapter – is an event of worship and

⁷⁸ IV/1, 283; KD IV/1, 311. Italics mine. See also CD IV/1, 282; KD IV/1, 310 for a similar claim.

sacrifice. The question thus is how Jesus Christ continues this mode of substitution, which is addressed by the resurrection.

Second, we would expect that good-pleasure to play a role in the ensuing description of the resurrection. In particular, Jesus Christ's struggle at Gethsemane had to do with a concealing of that available good-pleasure. Jesus Christ learns obedience within and through the joy of the Father, despite (and because!) the fact that that good-pleasure was hidden at the cross. But, does the Father do more than simply hide his good-pleasure at cross? Does he display it somehow? And, what would that accomplish? Those are questions that Barth tackles in the first foray into the doctrine of the resurrection in volume four of the *Church Dogmatics*.

Part Two: The Verdict of the Father: The Father shares His Joy in Jesus Christ's Self-offering

In this initial foray into the doctrine of the resurrection in volume four of the *Dogmatics*, Barth begins his exploration of the resurrection as an intratrinitarian event between the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and an event in the rest of human history. The resurrection accomplishes something within the Triune life and accomplishes something in the wider history of humanity. For Barth, in the resurrection, the Father shares and declares his good-pleasure in the Son's self-offering on the cross – which is one way of saying that God's glory is unveiled and shared in the resurrection. The resurrection also accomplishes something in the wider history of humanity. For Barth, when the Father shares his joy in Jesus Christ's achievement on the cross with other human beings, it opens a new beginning in history, the beginning of a new temporal field. That is to say, God's glory makes the beginning of the church's life possible.

Schleiermacher and Barth on the Resurrection

Compared to the incarnation as such, Christ's resurrection is often treated as relatively dispensable. For instance, Schleiermacher argued that Christ's resurrection is, strictly speaking, irrelevant to Christ's identity because sharing in Jesus' God-consciousness does not necessitate it. Christ's resurrection fails to show who Jesus is – that is, a divine human being – because it cannot be traced to “the original impression made by His existence.”⁷⁹ The original impression by which the disciples were influenced was Jesus' “absolutely powerful God-consciousness.”⁸⁰ Thus, Schleiermacher concludes: “if . . . the redeeming efficacy of Christ depends upon the being of God in Him, and faith in Him is grounded upon the impression that such a being of God indwells Him, then it is impossible to prove any immediate connexion between these facts and that doctrine. The disciples recognized in Him the Son of God without having the faintest premonition of His resurrection and ascension . . . ”⁸¹

Yet, Schleiermacher acknowledges that both Jesus' bodily resurrection and the general resurrection ought to be affirmed. If we cannot believe the scriptural writers as witnesses to Jesus' resurrection, then we will have little ground to trust them with regard to anything else – including their testimony to Jesus' God-consciousness.⁸² With regard to the general resurrection, Schleiermacher claims that it is a “prophetic doctrine” because “our Christian consciousness has absolutely nothing to say regarding a condition

⁷⁹ Friedrich Schleiermacher, *The Christian Faith*, ed. H.R. Mackintosh and J.S. Stewart (reprint, New York: T & T Clark, 1999), 125.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 387.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 418. He continues, “. . . and we too may say the same of ourselves; moreover neither the spiritual presence which He promised nor all that He said about His enduring influence upon those who remained behind is mediated through these two facts.”

⁸² *Ibid.*, 420. See also the comparable statement: “it is only through trust in what other people profess as their experience that the individual can come to have the same experience as his own” (639).

so entirely outside our ken.”⁸³ Since we have not experienced the consummation of all things, we cannot talk about it. The general resurrection, as a part of a belief in personal immortality, is indirectly related (i.e. inferred from a more basic experience expressed in doctrine) to the immutability of the union of Christ’s human nature to Christ’s person.⁸⁴

Barth’s point of departure differs significantly, as noted above. The issue is not the relevance of the resurrection to the conveyance of Jesus Christ’s God-consciousness. That would mean that, as with Schleiermacher, “faith demands only one past event, namely, *that* the incarnation happened.”⁸⁵ For Barth, the issue is whether human beings can have a history at all, given the destruction of humanity on the cross.⁸⁶ Thus, any doctrine of the resurrection is viable only in relationship to the event of the cross itself. Barth structures his description of the resurrection around five conditions, conditions for the viability of a doctrine of the resurrection. First, it must be the act of the same God who judges Jesus Christ and the rest of humanity on the cross. Second, it must be a new act of God, distinguishable from the cross. Third, the event itself must somehow

⁸³ Ibid., 706, 697. Although it is a special case of prophetic doctrine for him, given that the disciples witnessed it.

⁸⁴ That is, given that God “had determined to perfect and redeem human nature through such union” (Ibid., 702). Two related problems emerge from Schleiermacher’s account of the resurrection. First, Schleiermacher has difficulty expressing the purpose of Jesus Christ’s resurrection, as opposed to the general resurrection. Jesus Christ’s resurrection is no different from other human beings (Ibid., 418). Yet, when he explains the general resurrection, he claims that procreative sin and the urge to preserve one’s own life against death must be transcended – i.e. through new, immortal bodies (Ibid., 710). The question is: Did Jesus Christ overcome procreative sin and self-preservation only after a resurrection? Schleiermacher very firmly asserts that Jesus’ God-consciousness was fully actualized. Yet, how could this be possible if he was both mortal and sexual before his resurrection? The second problem follows from the first. We are left with the impression that bodily limits *qua* bodily limits are disordered and that the resurrection overcomes them. If Jesus Christ is raised for the same reason that sinful human beings are raised (given the radical disorder of human bodily existence), then embodiment *per se* will be treated as a problem. The only way to way out of this imbroglio is to show that embodiment in itself is a gift – in other words, a way of entering the divine life through the Holy Spirit.

⁸⁵ Dawn DeVries, *Jesus Christ in the Preaching of Calvin and Schleiermacher* [Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996], 99.

⁸⁶ Calvin gives a subtle hint in this direction as well, when he writes that “through his death, sin was wiped out and death extinguished; through his resurrection, righteousness was restored and life raised up” (Institutes, 2.16.13). Barth would agree with this, in part. Death is wiped out by Jesus Christ’s death, but righteousness has already been raised up for Barth in Jesus Christ’s self-offering.

correspond to the cross; the cross and resurrection must be related and relatable. Fourth, the event must be as historical as the cross and thus bear the marks of some sort of historicity. Fifth, it must be an event which happens in the history of Jesus Christ, not simply in the history of other communities or individuals.⁸⁷

In each of the ways that the resurrection meets these conditions, Barth's theology of glory plays a role. However, we will focus on the Barth's discussion of how the resurrection fulfills the first three conditions, given their relevance to our argument and the priorities of Barth's analysis throughout this subsection.

Resurrection, Glory and the sharing of Divine Joy

With regard to the first condition, Barth argues that the resurrection is an act of God because it is only after the resurrection that the New Testament witnesses were able to acknowledge "that in the man Jesus, God Himself was at work."⁸⁸ The event of the incarnation "took place before their very eyes and ears – but before eyes that were blind and ears that were deaf."⁸⁹ By the resurrection, the New Testament witnesses had the cross mediated to them. At this point, Barth makes a claim which he will repeat in various modulations and allude to in multiple contexts. The resurrection, he says, ". . . was not . . . something merely formal and noetic. It was also the true, original form of the revelation of God in Him and therefore of revelation generally, the revelation which lights up for the first time all God's revealing and being revealed (in Him and generally)."⁹⁰ The resurrection is the primal form of revelation in the creation. Barth is claiming here that, without the resurrection, nothing in the creation would be an avenue

⁸⁷ IV/1, 297-298.

⁸⁸ IV/1, 301.

⁸⁹ IV/1, 302.

⁹⁰ IV/1, 301.

of revelation. The resurrection lights up all the nodes of revelation in creation because it casts light in the creation upon the cross. In the concrete words of scripture to which Barth refers, “The glory of the Word made flesh . . . was first revealed to them and perceived by them when the event was already past, when the man Jesus was dead and buried . . .”⁹¹ In other words, the resurrection opens the glory of the cross to the creation in general and to the Christian community in particular.

But Barth does not reduce the resurrection to revelation. It is “divine revelation which has taken place *in this event*.”⁹² The resurrection is an event in which “He came amongst them again” and “God in Christ became conceivable to them in the inconceivable form of the unmediated presence and action of its origin and subject-matter without any other mediation at all.”⁹³ In other words, revelation happens because God, in Christ, becomes present to the community of his followers again, after the cross. The resurrection is simultaneously an ontological and an epistemological event initiated by God.

How can Barth say this in a coherent way? How is the resurrection both an ontological and epistemological event? Barth will return to two moves that we have seen before. First, Barth will show that the resurrection is another act of God’s participatory self-giving. If the resurrection is to open the cross to other members of creation, it will have to offer God’s own access to that event. Only God can recognize God’s own work. As Paul writes in I Corinthians:

What human being knows what is truly human except the human spirit that is within? So also no one comprehends what is truly God’s except the Spirit of God. Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit that is from God,

⁹¹ IV/1, 302.

⁹² IV/1, 301. Emphasis mine.

⁹³ IV/1, 302

so that we may understand the gifts bestowed on us by God. And we speak of these things in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual things to those who are spiritual (2.11-13).

Barth keenly notes that the creation's reconciliation with God is knowable only by God.

Barth argues that claims like the one that Paul makes here arise from the newness of the incarnation. The incarnation is entirely new to "the context of all God's other actions as

Creator"; thus, it requires a mode of knowing other than the apparatus deployed in

knowing the creation as such. So, God provides God's own mode of knowing,

represented here in I Corinthians 2 as the Holy Spirit's knowledge.⁹⁴ If the life and death

of Jesus Christ are God's own act, in a way that is distinctive from God's general acts as

Creator, then God shares God's own recognition of the incarnation with others in the act

of resurrecting Jesus Christ. Thus, the incarnation does indeed "make a place for itself in

⁹⁴ There is an interesting possible divergence from Hans Frei's approach to the resurrection in *The Identity of Jesus Christ*. Frei argues that "to grasp what this identity, Jesus of Nazareth . . . is to believe that he has been, in fact, raised from the dead" (179). Barth would agree – Jesus Christ cannot be known apart from an encounter with the resurrected Lord. But, Frei makes this case on the basis of the genre of the Gospel, such that "The narration is at once intensely serious and historical in intent and fictional form, the common strand between them being the identification of the individual in his circumstances" (178). Gethsemane is the primary example here, since the Gospels provide a glimpse into the inner life of Jesus Christ and also provide descriptions of events to which no one is a witness – that is, it is fictional in form (Ibid.). But, since the Gospels also are not presenting themselves as myths that symbolize universal human experience (174), we are forced to take the Gospels in their earnestness as "historical in intent." There are two ways to take this argument. The first way, which would be out of keeping with Barth, would be to say that the logic of the narrative makes disbelief in the resurrection impossible. As we saw in the last chapter, Barth is fully able to recognize that there is a sociological encounter with the Christian community that does not pervade knowledge of the church as a ministry of the Spirit. But, that does not mean that the church cannot be encountered at all. Just so, Barth is able to recognize encounters with both Jesus Christ and scripture which are not pervaded by the Holy Spirit, but which count as a certain kind of knowledge of the man Jesus. In other words, for Barth, one can acknowledge the logic of narratives without believing them, and of course, cut through the reliable for the unreliable. On this reading, Frei would be making the scriptural text into a kind of sacrament that works *ex opera operato*, given a certain kind of grateful reception (179). The second way, which would be in keeping with Barth, would be to say that knowledge of Jesus Christ requires more than the narratives are able to convey, simply because the Gospels trail off into an identity to be encountered by the readers. In other words, if Jesus Christ is to be "genuinely accessible," as the one he really is, then that access will "have to be in sequence where the crucified Jesus is raised from the dead as the Christ" (177). His resurrection opens his identity as the Word made flesh and as the Mediator of all creation, and the text is not enough to establish that identity. The resurrection enlivens the text and the text provides content for resurrection encounters between the Christian community and Jesus Christ.

human cognition, claiming respect and consideration.”⁹⁵ If the incarnation as the incarnation is to be known as the event that reconciles the world to God’s self, it will have to be interpreted from the inside out.

Second, Barth will appeal to God’s glorious life. In other words, without need for a creation, God could attest God’s self. God, in God’s self, is glorious. Revelation and ontology are not simply complementary categories in Barth.⁹⁶ For instance, note one of Barth’s descriptions of the resurrection:

Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, what God has prepared for them that love Him, nor has it entered into the heart of any man (1 Cor. 2⁹)—that is, except by its self-impartment, except in such a way that the only basis, justification and explanation of his knowledge and confession is the actual fact of it . . . by the divine act of majesty . . . it has the character, not only of being and occurrence, but also, as this fact, of revelation. In this character it reveals and discloses itself . . . it creates eyes to see it and ears to hear it and a mind to understand it. In this character it is light, and as such it can be seen and is actually seen—in *tuo lumine lumen videmus*.⁹⁷

If anything, Barth favors ontology over revelation in all layers of his doctrine of the incarnation. What links those layers is “self-impartment.” God’s self-giving includes the opening of God’s life to creatures other than Jesus Christ and the opening of the creature to the life of Jesus Christ. Both are forms of communion, of God’s self-impartment. This is why Barth claims that, with the resurrection, “It pleased God . . . to give to His eternity with Him and therefore to Himself an earthly form. He willed to give to the inner and

⁹⁵ IV/2, 120-121.

⁹⁶ This opens up the limitations of ways of allowing epistemology and ontology to be pitted against one another. My argument has not been, as with others, to add an ontological layer to Barth’s doctrine of God in relationship to the creation. For instance, while bolstering Rowan Williams’ claims that IV/1, to some extent, does not fit with volume one of the *Church Dogmatics*, Benjamin Myers, in an otherwise interesting essay, states that “Jesus is not merely epistemologically significant, as the one who makes God known; he is ontologically significant, as the one who (so to speak) makes God God” (Benjamin Myers, “Election, Trinity and the History of Jesus: Reading Barth with Rowan Williams, in *Trinitarian Theology After Barth*, 130). This is true as far as it goes, but it allows ontology/intratrinitarian communion and epistemology to be complementary categories, which will allow for an argument to ensue about a kind of balance in Barth. In other words, Myers is not sufficiently aware that ontology is epistemology in Barth, and so he tends to make ontology an additive in Barth’s doctrine of the resurrection.

⁹⁷ IV/2, 121-122.

secret radiance of His glory an outward radiance in the sphere of creation and its history . . . And that is what He did when He called Jesus Christ to life from the dead.”⁹⁸ God undertakes and undergoes the resurrection in order to share and unveil God’s self-glorification. God’s life glorifies itself; God shows forth within God’s self. God is God’s own audience. As such, God fulfils God’s gift of that self-declaration in the resurrection, such that the creation can not only participate in and give witness to that glory.⁹⁹ The creation is reconciled to God in the history of Jesus Christ. In that history, the resurrection (and ascension) definitively shares the glory in the history of that reconciliation. In other words: sharing the glory of Jesus Christ’s history is identical to the Trinitarian act of glorifying the history of Jesus Christ before the rest of creation. Thus, for Barth, there is no competition between revelation and ontology in the relationship between Jesus Christ and the Christian community, just as there was not competition between them in the doctrine of election. God just is God’s power to declare God’s self. God just is glorious. Thus, when God gives God’s self in the resurrection, God gives a capacity to be God’s audience to the Christian community.

We see Barth making these two moves in various ways as Barth describes the resurrection as the fulfillment of the second condition, how the resurrection is distinct from the cross, Barth makes his distinctively Trinitarian claims about the resurrection. He argues that “it was God’s answer to it, and to that extent its revelation and declaration . . . as God’s answer to it, it was distinct from it . . . it was the divine approval and

⁹⁸ IV/1, 308.

⁹⁹ IV/2, 132-133: “The being of Jesus Christ was and is perfect and complete in itself in His history as the true Son of God and Son of Man . . . The resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ are the event of his self-declaration...To use the biblical term, He was manifested in glory . . . a lifting of the veil . . . they were a step out of the hiddenness of His perfect being as Son of God and Son of Man...into the publicity of the world.”

acknowledgment of the obedience given by Jesus Christ.”¹⁰⁰ The resurrection fulfills “the sentence of the Father on the way which He had gone – His judicial sentence that the action and passion of Jesus Christ were not apart from him or against Him.”¹⁰¹ In other words, the resurrection is an event between the Father and the Son, in the economy of their activity within the creation. On the one hand, the cross completes Jesus Christ’s self-offering on behalf of humanity and the rest of creation. On the other hand, the resurrection completes the Father’s approving recognition – his verdict – of Jesus Christ’s self-offering.

Dale Dawson follows Bertold Klappert in recognizing that Barth’s work distinguishes here between “the resurrection in the sense of the awakening (*Auferweckung*) of Jesus Christ by the Father” and “the resurrection appearances of Jesus Christ (*Auferstehung*).”¹⁰² Strictly speaking, the Father’s raising of the Son from the dead is an act performed *pro nobis* while the Son’s resurrection appearances begin the Triune God’s actions *in nobis*. However, the Father’s raising of the Son secures the Son’s work *in nobis* because the Son’s resurrection appearances communicate to other human beings what is communicated to Jesus Christ in being raised by the Father.¹⁰³ The Father’s

¹⁰⁰ IV/1, 305.

¹⁰¹ IV/1, 305.

¹⁰² Dawson, *Resurrection in Karl Barth*, 118. Dawson also notes that *Auferstehung* sometimes included the passive sense of election for Barth, but *Aufersteckung* never includes the active sense of Jesus Christ’s resurrection presence.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 119. One of the central thrusts of Dawson’s work is that Barth inconsistently states that the cross is the completion of reconciliation and that “the basis and power of the transition from Jesus Christ to others rests more properly in the action of the Father as an act of sheer grace” (*Ibid.*). There is no real contradiction here, since the transition to others could quite easily be considered to be something above and beyond reconciliation. Dawson’s real complaint is that “he may have developed his discourse on the *Auferweckung* of Jesus Christ more clearly as a fundamental aspect of the reconciling work of God, leaving the notion of *Auferstehung*, the free self-revelation of Jesus Christ, to address the problem of the active movement of Jesus Christ to others . . . Barth’s point might better have been secured by saying that the *Auferstehung* adds nothing materially new to the saving being and action of Jesus Christ, for it refers to the resurrection appearances, the self-revelation, of Jesus Christ and the impartation of his reconciled being and action to us” (*Ibid.*, 123). In other words, Dawson wants the resurrection to tackle two distinct problems in

raising of the Son enacts *de jure* justification, sanctification and vocation on behalf of all, and the Son's appearance to others enacts *de facto* participation in that universal justification, sanctification and vocation.¹⁰⁴ In the awakening, the Son is purely passive, in the appearances, fully active.¹⁰⁵ In other words, the raised presence of the one who was crucified reveals in act that the Father is satisfied with the covenant's fulfillment in Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ's resurrection appearances unveil that that fulfillment happens on behalf of all simply because they are appearances before other human beings, for their sake.¹⁰⁶ Put in the terms we are discussing here, the awakening of Jesus Christ is Jesus Christ's reception of the Father's good-pleasure on behalf of the rest of humanity (*de jure* participation), and the resurrection appearances are the sharing of good-pleasure with the Christian community (*de facto* participation).

two distinct ways: *Auferweckung* deals with reconciliation and *Auferstehung* deals with the impartation of reconciliation. So, for Dawson, "the force of his thought tends more consistently to the inclusion of the passive reception of the resurrection grace of the Father by Jesus Christ as a materially new act and dimension of the being and act of reconciliation" (Ibid., 119). Otherwise, Barth's doctrine of vocation cannot consistently included with justification and sanctification, since there is no vocation without the *Auferweckung* (Ibid., 214). What are we to make of this? First, this sort of revision – pitting the impartation of reconciliation against reconciliation itself – counters what Barth is doing when he says that the cross completes reconciliation (see IV/1, 306 for Dawson's favorite proof-texts for this point). At every level of God's action, Barth will say that God does not have to do such and such, to guarantee God's freedom. Reconciliation for Barth, as we will see more clearly in chapters 4 and 5, just is both *de jure* reconciliation and *de facto* reconciliation. Both are forms of reconciliation, while the second depends on the first and the first has the second as its goal. Second, Barth does say that the Father is pleased with the Son's self-offering, it is just that the resurrection issues that pleasure in a way that the Son can receive – it is the Father's ontological demonstration of his pleasure in the Son's offering (see IV/1, 308, quoted above). Thus, Barth does not have the problem that vocation cannot be located within the *pro nobis* work of the Son. The Father's acceptance of the offering is his love and the Son receives that love. If Barth did not say this, then he would somehow be putting God's wrath and love in opposition, which is a move he avoids absolutely.

¹⁰⁴ IV/1, 334.

¹⁰⁵ IV/1, 303-304. T.F. Torrance follows these motifs when he affirms that "it is in the resurrection of Jesus Christ that all that God had to say about our forgiveness, and all that Jesus had said about forgiveness, became actualized in the same sphere of reality as that to which we belong" (*Space, Time and Resurrection*, 62). But, he departs from Barth's way of describing the Son as fully passive in the awakening, since "The Amen of the Cross was not just an act of infinite resignation on Jesus' part to the Father's will; it was positive and affirmative fulfillment, and the resurrection is the complete Amen of the Son to the Father as of the Father to the Son" (Ibid., 68). Torrance attempts to show that Jesus is the one who lives, and has that being-in-act even in the midst of death. The Son can and does affirm the Father's will not simply unto death, but in and through death.

¹⁰⁶ IV/1, 301.

Thus, we cannot simply assign these movements to the economic Trinity. We cannot affirm that for Barth, “The first mode [of the Trinity’s existence] —eternal, immanent, primordial, self-existent and necessary. . . remains forever hidden from us.”¹⁰⁷

In order to understand why, consider Barth’s description of the Son’s kenosis. In that description, Barth makes the distinction between the immanent and economic trinity.¹⁰⁸

He does this in order to show that the Son’s kenosis does not mean God will “give Himself away” or “cease to be God.”¹⁰⁹ It befits God to become a creature humbled before God, because God is triune. It befits God to become a creature because “the inner life of God” is itself “superiority and subordination” – that is, God is Father and Son.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁷ George Hunsinger, “Election and the Trinity: Twenty-Five Theses on the Theology of Karl Barth,” *Modern Theology* 24:2 (April 2008), 194.

¹⁰⁸ Barth distinguishes, in his comments on the kenosis of the Son, between the “the mystery of the inner being of God as the being of the Son in relation to the Father” and the “the mystery of His deity in His work *ad extra*, in His presence in the world” (IV/1, 177). See similar moves at IV/1, 308; IV/2, 42-44 and many other places. We intersect here, as we did in chapter one, with the debate concerning the ontological implications of Barth’s doctrine of election. As I mentioned in chapter one, I am convinced that the doctrine of election in the *Church Dogmatics* is a watershed for this question. In the face of what Barth asserts in II/2 in comparison with II/1, and what we will see especially in the following chapters, I cannot quite agree with Paul Molnar’s overall argument that Barth exhibits “a clear and sharp distinction between the immanent and economic Trinity” (*Divine Freedom and the Doctrine of the Immanent Trinity* [London: T & T Clark, 2002], 64). However, if, for Barth, “one must acknowledge God’s absolute sovereignty as the prior condition of God’s incarnational action” and “one must beware of collapsing the distinction between created time and eternity,” then it is indeed the case, that, for Barth, “indicating the ontological priority of God in Godself is a useful way to achieve this end” (Paul Jones, *The Humanity of Christ*, 94). As Eberhard Jungel interprets Barth, “. . . God in his revelation imparts his concrete relational existence as Father, Son and Spirit by reiterating himself” (*God’s Being is in Becoming*, 119). The immanent-economic distinction is important because “reiteration . . . is nothing without that which is to be reiterated” (Ibid., 118). Indeed, upon reading Jürgen Moltmann’s *Theology of Hope*, Barth advised Moltmann to “accept the doctrine of the immanent Trinity” (Karl Barth, *Letters 1961-1968*, trans. and ed. by Geoffrey Bromiley [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981], 175). Thus, there seems to be three basic positions in this debate. Bruce McCormack argues that the implication of Barth’s doctrine of election is that we should see God’s triunity “logically as a function of divine election” (“Grace and Being,” 103). Second, as I mention here, Molnar, Hunsinger and also Edwin Van Driel maintain that, for Barth, God’s immanent triunity has not been modified in any way due to election. Third, in a position I quote here and mention again in chapter four, Paul Jones affirms that election has effects in God’s immanent triunity, but one must still affirm an ontological priority of God’s immanent triunity over God’s God’s relations to the creation. He does not concern himself with logical priorities since God “is never not humanized” (*Humanity of Christ*, 149). As an exposition of Barth’s commitments, I follow Jones’ position.

¹⁰⁹ IV/1, 185.

¹¹⁰ IV/1, 201. Cf. IV/1, 209.

God enters into the economy of creation without giving up God's own life because God is, from eternity, a life of humility.

Barth appeals to these claims as he writes about the resurrection: "We must not be afraid of the apparently difficult thought that as in God Himself (as we have seen), in the relationship of the Son to the Father (the model of all that is demanded from man by God), there is a pure obedience, subordination and subjection, so too in the relationship of the Father to the Son (the model of all that is given to man by God) there is a free and pure grace which as such can only be received, and the historical fulfillment of which is the resurrection of Jesus Christ."¹¹¹ For Barth, the resurrection, on God's part, is an event which God enacts (Father) and which God undergoes (Son). The resurrection is not a gift given to the Son merely as a human being, but to the Son as "very God."¹¹² The resurrection is an act of grace – it did not have to happen. It does happen, because of God's mercy. Barth takes the resurrection into the relationship between the Father and the Son in order to show that it is a properly divine act. The divine life itself, in itself, is a life of grace, of activity and reception between the Father and the Son. The issue is not, as Benjamin Myers puts it, that "in the distance that opens up between the Father and Son" in the Father's judgment and the Son's death there "an irruption in the prior harmony of the divine being." No, instead, it is that "this distance between the Father and Son is precisely God's way of being God."¹¹³ It is not strange for God to perform a resurrection, because God is triune. The Son receives that which did not have to be received, and the resurrection fulfills that life of grace. God's self-qualification re-emerges, only now in

¹¹¹ IV/1, 304.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Benjamin Myers, "Election, Trinity and the History of Jesus," 131. Cf. Paul Jones' claim that "Since God self-determines as Christ, there is no absolute event of diremption within the divine life" (*Humanity of Christ*, 228).

relationship to the resurrection – God is the electing God who has determined to be a God who resurrects. God enacts God’s own life of grace in and through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

But we need to see these claims more concretely, in light of the dynamics of the cross we saw in the last section. First of all, in the resurrection, the Son gets access to the meaning of the cross. For, as Barth argues constantly with regard to the cross, “The reconciliation of the world with God which took place in Jesus Christ had . . . the meaning that a radical end was made of Him and therefore the world. And that might have exhausted its meaning. The saying, ‘My God, My God, why have you forsaken me’ (Mk 15.34) shows how close was this frightful possibility.”¹¹⁴ Hans Frei comments that “the resurrection demonstrates Jesus’ acceptability to God as being obedient to God’s will.”¹¹⁵ Without the resurrection, the Son himself would not have access to the full meaning of the cross. The Son, as both divine and human, receives the resurrection as an illumination of the cross. It might simply have been that the Father renounced the world, with due regard for its inability to judge itself and satisfy God’s good-pleasure. But, the Son’s self-offering has now been openly answered in the resurrection. The Father has said, in the act of the resurrection, you are not forsaken.

Conversely, the Father himself accesses the cross in the resurrection. For the Son gains access to the meaning of the cross through the Father’s accessing the cross in the resurrection. In the resurrection, the Father “confirmed the verdict which, according to Matthew 1.11, he had already pronounced at Jordan when He entered on the way which

¹¹⁴ IV/1, 306.

¹¹⁵ Hans Frei, *The Identity of Jesus Christ*, 146.

led Him to Golgotha: ‘You are my beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased.’¹¹⁶ It is important to note that the Father is not taking pleasure in the Son’s suffering, the Father takes pleasure in the Son’s obedience. Barth’s work is not commensurate with theologies that will assign reconciliatory and redemptive power to the Son’s suffering *per se*. The resurrection is not so much the vindication of Jesus Christ’s suffering with other human beings. It is an event in which “God’s obedient suffering requires acknowledgment,” and thus God’s movement in Christ “passes from cradle, to cross, to resurrection.”¹¹⁷ The Father’s good-pleasure in the Son’s self-offering now becomes explicit in the resurrection. And, insofar as the Son receives that answer on behalf of others, the rest of humanity and the rest of creation also receive that answer.¹¹⁸ The Father was free to withhold the unveiling of his good-pleasure; he was free to allow the rest of creation to end without a new communication of his answer. In other words, the Father elects to bear a certain relationship to the cross: He is pleased with the Son’s self-offering and unveils that pleasure to the Son by means of the resurrection. Thus, the Father shares his own access, his own relationship, to the cross through the resurrection.¹¹⁹

What prevents thinking of it as another tragic, lamentable, and regrettable crossing of the movements of the cosmos? In another direction, what forestalls thinking of it as cosmic challenge to the lordship of the triune God? Just what is it about the cross

¹¹⁶ IV/1, 307.

¹¹⁷ Jones, *Humanity of Christ*, 210-211.

¹¹⁸ IV/1, 307, 309.

¹¹⁹ It is these trinitarian dynamics that George Hunsinger overlooks when he says that, in IV/1, “Christ’s resurrection reveals reconciliation as the humiliation of God’s Son in human flesh” (George Hunsinger, “Karl Barth’s Christology: Its Basic Chalcedonian Character,” in *Disruptive Grace* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000], 144. Hunsinger acknowledges that the resurrection is an act of God, but he does not recognize that Jesus Christ is the primary audience of the resurrection – it is the Father’s act for the benefit of Jesus Christ.

that does not carry the beholder into a lack of faith in its victory? God's triune glory.

Barth writes:

in the revelation of His faithfulness as the Father of this Son, in the revelation of the love with which He loved Him from all eternity and all along His way into the far country, at Jordan and in the wilderness and in Gethsemane, and never more than when the Son asked Him on the cross (Mk. 15³⁴) . . . His whole eternal love would still have been His even if He had acquiesced in His death as the Judge who was judged, if His mission had concluded at that ninth hour of Good Friday . . . But then, like His right as Creator and Lord of the world, it would have been, and remained, a completely hidden love: without witnesses, without participants, because without proclamation, without outward confirmation and form, concealed in the mystery of the inner life and being of the Godhead. It pleased God, however, to justify Himself, that is, to reveal and give force and effect to His faithfulness and love in this supreme sense, by an ὀρίζειν (Rom. 1⁴) of His Son which the disciples of Jesus could see and hear and grasp, and which was ordained to be publicly proclaimed. He willed to give to His eternity with Him and therefore to Himself an earthly form. He willed to give to the inner and secret radiance of His glory an outward radiance in the sphere of creation and its history. He willed to give to His eternal life space and time. And that is what He did when He called Jesus Christ to life from the dead.¹²⁰

First, Barth refers, obliquely, to the form of God's glory – the unity of identity and non-identity – when he refers to the revelation of the love between the Father and the Son.

Later on in the same context, the oblique connections are made evident: "The fact that Jesus Christ was raised from the dead by the Holy Spirit and therefore justified confirms that it has pleased God to reveal and express Himself to the crucified and dead and buried Jesus Christ in the unity of the Father with the Son and therefore in the glory of the free love which is His essence."¹²¹ It is the revelation of God's triunity in the resurrection which draws the creation into its own self-involving, participatory witness to God's glory. For, it is the revelation of the faithfulness involved in that Triunity which draws out creaturely witness to the cross. Since all three persons of the Godhead, who together

¹²⁰ IV/1, 308.

¹²¹ IV/1, 309.

enact God's life, are involved in the recognition of the cross, the cross can be a source of faith, not despair or dismissal.

Second, Barth hints that it is God's good-pleasure or joy, the power of God's triune glory, which expresses God's gratuity in resurrecting Jesus Christ. With these words, he constantly reminds that God does not need to resurrect the Son out of any obligation to God's self or to the creation.¹²² In other words, it is a matter of God's election, as that election expresses God's good-pleasure. It is "the glory of the free love which is His essence," as we saw above. God's own joy, *God's elective overflowing*, might have been exercised without the resurrection.¹²³ It is the Father's pleasure to do something like this; it is not something God is obligated to do. At the same time, it is befitting for God to do something like the resurrection, given the Triune life that is and issues in joy. For, God has this joy only insofar as God is a triune fellowship, a unity of identity and non-identity. Given that triune fellowship, God is free to love.¹²⁴ The glory of God's free love led to the cross, and it is that same glorious triune freedom which recognizes the cross as such. God's glory makes for God's freedom, and makes for God's own freedom from the potential limits of the cross.

Third, it is by sharing God's glory with other human beings that creatures become participatory witnesses to the cross. The language in this block quotation emphasizes that God gives God's self a new human audience, a new outwardness in the creation, *through the resurrection*. As Adam Eitel has recently argued, for Barth, the resurrection is "the

¹²² IV/1, 304.

¹²³ "It might have pleased God to execute His good and holy will with the world in this way . . . by simply removing its existence" (IV/1, 294).

¹²⁴ "The triune life of God, which is free life in the fact that it is Spirit, is the basis of His whole will and action even ad extra . . . it is the basis of the election of man to covenant with Himself; of the determination to become man . . ." (IV/2, 345).

historical continuation of God's eternal being-in-act."¹²⁵ The God whose election is identical to God's trinitarian life, is the resurrecting God. But, the chief implication of election is that God's glory is given to the creation in the resurrection. More particularly, in this context, God gives God's own electing good-pleasure to the creation in and through the resurrection.¹²⁶ The origin, the beginning of God's election – God's joy in God's own form is shared with the creation in and through the resurrection. This will become even more pronounced in the following chapters, as we address Barth's doctrine of the resurrection in IV/2 and IV/3. But, here, the issue is about the beginning of a new time. The beginning of God's ways and works in creation is shared with the creation, such that the creation can have a new beginning in and through the cross of Jesus Christ. Through the resurrection, God lends God's own beginning of the creation, centered on the Mediator Jesus Christ, to human history. Creation and human history have a new beginning after the cross as they participate *de facto* in God's own beginning, the good-

¹²⁵ Adam Eitel, "The Resurrection of Jesus Christ: Karl Barth and the Historicization of God's Being," *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 10 (January 2008), 45. Cf. Eitel's following comment: "On Dawson's reading, Barth conceives the resurrection as the 'reassertion' or 'reaffirmation' of God's triune being in the face of death. While Dawson's valuation of Barth's suggestive remarks is in some sense correct, it misses the more nuanced trajectory of Barth's resurrection-trinitarian correspondence. As I have shown, the resurrection is presented, not as the reaffirmation of the intra-divine life – but rather as its telos. The resurrection does not 'reassert' God's eternal being; it is an event always already grounded in the singular and eternal affirmation of God's eternal being as a being-for space and time" (Ibid.). Eitel refers to Dawson, *The Resurrection in Karl Barth*, 118-123, 216-219.

¹²⁶ It is important to note that the Holy Spirit plays a subtle but important role here, which supports my point. The title of the subsection is "The Verdict of the Father." In other words, Barth is trying to show that the resurrection is a trinitarian act – the resurrection is an act of the Father with regard to the Son. The Father makes possible the Son's ascension, his mediation, his prayer on behalf of his people, and, in general, his presence with his people. But, given Barth's patterns of Trinitarian thinking, he also briefly discusses the verdict as the "verdict of the Holy Spirit" (IV/1, 320). The resurrection is also the Spirit's verdict because the Holy Spirit is "God Himself maintaining His unity as Father and Son, God in the love which unites Him as Father with the Son and the Son with the Father" (IV/1, 308). Thus, when the resurrection makes it possible for Jesus Christ to mediate the life of his people, Barth emphasizes that the Spirit's presence after the resurrection communicates the Spirit's own verdict on the Son's self-offering (IV/1, 320).

pleasure of the Triune God.¹²⁷ Again, more particularly, as we shall see in the next section, *Jesus Christ and the Christian community* become, in the resurrection, an outward form of God's own inner glory.

Resurrection as the Beginning of a New Time for the Church

This brings us squarely in front of Barth's consideration of the third condition. When Barth addresses the third condition of the resurrection's viability, his doctrine of the resurrection takes a "decisive" turn.¹²⁸ Barth's doctrine of reconciliation takes a very subtle but important turn away from the cross as an event merely in the past to the cross as an event which pervades all ensuing history. Barth's third condition for the viability of any theology of the resurrection is that the cross and resurrection must be irreversibly related, which ensures that they are both acts of the same God. At this moment, Barth attempts to show that the death is "not . . . a conclusion, but . . . a beginning" that allows for and creates a Christian community.¹²⁹ In other words, how does the resurrection mark time and space, in order that a Christian community might exist? How does Jesus Christ's death become a "*terminus a quo*" and resurrection become a "*terminus ad quem*"?¹³⁰

¹²⁷ Also, as we will see in more depth in chapter five, without the resurrection, the creation would not know itself. Not only does the resurrection definitively reveal the faithfulness of the Father of this Son, the resurrection reveals God as one who is faithful to his creation and to God's self as creator. In the resurrection, the Father's love for the Son, the eternal love which they share, becomes available to the creation. Indeed, Barth affirms that the Father renders this verdict before and in the creation simultaneously with the verdict he renders before and in His Son. Thus, for Barth, the resurrection confirms and makes available God's triune decision to create a world which has covenant partnership with the triune God as its telos, in the face of its destruction on the cross. Barth writes, "He did this first in the revelation of His faithfulness as the Creator and Lord of heaven and earth and all men, to whom in the person of this their Representative, after their destruction in their old and corrupted form of life, He has spoken a second Yes which creates and gives them new life: a Yes which He did not owe them, but which He willed to speak, and which was the gracious confirmation of His own original will to create and His act of creation" (IV/1, 308).

¹²⁸ IV/1, 332.

¹²⁹ IV/1, 333.

¹³⁰ IV/1, 310.

How does the resurrection illumine Jesus Christ's death as a "negative act of God . . . with a positive intention"?¹³¹

For Barth, the Father's resurrection of Jesus Christ makes it possible for Jesus Christ to be Lord of and thus present to the rest of humanity. He writes, "The event of Easter Day is the removing of the barrier between His life in His time and their life in their time, the initiation of His Lordship as the Lord of all time."¹³² In this claim, Barth shares territory with Bultmann, one of Barth's chief opponents in his treatment. For Bultmann the resurrection makes Jesus Christ accessible to others who appropriate Jesus Christ's history within their own history.¹³³ But, Barth makes a much more radical claim that Bultmann is willing to make. Barth emphasizes in his discussion that it is Jesus Christ as the one who was crucified in the body that becomes present. He writes, "If Jesus Christ is not risen – bodily, visibly, audibly, perceptibly, in the same concrete sense in which He died, as the texts themselves have it – if He is not also risen, then our preaching and our faith are vain and futile . . ."¹³⁴ Why is our preaching in vain if the crucified Jesus, as the crucified Jesus, is not raised into a bodily history as concrete as his life and death? For Barth the answer is simple. He cannot be, as I Timothy 2.5 has it (and which Barth quotes in this context), "one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men."¹³⁵ If Jesus Christ is not raised from the dead in this way, then he does not continue to be the single Mediator for all men as the

¹³¹ IV/1, 310.

¹³² IV/1, 316.

¹³³ "The Easter faith of the first disciples, then, is not a fact on the ground of which we believe insofar as it could relieve us of the risk of such faith but itself belongs to the eschatological occurrence that is the object of faith . . . the word of proclamation that arises in the event of Easter itself belongs to the eschatological salvation occurrence" (Rudolf Bultmann, "New Testament and Mythology," in *New Testament and Mythology and Other Basic Writings*, ed. Schubert Ogden, [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984], 40).

¹³⁴ IV/1, 352.

¹³⁵ IV/1, 313.

crucified one. He cannot be the “the living Saviour” who “is in eternity and therefore today now, at this very hour.”¹³⁶ Thus, Barth emphasizes that Jesus Christ continues to obey the Father, continues to receive grace, and continues to intercede on behalf of humanity and the rest of creation.¹³⁷ However, Jesus Christ continues to do these things as the one who was palpably, bodily crucified.¹³⁸ In other words, Barth tackles the problem of access to God’s life, given that access to God’s life comes through the crucified man Jesus.¹³⁹

How can human beings live before God given their end in the resurrection? Since the crucified Jesus Christ lives as the crucified one and also lives for other human beings, they too can live. Note the participatory framework at play here. Human life happens only insofar as it participates in God’s eternal life for Barth. Since Barth has now shown that God mediates God’s eternal life through the crucified Jesus Christ, he now claims that it makes sense to recognize the resurrection as the enlivening of the crucified Jesus Christ for that purpose. Thus he writes, “He who was crucified is risen, and as such He lives unto God (Rom 6.10). He is the same yesterday, today and forever. This temporal togetherness of the Jesus Christ of Good Friday and the Jesus Christ of Easter Day as created by the divine verdict is the basis of life for men of all ages.”¹⁴⁰ In other words, the resurrection mediates the life of God to the rest of humanity and the creation as a whole,

¹³⁶ IV/1, 314.

¹³⁷ IV/1, 315. Alan Torrance’s claims about the lack of a worship orientation in Karl Barth needed much more defense in the light of these claims. Alan Torrance is following in the wake of T.F. Torrance’s critique that Karl Barth read the book of Hebrews in “the light of a Platonic dualism between . . . the eternal and the temporal,” resulting in a sacramental theology that is “dualist in orientation” (T.F. Torrance, *Theology in Reconciliation* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975], 129). While there is an untoward cleavage in divine and human activity in the Barth’s theology of the sacraments, there is much more going on in Barth’s doctrine of the ascension that has been recognized in this line of critique. See Andrew Burgess, *The Ascension in Karl Barth* (Ashgate: 2004).

¹³⁸ Barth leans heavily on the book of Hebrews in his warranting excursus on this point. See IV/1, 314.

¹³⁹ Of course, for Barth, other mediations – historical, decisions, recollections, tradition, etc. – won’t do the trick on their own, apart from God’s triune activity (IV/1, 314, 315, 317).

¹⁴⁰ IV/1, 316.

to all human beings, to all times and places. There can be no time and space without the resurrection, since God mediates God's eternity to the creation through the life of the crucified Christ.

As the resurrection mediates time and space to creation, it also mediates creation's judgment as that judgment is received by Jesus Christ. Since the crucified one mediates God's eternal life to all times such that all times now participation in the crucifixion, all human beings can recognize that they belong to God. For, "in virtue of the divine right established in the death of Jesus Christ . . . They are no longer turned away from Him, but away from their own being in the past, and turned to Him. They are no longer sinners, but righteous. And all this as He belongs to them and they to him, He who was in His time to them in their time, and they in their time to Him in His time."¹⁴¹ Why? Simply because the crucified one shares his time with them now *and* mediates for them before the Father even now. The one who received their judgment lives, shares that life, and fills that shared life with his own prayer, obedience, and the reception of God's good-pleasure. Other human beings can know that they can live with God because of what Jesus does now, a presence and action that happens now. If the judgment of God accomplished in Jesus Christ is to be shared with the entirety of creation, then the Judged Judge will need to live with the other objects of judgment, those who he represents.

At this point, Barth makes clear his distinction between the three modes of Jesus Christ's resurrection presence – Jesus Christ's appearances to the disciples, his current self-mediation to the creation in the Holy Spirit, and his future self-mediation to the creation. He makes a case for the distinction between these modes of presence by noting that the resurrection constitutes as concrete a history as the cross. He writes, "He is the

¹⁴¹ IV/1, 316-317.

living Saviour in these two times, the one after another . . . the fact that the two times followed one another means that the forty days too, being a temporal event, have their beginning and end like the first form of the life of Jesus.”¹⁴² If the resurrection can be said to be in sequence to the cross, just the cross follows other events, then the resurrection too is a temporal event. It has a beginning, an end, and the event which links that beginning and end. Or, rather, the resurrection has two ends. Once Barth establishes that the resurrection has a beginning as real as the cross is an end, he then searches the biblical history for an end. However, the biblical story puts forth not simply one end of the resurrection, but two. The first end is the ascension, which ends the time in which Jesus is “directly revealed and visible and audible and perceptible” and, simultaneously, the beginning of a time when Jesus Christ is “directly present” but not without “recollection, tradition, and proclamation” mediating that direct presence.¹⁴³ He describes the second end of the resurrection as the second coming of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ’s presence at the second parousia distinguishes itself from the mediating time of the Holy Spirit because it is “the revelation of the altered creation, of the children of God as they are transformed by what has taken place for them and to them in Jesus Christ.”¹⁴⁴ The time after the first parousia ends at the second parousia, a time when the alteration of humanity will no longer be hidden from the world and from the church’s own sight.¹⁴⁵

Thus, Barth emphasizes here that the second mode of the resurrection and the time which corresponds to it – where we are in history now! - has its meaning in the church’s activity. He writes, “This time, which begins with the end of the forty days and

¹⁴² IV/1, 318.

¹⁴³ IV/1, 318.

¹⁴⁴ IV/1, 319.

¹⁴⁵ IV/1, 319,

therefore with the resurrection of Jesus Christ, is the time of the community in the world, its grounding on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, its appearance and tribulation and activity in the world, its internal and external history right up to the present day.”¹⁴⁶ It is in this time that “He was and continues to be and ever again will be directly present and revealed and active in the community by His Spirit.”¹⁴⁷ Jesus Christ is not indirectly present after the ascension, he is directly present through the mediation of the church’s life by virtue of the Holy Spirit.¹⁴⁸ The Christian community is such an important aspect of this time after the ascension that Barth claims its very existence demonstrates the resurrection, demonstrates that human beings can indeed live with God despite the resurrection. Human beings can know they belong to Jesus Christ and can act in that knowledge because “in the existence of the community in the world we have immediately before our eyes the fact that even after the event of the cross revealed in that of Easter, God still had allowed and had time and space for human existence and history and problems.”¹⁴⁹ More specifically, God condescends in the resurrection, allowing the Christian community to be “the first-begotten of all God’s creatures, as a lasting and living and concrete indication of the fact that . . . He expects praise from all men, and every man.”¹⁵⁰ In other words, for Barth, the resurrection is not as real as the sociological community we call the Christian community. Barth does not establish concreteness from

¹⁴⁶ IV/1, 319.

¹⁴⁷ IV/1, 318.

¹⁴⁸ This parallels John Calvin’s claim that “it is now God in us, as much as God with us. Our God with us is declared when he willed to dwell in our human nature as in his temple. But now it is God in us, that is, we feel him joined to us in greater power than when he showed and declared himself mortal man” (Sermon on Luke 2.14, in *Ioannis Calvini opera quae supersunt Omnia*, Vol. 46 of 59, Edited by Baum et.al. [Brunswick: C.A. Schwetschke and Son, 1863-1900], 966; quoted and translated in Dawn DeVries, *Jesus Christ in the Preaching of Calvin and Schleiermacher*, 33). Dawn DeVries makes the conclusion that, for Calvin, “we can know Christ in us as much as, or more than, his earthly companions did” (*Jesus Christ in the Preaching of Calvin and Schleiermacher*, 33).

¹⁴⁹ IV/1, 353.

¹⁵⁰ IV/1, 354.

the shared embodiment that we currently experience.¹⁵¹ Instead, for Barth, the Christian community is as real as the cross and the resurrection. The Christian community is as actual as the resurrection, since the resurrection shares the life of Jesus Christ with the community in the resurrection.¹⁵² Thus, the Christian community indicates that human beings can live with God, despite the end of humanity on the cross.

In conclusion, how does this bear on the question of the induction of the Christian community's growth? The expressiveness of the divine life in Barth, the intertwining of epistemology and ontology expressed in God's glory, offers two ways in which God's life draws the Christian community into its own growth. First, as we saw above, God's life in Jesus Christ draws the community into its own growth insofar as the church encounters God as a Person who loves in freedom. The Christian community is *drawn upward* into the glorious, free love of God as Jesus Christ mediates the pleasure of the Father to the Christian community and the rest of creation as the one who is resurrected. In other words, by virtue of God's glory demonstrated and shared in the resurrection, the Christian community is drawn into its own action.

But, secondly, the Christian community is *drawn forward* into the future insofar as Jesus Christ comes to the Christian community in his fullness, and thus with the fullness of the creation's alteration in Jesus Christ. Here begins to anticipate the layers of

¹⁵¹ As Bultmann puts it, "The event of Easter, insofar as it can be referred to as a historical event alongside the cross, is nothing other than the emergence of faith in the risen one in which the proclamation has its origin. The event of Easter as the resurrection of Christ is not a historical event; the only thing that can be comprehended as a historical event is the Easter faith of the first disciples" ("NT and Mythology," 39-40). Paul Molnar, of course, is right to say that Barth "rejects Bultmann's exegesis primarily because it is distorted by his own systematic theological presupposition that statements cannot be theologically true if they are not depictions of human existence" (Paul Molnar, *Incarnation and Resurrection* [Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 2007], 18). However, his analysis is so guided by the need to show that other theologians lose a doctrine of the resurrection without a clear distinction between the immanent and economic trinity (see page 19) that he fails to address how it is that the resurrection is important for the immanent trinity, as it is a life constituted in relationship to the creation.

¹⁵² IV/1, 354.

the resurrection that will come into clear view in IV/3 (and in chapter 5 below). He argues carefully that the church does not look for a future as a deduction from “the imperfection of the form of the presence of the Crucified in this our own time . . . from a deficiency in the present form of life by and with the life of the Resurrected.”¹⁵³ Instead of a deduction from the incompleteness of Jesus Christ’s presence, Barth warrants a claim about Jesus Christ’s return in the Christian community’s experience of that future presence. He writes, “His final coming is not something which is still lacking in His present action and revelation, but positively, the finality proper to it which opens up to Christians as it takes place in the mode of their present time.”¹⁵⁴ In other words, while the Christian community hopes in a future, it does not postulate that future as a deduction from the lacunae in its experience.¹⁵⁵ Instead, it hopes in a future because it experiences now “the fullness of Jesus Christ Himself . . . the fullness of the love and power of God active in Him.”¹⁵⁶ Barth does make deductions from the experience of the Christian community. However, he makes deductions from the “subject and object of the consummating act of God.”¹⁵⁷ In other words, he finds the condition of Christian experience in what the Christian community encounters, not in the subjective formalities of its encounter of Jesus Christ.

Barth describes the New Testament community’s experience of Jesus Christ as its future: “They lived with a burning longing (*brennenden Sehnsucht*) for the sight denied

¹⁵³ IV/1, 327.

¹⁵⁴ IV/1, 327.

¹⁵⁵ Barth undertakes an interesting implicit dialogue with Schleiermacher. Schleiermacher does affirm the bodily general resurrection, because “The Redeemer ascribes such survival to Himself in everything that He says about His return or reunion with His people; and . . . it follows that in virtue of the identity of human nature in Him and in us, the same must hold good of ourselves” (*Christian Faith*, 700). For Schleiermacher, the promise is the promise of a filling of a lack of presence, while for Barth, it is the promise of the same full presence of Jesus Christ, in another form.

¹⁵⁶ IV/1, 327.

¹⁵⁷ IV/1, 327.

them in this time, for the liberation and redemption which are still to come . . . they burned with this longing (*Sehnsucht*) because . . . He Himself . . . showed Himself to them . . . as the One who stood before them as eternally future.”¹⁵⁸ Again, Barth’s point is that the Christian community does not deduce a future from what it desires; it simply desires more of what it already experiences. Then we find Barth utilizing more explicitly the onto-epistemological vocabulary of glory: “this time between is made for them a time of joy (*Freudenzeit*), in which every moment and every hour means not simply the continuation of that which has been received, not simply an advance in the consequences which can be drawn from it, but also the approach of the making absolute of that which has been received, of its new and definitive form (*Gestalt*)”¹⁵⁹ In other words, it is the final form or shape of Jesus Christ’s self-manifestation which the Christian community experiences now in this time. As we saw in chapter one, joy is the power to be moved by God’s form.¹⁶⁰ As we saw in chapter two, joy is fundamentally temporal, the experience of anticipatory or retrociprocity gratitude and surprise in reaching a goal. Barth combines both ways of talking about joy and glory. The Christian community experiences anticipatory joy, longing, desire because of the future they experience as Jesus Christ mediates himself to the community by the Holy Spirit. The future time and the present time are, ontologically, different “manifestations, shapes, forms (*die Erscheinungen, die Gestalten, die Formen*) of the alteration of the human situation, which has taken place in Jesus Christ and is now underway.”¹⁶¹ In other words, the Christian community enjoys a

¹⁵⁸ IV/1, 326; KD, 360.

¹⁵⁹ IV/1, 328; KD 361.

¹⁶⁰ Cf. II/1, 674; KD 760: “Die Herrlichkeit Gottes muß in ihrer Verherrlichung durch die Kreatur in Form einer Entsprechung Gestalt gewinnen oder sie tut es gar nicht”/“The glory of God in its glorification in the creation takes on in form a corresponding shape or it does not happen at all.”

¹⁶¹ IV/1, 331; KD 365. Translation modified.

future glory in its own present glory. It takes *joy* insofar as its present, provisional *form* of existence anticipates its future joy and future form, and Jesus Christ's own future form. It *is* between two forms of glory.

Thus, the Christian community grows into its signaling of history's future. The church, in its sociological visibility, self-develops (*sich entwickelnd*) in, alongside of, and in dependence on the rest of human culture and history.¹⁶² As such, the church is a history, a pattern of change which intensifies over time as it approximates its own intent (*Absicht*), the self-gathering of the church to its object, which is Jesus Christ.¹⁶³ However, the visible church is also gathering toward and *within* the glory of Jesus Christ, who is visible in its common action by the Holy Spirit.¹⁶⁴ Of course, its development toward the goal of the universal glorification of Jesus Christ is hidden from all who do not share Christian faith. In this present time, the Christian community has the task of "discovering and receiving as the life of all men and our own life, and of letting it take root and grow, that life of His which is the life of the Son of God in the place of all men and as the Mediator."¹⁶⁵ In other words, for Barth, Jesus Christ's new future presence brings a new future alteration to the rest of creation.¹⁶⁶ That new future alteration has a provisional form – a provisional glory – in the current life of the Christian community. And, insofar as that definitive form of glory (Jesus' own life and the response to that life in the

¹⁶² IV/1, 652; KD 728.

¹⁶³ IV/1, 652/KD 728; IV/1, 650.

¹⁶⁴ IV/1, 656-657: "the glory of the community gathered together by Him within humanity is only a glory which is hidden from the eyes of the world until His final revelation, so that it can be only an object of faith" because "the gathering and maintaining and completing of the community . . . is . . . in the hand of God . . . the glory of the Lord justifying man."

¹⁶⁵ IV/1, 320.

¹⁶⁶ These are the kinds of affirmations, and their interweaving logic, which show that Edwin Van Driel's claims about Jesus Christ's resurrection over-read Barth. As one example, Van Driel writes that "For Barth, the meaning of Christ's resurrection lies not in an eschatological continuation of his embodied existence but in a revelation to those who still live in time of what his preresurrection life entailed" (*Incarnation Anyway*, 115). The resurrection does indeed do that, but it also reveals the future form of the creation's existence, as we have, are, and will continue to see.

creation) comes, the Christian community is now growing in its response to that future. The Christian community stretches forth towards its “goal,” it grows.¹⁶⁷ That is why Barth refers to this self-gathering of the church as the penultimate goal of the world’s time after the ascension of Jesus Christ and before the return of Jesus Christ.¹⁶⁸

Yet, Barth’s overall point with regard to this time and the Christian community is about the graciousness of God’s glory. This time and space is entirely superfluous.¹⁶⁹ He even brings up the question as to whether the interval between the first and second *parousia* is at all advisable, given that the judgment of God is obscured by the weak witness of the Christian community.¹⁷⁰ For Jesus Christ is the Head of both the Christian community and the entire human community: The Christian community is indeed the body of Christ, but “it has to understand itself as a promise of the emergence of unity in which not only Christian but all men are already comprehended in Jesus Christ.”¹⁷¹ Thus, God does not need an interval to realize a reconciliation with the world - God’s acts in

¹⁶⁷ IV/1, 329. See also IV/1, 316: “. . . He has called them His children and received them as such. This was said to them, no, is said to them, by the Word of God made flesh, in the glory in which it was spoken and heard on Easter Day, and in which from that day it will be spoken and can be heard as the living Word, as the redemptive history which takes place to-day within universal history.”

¹⁶⁸ As Barth says, this time, which is the time of the entire creation, is the time of the Christian community – “the time which is spared and appointed for the sake of the gathering and existence and mission of the community” (IV/1, 733). For God “wills not only that the justification which has taken place in Jesus Christ should have taken place, but that the news of it should be sounded out and should meet with faith. In order that this may happen, he still gives to the world space, time and existence” (IV/1, 738). God gives the world time to come to a “correspondence in a voice of human thanks” such that God can receive “praise from the heart of His human creation” (IV/1, 737). The church is given time in order to develop an offering of praise, to offer worship before and on behalf of the rest of humanity.

¹⁶⁹ He writes, “the event of Easter morning might have been the sounding of the last trumpet (I Cor. 15.52), the event of the final revelation, presence and action of the Judge who was judged for sinful men and therefore the even of the last day, the final judgment” (IV/1, 734).

¹⁷⁰ IV/1, 736.

¹⁷¹ IV/1, 665.

Jesus Christ are enough for that.¹⁷² God's acts apply universally, without the gathering of the Christian community.

So, why? Why give the Christian community time to develop its praise on behalf of creation? Here again we see that Barth specifies the reason in terms of the glory of God's grace:

However final was that which was done in the death of Jesus Christ and revealed in His resurrection—it was not a unilateral decision of force or a dictatorial declaration of will or a sovereign overpowering. God did not will to act and He did not act in this way in Jesus Christ. This is not the aspect of what He did for His own glory and our good, of the act of grace in which He confirmed Himself as the Creator of man and the Lord of the covenant for which He elected him, of His conflict with the pride and fall of man, and the conversion of man to Himself—although this is indeed His last and supreme achievement . . . we may think that this would have contributed to His glory or been of great benefit for the world, but it would have been the act of an abstract and godless grace, not His own grace, not the divine grace addressed to man in Jesus Christ, but a faithfulness full of unfaithfulness, just because it is a unilateral decision which overrides man, eliminating and ignoring him. Grace which does not want any response, any thanks? Grace which does not yearn (*begehrte*) for any correspondence on the part of man? No eternal glory of the world consummated in this way could alter the fact that an act of this kind is unfriendly to man, that it is at bottom an ungracious act. No sovereignty of which man might boast in the exercise of such grace can alter the fact that it is brutal grace—grace as brutal man might conceive it, but not the grace of the true and living God, who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The fact that between the first end which has already come and the future final end there is interposed our time, the end-time, shows us first of all that we have to rid our minds completely of all thought of a god or a grace of this kind.¹⁷³

The issue here is first of all the character of God. As Igor Davidson puts it, “The temporal history of God's outshining is . . . of the utmost importance, for it is in the concretions of that history that God is indeed found to be the God who, in utterly momentous grace, has

¹⁷² As for the Christian community, “it realizes, it sees and acknowledges and confesses ‘already before all others’ what has been done for all in Jesus Christ, and what, as it has been done for all, will be seen and acknowledged and confessed by all when He appears as the Judge of the quick and the dead” (IV/1, 662).

¹⁷³ IV/1, 737. KD IV/1, 823.

determined himself for us.”¹⁷⁴ If grace is God’s self-giving in order to include the creation in God’s being, then God’s reasons for giving the creation time to respond in praise would be the character of God’s life. It would not befit the being of God to bring history to a close in a “unilateral,” “overpowering,” or “dictatorial” way. Instead, grace “yearns” (*begehrte*). God yearns. A glorious God – a God who yearns for God’s own grace-filled triunity - is the same God who pours out that glory in human history in Jesus Christ. Thus, a glorious God befriends the creature. It would be an ungracious, and thus, inglorious, and thus not an act of the Triune God to not allow the creation to respond to God in Christ because it is not like God in Christ to do this. That is not how God gives God’s self. God gives God’s own being, which includes God’s glory. When God gives God’s self, God gives the creature God’s own power to be changed by God. The glory of God’s self-giving draws the Christian community into its own freedom, for God means to befriend them. Friends are not overpowered. They love freely, recognizing the worth of God’s triune love. In doing this, the church gathers itself in freedom.

V. Conclusion

My goal in this chapter was to uncover the substructure of glory within Barth’s Christology in IV/1. We undertook a cursory glance at Barth’s description of the work of Christ in IV/1. Yet, the focus of the analysis was the doctrine of the resurrection because there Barth discusses how Jesus Christ’s accomplishments in his life and death are communicated to the Christian community. Just as Barth framed the doctrine of glory as a matter of the Triune God’s transition to the creation, as a matter of God’s maintaining non-violent lordship over that transition, we see that same dynamic arise in the relationship between Jesus Christ and the Christian community. The Triune God is lord

¹⁷⁴ Igor Davidson, “Divine Light: Some Reflections after Barth,” in *Trinitarian Theology After Barth*, 58.

over the transition to creature, and that includes the transition from Jesus Christ to the Christian community. More concretely, for Barth, the resurrection, as described in IV/1, deals with the issue of the destruction of humanity (and of all of creation) in the cross, such that without the resurrection, the cross would have meant the cessation of creaturely existence. In IV/1, Jesus Christ's transition to the Christian community is a transition from the destruction of the cross.

The substructure of glory can be described in two basic ways as Barth describes the resurrection in IV/1 as that transition. First, I argued that the substructure of glory appears as Barth frames the resurrection as an intratriune activity between the Father and Son, such that the Father issues his joy upon the Son in the resurrection and thus the Son can and does begin his own resurrected appearance to the Christian community. God's life is a life of self-giving: God gives God's self, God's self is glorious, and thus glory is invested in Jesus Christ. Yet, God's self-giving does not end with Jesus Christ. For Barth, the glory of Jesus Christ – the glory invested in Jesus Christ and invested through Jesus Christ – awakens a Christian community's participatory response to Jesus Christ without violence. Thus, second, I argued that we see these dynamics of glory emerge when Barth suggests that the resurrection is also a sharing of the Triune God's own good-pleasure with the Christian community: the history of creation and the Christian community has a new beginning in God's own beginning – God's joy in God's own life, which enacts God's election to be God for the creation.

In the next chapter, I turn to Barth's treatment of Christology, especially his doctrine of the resurrection, in IV/2 of the *Church Dogmatics*. As I shall argue, a subtle shift occurs in the use of the categories of glory. While not leaving behind his

descriptions from IV/1, he also engages more directly with the triune form of God's glory, and shifts his attention from the resurrection as a beginning of a new time to the resurrection as the sustenance of ongoing time after Jesus Christ's awakening. Christ's resurrection in glory does not simply begin a new time, but sustains this time after the resurrection – and thus sustains the Christian community's unique being-in-act within that time. For Barth, the form of God's life, as God shares that form with the Christian community in and through the resurrection, sustains the Christian community's growth. To these claims I now turn.

Chapter Four:
Triune Transition: The Resurrection and God's Glory in *Church Dogmatics* IV/2

. . . created sharing in the life of the divine is precisely a ceaseless growing into what is always and already greater and does not itself either grow or diminish . . . The identity of nature and act in God is . . . the condition of God's accessibility to faith and charity. Because his activity and life are self-differentiating, a pattern of initiating gift, perfect response, and the distinct and 'new' energy that is the harmony of these two movements, created difference, otherness, multiplicity, may find place in God.¹

The task of this chapter is to identify the substructure of glory in Barth's doctrine of the resurrection in IV/2, especially in Barth's use of the term form. I have two basic arguments. The first argument is preliminary and cursory. The task of my preliminary argument is to identify how the substructure of Barth's doctrine of glory operates in his description of Jesus Christ's life and death in IV/2. IV/1 pays closer attention to the downward movement of the incarnation, the movement in which God becomes human. IV/2 pays closer attention to the upward movement of the incarnation, the movement in which humanity is brought into communion with the divine. Thus, for Barth, since God's being is what it is in act, he considers Jesus Christ's humanity in both IV/1 and IV/2. In IV/1, Barth argues that Jesus Christ substitutes himself for humanity by taking on and effecting God's judgment on the rest of humanity, thereby expressing God's humiliation in becoming human. In IV/2, Barth argues that Jesus Christ substitutes himself for humanity by taking on and effecting God's rule over the rest of humanity, thereby expressing God's exaltation of human beings. In IV/1, Jesus Christ's obedient self-offering is the humiliation of God; in IV/2, it is also the exaltation of humanity.² Where is

¹ Rowan Williams, *Arius: Heresy and Tradition*, revised ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 243.

² Jesus Christ's obedient self-offering is "the exaltation of our essence with all its possibilities and limits into the completely different sphere of that totality, freedom, correspondence and service"; Jesus Christ's self-offering exalts humanity because human finally achieves "free, spontaneous, inward agreement with

the substructure of glory in IV/2? As we saw in chapter two, Barth describes Jesus Christ as “the man who is well-pleasing (*wohlgefällig*) to God.”³ One of the key terms in Barth’s doctrine of glory is God’s joy or pleasure.⁴ As we saw in the last chapter, in IV/1, for Barth, Jesus Christ’s obedient self-offering (which culminates at the cross), corresponds to the Father’s good-pleasure in that self-offering (which culminates in the resurrection). As we saw in the last chapter, in IV/1, for Barth, the Father’s good-pleasure did not result from that self-offering, it empowered and sustained Jesus Christ’s history of learning to obey, which is made most obvious in Barth’s description of Gethsemane. This chapter brings us to the other key term within the landscape of Barth’s doctrine of glory: form. When God takes pleasure in a creature or creatures, the creature’s form changes and conforms to that joy. It is Jesus Christ’s *form* of obedience which pleases the Father. God’s joy in God’s own triune form turns toward the man Jesus, and thus produces in Jesus Christ a human form of life corresponding to the triune form of life (i.e. his obedience). In the last chapter, the focus was on joy or good-pleasure as noted particularly in IV/1; in this chapter I focus on form as used particularly in IV/2 (with some glances back at IV/1).

Identifying Barth’s use of form in his description of Jesus Christ’s life and death prepares us for the central burden of the chapter, which is how the resurrection draws out the Christian community in IV/2. The issue that Barth addresses in his doctrine of the

the will and decree and action of God, and therefore a service of God, which includes also a service of man” (IV/2, 29-30).

³ IV/2, 30.

⁴ In the opening paragraphs of IV/2 that frame the problem he addresses in the volume, Barth mentions that the purpose of the judgment described in IV/1 is the exaltation of humanity into a form corresponding to God’s good-pleasure: “in and with His own abasement God has elected and achieved man’s exaltation, that the telos of this judgment . . . can be only the redemption of man – and more than that, the creation and existence of the new man who is well-pleasing to God. This is the second theme and problem which we must now discuss” (IV/2, 6).

resurrection in IV/2 is that the cross is not only an end to human history, it is also an absolute achievement. The cross, with Barth, is the absolute fulfillment of the covenant, since God fulfills both the human and divine side of the covenant in Jesus Christ. Yet, the Christian community's activity, including its growth, is not depicted as a redundancy in comparison to the completeness of Jesus Christ's fulfillment of the covenant. Jesus Christ's complete fulfillment of the covenant renders the Christian community's growth an ever-renewed gift. But, how does this work? And, what does this have to do with glory?

We would expect Barth to engage the concept of form in his doctrine of resurrection, just as the concept of form emerges as Barth describes Jesus Christ's life and death in IV/2 and IV/1, as well as in the ecclesiology we considered in chapter two. I argue that this indeed is what happens in Barth's doctrine of the resurrection in IV/2. My central argument is that, for Barth, in IV/2, the resurrection glorifies the Christian community as the Christian community is directed by the Son and taken by the Spirit into the ever-renewing history – or *form*, in the language of glory - of the triune God. In the resurrection, the Triune God shares the Triune God's own form, God's own distance-crossing or history in partnership, the Triune God's own intratrinitarian transition between the Father and the Son – i.e. the Holy Spirit, making possible the ongoing growth of the Christian community. Put another way: Given God's investment of God's triune form in Jesus Christ's life and in the Christian community through the resurrected Son and the imparted Spirit, the Christian community's form can and does correspond to the growth of the Son and the history of the triune life – that is, the Christian community grows. The glorification of Jesus Christ's obedient life in the resurrection not only opens

a temporal beginning for the Christian community (as I argued in chapter three), but also draws the community into an ever renewing maturation from that beginning.

This chapter has two parts. The first part analyzes briefly the role that glory - especially the term form - plays in Barth's historical ontology of Jesus Christ's life and death presented in 64.2 ("The Homecoming of the Son of Man"). The second part of the chapter considers the substructural role of glory in Barth's doctrine of the resurrection presented in 64.4 ("The Direction of the Son"), and is where the central theses I mention in the last paragraph are supported.

Part One: Forming Divine and Human Essence in the Incarnation

In this preparatory section, I consider Barth's treatment of Jesus Christ as the one who exalts humanity in his life and death. I follow a recent reading of Barth's Christology offered by Paul Jones, such that, for Barth, God achieves God's own identity in the life and death of Jesus Christ - the life and death of Jesus Christ reverberates into the immanent life of God, such that God's modifies God's own triune life. Since this historicized triune life is shared with the Christian community in the resurrection, reviewing the shape of Barth's argument in 64.2 (in accord with Jones' reading) prepares us for those claims. My goal is simply to note how the vocabulary of glory functions within this dynamic, especially noting how the concept of form plays a role in organizing Barth's description of the divine and human essence. I note that the concept of form allowed Barth to track changes in the divine life which do not alter the divinity of the divine life. I also note that the glorification of humanity in Jesus Christ is a way for Barth to name the depth of the divine self-giving, such that all of the divine life is offered for human participation. This sheds light on why Barth rejects deification and *habitus* as

concepts which can explain participation in the divine life by Jesus Christ or other human beings.

Thesis, Claims, and Ground Rules in “The Homecoming of the Son of Man”

Overall, Barth’s thesis in 64.2 is that Jesus’ humanity “is both completely like and yet also completely unlike that of other men.”⁵ Barth uniquely argues that Jesus Christ not only lives an authentically human life, he bears an authentically sinful human nature. The Son of God incarnates not human nature insofar as it is properly ordered, but human nature insofar as it opposes God, humanity and the rest of creation. Jesus Christ is like other human beings because he has “our creaturely form (*geschöpflichen Art*), but also in its determination by sin and death; in our human nature, but also its concealment under the human ‘un-nature’ which results from the opposition of man to God.”⁶ On the other hand, Jesus Christ is completely unlike other human beings. Barth is not merely saying that Jesus’ individual personality is unique and that Jesus Christ is also the Son of God. Barth concerns himself with what happens to the human form in Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is uniquely human in that “his human existence, in the history in which He became and is man . . . there took place an exaltation of the humanity which as His and ours is the same.”⁷ Jesus Christ fulfills human possibilities and draws them into a new pattern of activity which transcends their created integrity and their creaturely self-negation. He does what other human beings, burdened by their own pride, sloth, and falsehood, cannot do without him. He does what other human beings, limited by their own creatureliness as

⁵ IV/2, 27.

⁶ IV/2, 27/KD IV/2, 28.

⁷ IV/2, 28.

such, cannot do without him.⁸ Exaltation has to do with a restitution of created integrity through the overcoming of human pride, sloth, and falsity and an intensification or perfection of human life beyond the creational possibilities of human beings. As Paul Jones describes it, “Christ’s life sanctifies because his existence in correspondence with God sets each and every human in covenantal partnership with God; Christ’s life *re*-sanctifies, because his existence countermands the damaging effects of sin . . .”⁹ Jesus Christ fulfills the created possibilities which he himself creates as the incarnate one insofar as He is the man “in whose human being and thinking and willing and speaking and acting there takes place the grateful affirmation of the grace addressed to the human race and the whole created cosmos.”¹⁰ What it is to be human, *humanitas*, transcends itself in the history of Jesus Christ because humanity becomes newly related to God.

Barth structures his argument for and explanation of this thesis in three main parts. First, he discusses, ever so briefly, the basis of human exaltation in the divine election. Second, he discusses the historical fulfillment of that election in the event of the incarnation. Third, he offers a meditation on how the resurrection and ascension provide epistemological access to the exaltation of humanity (as opposed to any other sources). While I will engage the first part somewhat, I focus on the second part, which is also the heart of his argument. Our analysis will show how the category of form or shape helps him make his argument.

⁸ “this man, and in Him the essence of Man as determined not only in its creatureliness but also its fleshliness, in its nature but also its ‘un-nature,’ is set in motion from its very centre . . . It is an exaltation – the movement of man from below to above, from the earth which his own sphere, created good by God and darkened by Himself, to heaven which is most proper sphere of God, from man in his creaturely and fleshly essence . . . to peace with God His Creator, Judge and Lord.” (IV/2, 29).

⁹ Paul Jones, *Humanity of Christ*, 184.

¹⁰ IV/2, 30.

The second part of 64.2 takes up the bulk of 64.2, and provides the four key claims Barth intends to make. Those claims are: “(1) that this One, God, the Son, became and is also man; (2) that His existence became and is also the existence of a man; (3) that divine and human essence were and are united by Him and in Him; and (4) our present goal, that He raised up human essence to essence in Himself and therefore as true God became and was also true man.”¹¹ The order of these claims, as well as the topics addressed within them, generally follows Protestant scholastic treatments of the person of Jesus Christ. Barth particularly follows the compendium of Reformed scholastic theology assembled by Heinrich Heppe, which was instrumental to Barth’s theological development.¹² It is instructive, given the importance of this background, to compare Barth’s divergences from Protestant scholastic treatments, as represented by Heppe. My analysis particularly follows Barth’s expansion of the last two claims.

Before he expands these claims, Barth indicates key markers or ground rules for his expansion of these claims. Barth opens by emphasizing that the exaltation of humanity is an act of God, and that it transcends all of God’s other acts in creation because “God becomes man and the Creator creature.”¹³ Barth moors this claim by asserting what he argues in IV/1.59: God becomes human “without ceasing to be God.”¹⁴ God is immutably, or constantly, God. Barth is even willing to say that “. . . the one thing

¹¹ IV/2, 44.

¹² Heinrich Heppe, *Reformed Dogmatics: Set Out and Illustrated from the Sources*, trans. G.T. Thomson, (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1978). Bruce McCormack argues that it was Barth’s discovery of Heppe that allowed him to secure his own Christological approach to Christian dogmatics (*Karl Barth’s Critically Realistic Dialectical Theology*, 327-328, 334-337). Paul Jones has offered a stimulating analysis of this material in relation to Heppe, where he attempts to show how Barth has reworked Heppe’s categories with his “own theological convictions” (*The Humanity of Christ*, 126; see 126-150 for Jones’ full analysis of Barth in relationship to Heppe and classical Lutheran scholasticism). I am greatly indebted to Jones’ work here.

¹³ IV/2, 37.

¹⁴ IV/2, 40.

that God cannot do is cease to be God. He cannot change himself into another.”¹⁵ The chief danger is to describe the incarnation in a way that transmutes God’s life into a creaturely life or into something merely between God and humanity. The incarnation does not exalt humanity to a new reconciliation with God if God does not continue to be God. If God does not continue to exist as God, then humanity no longer has the partner to whom it must be reconciled.

Also, if God does not cease to be God, then it is easier to say that God is “*also* true man.”¹⁶ The exaltation of Jesus Christ is the exaltation of all of humanity, the *humanitas* per se. Yet, if Jesus Christ’s exaltation makes him something other than truly human, then he does not exalt the rest of humanity in his self-offering. For as he writes, “When we see Him we see the Father (Jn 14.9), but we also see the child, ourselves, man – in the full sense of the word, true man, the man who exists in history.”¹⁷ Thus, if God does not cease to be God, God adds (*hinzunehmen*) and affiliates (*aufnehmen*) “a being as human to his being as God (*ein Sein als Mensch zu seinem Sein as Gott*).”¹⁸ To become a true human being as God, God must add and affiliate a human being to God’s life who is human in the ways that others are human. Very clearly, forthrightly, and carefully Barth claims that exaltation does not mean “a destruction or alteration of His humanity.”¹⁹ Jesus Christ does not use human nature as raw material for another being; he is not “an angel, a middle being, a half-god.”²⁰ The fact that Jesus Christ is God “does not mean a destruction or even diminution of His likeness with us, so that it does not take place in

¹⁵ IV/2, 40.

¹⁶ IV/2, 41.

¹⁷ IV/2, 29.

¹⁸ IV/2, 42/KD IV/2, 44.

¹⁹ IV/2, 28.

²⁰ IV/2, 27/KD IV/2, 28 (Translation modified).

any situation but that which is ours.”²¹ Human nature can be inalterable, immutable while still allowing for the uniqueness of the incarnation and the exaltation of human life, or at least that’s what Barth aims to show.

The Form of the Divine Essence in Jesus Christ

In a wonderful transposition of both Antiochian and Alexandrian Christologies (if those descriptions are useful), Barth stakes out important territory with regard to the *communio naturarum/unio mediata, communicatio idiomatum, communicatio gratiarum and communicatio operationem* – or, the communion of natures and the effects of that communion.²² Barth affirms that the divine essence (or that which Jesus Christ has in common with the Father and Holy Spirit in absolute distinction from the creation) and the human essence (or that which Jesus Christ has in common with all other human beings in absolute distinction from the Father, Son and Holy Spirit) are united in Jesus Christ.²³ Again, Barth carefully notes that the essences do not transmute into one another or become ingredients in a third creation and the warrant for that claim is that they are united in the person of the Son of God.²⁴ Barth warrants these claims though an actualistic account of the union. The divine and human essences, while not epiphenomenal, do not transcend – as in exist apart from – the free action of God in Christ. He writes, “Neither of the two natures counts as such, because neither exists and is actual as such.”²⁵ In other words, the divine subject determines the divine essence and

²¹ IV/2, 30

²² See Paul Jones’ locating of Barth vis-à-vis Alexandrian and Antiochian tendencies (*Humanity of Christ*, 47-51). Jones’ point is that trying to locate Barth within one of these two camps is impossible, because the camps are, historically, a false construct and that, even if the constructs were right, Barth falls in neither one. However, Jones does confirm, as I mention here, that Barth draws upon concerns that are dear to both tendencies.

²³ IV/2, 61.

²⁴ IV/2, 63.

²⁵ IV/2, 66.

human essence insofar as they are united in that subject, because the union of the two natures is a “two-sided participation” in which the absolute depths of both the divine life and human life are invested.²⁶

A note about the term “essence.” Part of what we are doing in this section is to locate Barth’s use of the terms essence or nature. Barth wrote that Jesus Christ is “not merely ‘a man’ but the *humanum*, the being and essence (*Wesen*), the nature (*Natur*) and kind, which is that of all men, which characterizes them all as men, and distinguishes them from other creatures.”²⁷ Notwithstanding Barth’s actualism, Barth is not completely adverse to using the language of essence with regard to humanity. While he claims that it is in “serious need of interpretation,” he also states that this does not require abandoning the concept of essence.²⁸ Barth’s main objection to the terms nature or essence is the suggestion that anthropology can be determined prior to knowledge of Jesus Christ. Both the “ground of being and ground of knowledge” with regard to anything in creation is the act in which God incarnates God’s self in Jesus Christ.²⁹ For Barth, Jesus Christ does not assume a humanity pre-determined by God’s acts in creation, such that the history of humanity prior to Jesus Christ anticipates the incarnation. Given the doctrine of election, creation at large and humanity in particular “does not move towards Christ . . . it *begins*

²⁶ IV/2, 64.

²⁷ IV/2, 48. Not only does Barth have a “supralapsarian Christology,” he has a *supracreatio* anthropology in which Christ’s humanity determines the created possibilities which Christ himself fulfills. Since humanity is elected in Christ and thus determined to be what it is in Christ, due solely to the overflow of God’s good-pleasure, human beings do not determine their own humanity apart from Jesus Christ (IV/2, 41, 34-35). Edwin Van Driel is right when he claims that “Election is an eschatological category; and the eschaton is the first in the order of the divine decrees. Object and subject of these decrees is Jesus Christ – not the Son as *logos asarkos* the preincarnate Word, but the Son as Jesus Christ, the incarnate Word. The incarnation stands thus at the very beginning of God’s relating to what is not God” (*Incarnation Anyway*, 81). Van Driel is also right to point out that, in some sense for Barth, “we are before we come to exist” (Ibid., 72).

²⁸ IV/2, 26.

²⁹ IV/2, 37, 47.

with Christ.³⁰ Thus, we cannot simply apply an anthropology derived apart from Jesus Christ to Jesus Christ. Yet, for Barth, the terms nature and essence are “right and necessary” in order to secure “the likeness between the humanity of Jesus Christ and that of other men” and to function “as a delimitation . . . against every kind of docetic Christology, in which His likeness with us is either crudely or cunningly denied.”³¹ In other words, humanity is a nature or an essence that is inalterably what it is, *given that it is determined to be what it is in Christ’s history*. Essence or nature denotes the identifying characteristics of human life as opposed to God and other creatures, that which qualifies something to be what it is. Barth is quite clear about this: nature and essence identify the stable markers of humanity. Thus, Barth says that what God assumed into unity with God’s self in Jesus Christ was not a man, but human nature – that which identifies all human beings as human beings.³² It is this commitment to nature or essence which helps Barth affirm that God and humanity remain what they are both despite and because of the incarnation. The incarnation unifies God as authentically God with human beings as they are authentically human.³³

While essence or nature denotes the stability of human existence, in Barth’s work it does not denote either a uniform or static existence – human essence is what it is

³⁰ Jones, *Humanity of Christ*, 87.

³¹ IV/2, 26.

³² IV/2, 48.

³³ IV/2, 49. Jones is absolutely right in his claim that Barth is offering a Christology beyond Chalcedon in that Barth offers “an account of Christ’s humanity that goes beyond bald affirmations of co-essentiality and regulative assertions about the nature of the hypostatic union” (*The Humanity of Christ*, 128). But, given Barth’s quite numerous references to both *Wesen* and *Natur* on their own and as synonyms (see IV/2, 48, quoted above, for example), it is an exaggeration to say that “*Natur* and *Wesen* take up no meaningful role in Barth’s Christology in *Church Dogmatics* I/2 and thereafter” (33). Van Driel makes a more radical claim: “Barth does not want to supplement the traditional understanding of divinity and humanity in terms of natures with one in terms of history; he wants to replace it” (*Incarnation Anyway*, 104). Pace Jones and Van Driel, there are two meaningful roles, given Barth’s usage in these texts: essence denotes the authenticity and integrity of human history as human history and essence denotes that which results from the encounter with Jesus Christ. Essence is what is in history and history determines essence, but essence is still meaningful in these two ways.

because of Jesus Christ's history. Barth claims that human nature, *because of Jesus Christ alone*, is self-transcending and stable at the same time. He writes, "In His person, as the *humanitas* of this man, *humanitas* itself is in motion – from here to there, from the far country to which the Subject who acts her as man, the Son of God, gave Himself, back again to the home which is shown to be the home of man by the fact that the One who came from it willed to become and be the Son of Man, and to which every man may really return, and has already done so, in the person of this One."³⁴ This exaltation is an event which has happened and continues to happen. The incarnation "can never become past or cease to be His act"; the incarnation is a "being which does not cease as such to be a becoming."³⁵ Human nature undergoes changes that do not alter its authenticity as human nature because it is accomplished in Jesus Christ's history and shared with the rest of humanity. We can locate the stable markers of humanity in Jesus Christ's history; indeed, that is the only place it is fully locatable. Just as Jesus Christ has a stable, performed identity as the Son of God and the Son of Man, there is an essence – the pattern of stability in that performance. Thus, in Jesus Christ, Barth is describing human nature as something which consistently, stably, undergoes changes vis-à-vis God, which is what it is in its own history in relationship to God.

How does this work? How do the categories of glory play a role? First, participation is an important term to mediate the relationship between divine and human essences, because it allows Barth to maintain a *communio* of the divine and human essence in Christ while distinguishing them. The divine essence and human essence remain themselves but can be intimately related and even co-identified in the history of

³⁴ IV/2, 29

³⁵ IV/2, 46.

Jesus Christ. Indeed, participation is a particularly important word because of Barth's development of the *communicatio idiomatum*. Barth is keen to reject any form of either the *genus majesticum* (the communication of the divine nature as such to the human nature as such) or the *genus tapeinoticum* (the communication of the human nature as such to the divine nature as such).³⁶ However, in the incarnate Son of God, in his history, the divine and human essences possess a type of determination. He writes, "the divine acquires a determination to the human and the human a determination from the divine. The Son of God takes and has a part in the human essence assumed by Him by giving this a part in His divine essence. And the human essence assumed by Him takes and has a part in His divine essence by receiving this from him."³⁷ There is no cyclical or reciprocal pattern here. The divine determines itself "to" the human; the human determines itself "from" the divine.³⁸ Yet, there is absolute investment on both sides, a "complete openness" in which the divine is absolutely that which gives and the human is absolutely that which receives.³⁹ In other words, in opposition to anything found in the Protestant scholastics – either Reformed or Lutheran – for Barth the *effecta* of the hypostatic union are not simply found in human nature. The incarnation has an effect within the divine life. The Father, Son and Holy Spirit are what they are – the God who gives God's entire life to the creature as the creature – because of the incarnation. Just so, the human essence receives that impartation of the divine life with its own self-impartation. Human essence, in Jesus Christ, becomes exalted in gratitude. Exaltation is a matter of Jesus Christ's self-

³⁶ IV/2, 77-78, 82-83.

³⁷ IV/2, 70.

³⁸ IV/2, 70.

³⁹ IV/2, 74; cf. IV/2, 64. See also IV/2, 86: "all that God is, without either needing or being subject to any change or diminution or increase, is characterized by the fact that He is everything divine, not for Himself only, but also, in His Son, for the sake of man and for him . . . The actuality of the incarnate Son of God, the union of the two natures in Him, is the direct confrontation of the totality of the divine with the human in the one Jesus Christ."

offering as a human being. The exaltation of human essence in Jesus Christ is simply “harmony with the divine will, that service of the divine act, that correspondence to the divine grace, that state of thankfulness, which is the only possibility in view of the fact that this man is determined by this divine will and act and grace alone. . .”⁴⁰ Human essence becomes exalted as it gives itself over to the divine self-giving, obeying and thus imitating the divine self-giving.

This aspect of IV/2 has been the object of increased attention as of late. For instance, Bruce McCormack has recently argued that, for Barth, “the exaltation of the human . . . is the consequence of a human participation in a concrete history in which both the ‘essence’ of God and the ‘essence’ of the human are . . . *made real*. Thus, the link which ‘joins’ divine ‘essence’ to human ‘essence’ is not an abstract doctrine of being but rather history; if human ‘exaltation’ takes place in the same history as that in which the ‘essence’ of God is made real, then one can speak meaningfully of a participation in the divine ‘essence.’”⁴¹ McCormack’s goal is to show that Barth’s depiction of exaltation as a participation in the divine essence are is not equivalent to Eastern Orthodox versions of deification. But he also suggests that “on the basis of his actualistic Christology, Barth is able to say everything that the Orthodox would like to say with their concept of divinization.”⁴² The key to McCormack’s argument is that, due to God’s self-election in Christ, God realizes or actualizes both the divine essence and human essence in the

⁴⁰ IV/2, 92.

⁴¹ Bruce McCormack, “Participation in God, Yes, Deification, No: Two Modern Protestant Responses to an Ancient Question,” in *Denkwürdiges Geheimnis: Beiträge zur Gotteslehre. Festschrift für Eberhard Jüngel zum 70. Geburtstag*, ed. Ingolf U. Dalferth, Johannes Fischer, and Hans-Peter Grosshaus (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 349. It is important to note that Adam Neder has opened up the discussion vis-à-vis deification in Barth by pointing to those who study deification in patristic, medieval and Eastern Orthodox texts. In other words, once we get down to actually defining deification in other traditions, it may be possible to see Barth as offering a version of deification, despite his claims to the contrary (Neder, *Participation in Christ*, 86-92).

⁴² McCormack, “Participation in God,” 359

history of Jesus Christ, but that it is the nature of the actualization which secures the ongoing authenticity of the divine and human essence. On McCormack's account of Barth, the man Jesus and the Son of God enact a history of encounter and confrontation. The man Jesus receives God's self-determination to be God for the human being and thus is determined by that reception. The divine essence becomes "structured by a giving and human essence is structured by a receiving that finds its basis in the divine giving."⁴³ Since the human essence is realized in an act of volitional conformation that is not bilateral, its participation in the divine essence is a matter of historical confrontation and encounter – a response to "an authoritative claim."⁴⁴ Thus, both the divine essence and human essence are actualized, or "made real," in that encounter. The ongoing encounter is that which fungibly stabilizes essence, on both the divine and human sides.

Paul Jones extends and tunes McCormack's claims. Overall, Jones' treatment of the Barth's Christology in the *Church Dogmatics* is meant to show that Barth affirmation of Christ's divinity does not create "an enfeebled account of Christ's humanity."⁴⁵ In the context of modifying McCormack's claim, Jones reiterates the central positive thesis of his recent book. Barth is after more than a mutual actualization of divine and human essences. For Barth, "Christ's essences together enact and realize Christ's personally simple identity . . . the divine Son is . . . the subject who directs and animates comprehensively the person of Christ . . . Christ qua human is given, receives and then acts to affirm and uphold the simply identity definitive of his person."⁴⁶ Jesus Christ actualizes his own person, within his own person, *as that person is constituted* by both

⁴³ Ibid., 354.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 357.

⁴⁵ Jones, *Humanity of Christ*, 3.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 133.

divine and human agency, the divine and human wills. The acts of Jesus Christ described in the Gospels will “ensure that Christ is the person that God wills him to be and that he is – the Word incarnate.”⁴⁷ Jones’ analysis is rich, and forces the reader to come to grips with the fact that Barth does indeed say that the being of Jesus Christ is actualized through both the human and divine activity which is co-constitutive of divine and human essence.⁴⁸ Jones thus confirms that Hans Frei’s Christology is a direct legatee of Karl Barth: Jesus Christ achieves his identity insofar as he exercises both divine and human agency.⁴⁹

The lurking question here, given this layer of current scholarship on the implications of Barth’s doctrine of election, is the question of how far Jesus Christ’s history ramifies into the Triune God’s life. As we mentioned in chapters one and three, McCormack and others have claimed that Barth’s doctrine of election means that we should see God’s triunity “logically as a function of divine election.”⁵⁰ In other words, if God is who God is because of the history of encounter happening in the history of Jesus Christ, what do we mean when we say that election is an act that “qualifies God’s second

⁴⁷ Jones, *Humanity of Christ*, 133.

⁴⁸ “The being of Jesus Christ consists in this union. Union? To say this is already to suggest an act or movement” (union being the union of the divine and human essence) [IV/2, 109]; “. . . He also exists as God exists. His existence as man is identical with the existence of God in His Son . . . The existence of the man Jesus Christ is an event by and in the existence of the Son of God, i.e. by and in the event of the divine act of reconciliation, by and in the electing grace of God” (IV/2, 90); “The actuality of the incarnate Son of God, the union of the two natures in Him, is the direct confrontation of the totality of the divine with the human in the one Jesus Christ” (IV/2, 86); “The Subject Jesus Christ is this History” (IV/2, 107). See especially the claims on pages 113-116 in IV/2.

⁴⁹ Hans Frei, *Theological Reflections on the Accounts of Jesus’ Death and Resurrection in Identity of Jesus Christ* (Eugene OR: Wipf and Stock, 1997), 15: “Identity is essentially the action and testimony of a personal being by which he lays true claim to the being himself and the same at an important point as well as over a length of time.” However, Jones ought to deal more particularly with texts which appear to undercut his claims, such as: “The unification of divine and human essence in Him, the One, and therefore His being as very God and very man, rests absolutely on the unity achieved by the Son of God in the act of God” (IV/2, 63).

⁵⁰ Bruce McCormack, “Grace and Being,” 103.

way of being,” as Jones puts it?⁵¹ Jones is not willing to say with McCormack that Barth should discard the *logos asarkos*, since it provides a marker of the prevenience of Jesus Christ’s humanity and the priority of divine action.⁵² Instead, he settles into the following claims: “for Barth, God qua Son is never not humanized; God qua Son is never not the Christ who undergoes suffering . . . the Chalcedonian adverbs *indivise* and *inseperabiliter* have been pushed back into the divine life.”⁵³ Jones seems unwilling to make the doctrine of the Trinity logically a function of divine election for Barth, and it is clear that Barth does not do this in the *Dogmatics*.⁵⁴ The central problem is that if God’s triunity was a function of election, then God’s freedom to love would also be a function of election. Barth affirms the constancy of God’s life such that “. . . in this address, direction and participation, it (the divine essence) does not acquire the increase of any alien capacity or incapacity. No difference at all is made (*Es widerfährt ihm überhaupt nichts*). What is, then, the divine essence? It is the free love, the omnipotent mercy, the holy patience of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. And it is the God of this divine essence who has and maintains the initiative in this event.”⁵⁵ As we noted above, Barth claimed that there is one thing that God cannot accomplish, to become, absolutely, not God. If the incarnation is to remain an assumption, an addition, in which God and humanity become related and stay related as God and humanity, then Barth will need some way to reconcile his commitment to God’s immutable freedom and love and the bent of his doctrine of election, in which God undergoes God’s own self-determination in the history of Jesus

⁵¹ Jones, 93.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid, 148-149.

⁵⁴ IV/2, 345: “The triune life of God, which is free life in the fact that it is Spirit, is the basis of His whole will and action even *ad extra* . . . it is the basis of the election of man to covenant with Himself.” See chapter one for hosts of examples of this within II/2.

⁵⁵ IV/2, 86. KD IV/2, 94. See also his claim in IV/1: “He does not change in giving Himself. He simply activates and reveals Himself *ad extra*, in the world” (204).

Christ. The doctrine of the Trinity provides one such bulwark – given that God is triune, God’s freedom to love does not rest on the incarnation.⁵⁶ Yet, Jones argues forcefully that “the Son is eternally transformed by Jesus Christ.”⁵⁷ Put more fully, “the Son is eternally ‘becoming’ the concrete person of Jesus Christ – this event of self-transformation constitutes his immutable identity.”⁵⁸ God could be God without the incarnation because God would be triune without the incarnation, but it is to postulate a counter-factual in the face of God’s own elective necessity. God is, in the depths of God’s eternal life, shaped to the history of the incarnation.

The term form, one of the keys in Barth’s doctrine of glory, is quite handy as an organizing motif in this regard. Due to Barth’s commitment to a self-transcending human nature, actualized in Jesus Christ, he utilized the concept of form to retain the continuity of human existence in the face of the exaltation undertaken in Jesus Christ’s existence; Barth utilized the concept of form when he wants to show that human nature can change without undoing itself. Note the following passage: “He is our Brother in which each of us can and may recognize himself as His brother, but also recognize the face and form (*das Angesicht und die Gestalt*) of every other man: the face and form in which God the Creator conceived and willed him and in spite of everything stills knows and loves him; yet also his face and form as the man who has fallen away from God and is accused by

⁵⁶ Jones’ reluctance seems to be an implicit recognition of Van Driel’s argument that Barth’s way of reading the divine obedience into the divine life in IV/1 secures God’s immutability since “incarnation and election cannot be acts of obedience of the divine other, if the other is only begotten in these same acts” (*Incarnation Anyway*, 96). Yet, the further question is whether McCormack does not have the upper-hand in identifying the implications of Barth’s doctrine of election. Jones’ analysis stays closer to Barth’s actual statements, but McCormack’s line of interpretation does justice to what Barth’s unique doctrine of election should mean for God’s trinity. However, constructively, this does not mean that we should follow Barth in this. Van Driel is particularly important in this regard. While Van Driel’s interpretive work simply does not do justice to the range and intensity of Jones and McCormack in their interpretive work, his objections to McCormack are, *de facto*, objections to the implications of Barth’s doctrine of election.

⁵⁷ Jones, *Humanity of Christ*, 149.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

Him and perishes under His wrath, adamic man.”⁵⁹ In other words, human beings have a form of existence due to their ingratitude, sloth, pride, their sin. But, human beings can have that form *as human beings*. Their nature does not change, given what happens in Jesus Christ. But their forms do change. In other words, only in Jesus Christ do human beings regain a form of existence which has been lost: their capacities to be for one another, for the creation, and for God in the creation. More broadly, Barth assumes here a kind of nature-form logic in which human nature can take many forms, or many changes, while also retaining its own authenticity as something identifiably human. Nature, then, can be conceived in Barth as a range of forms, continually actualized in Jesus Christ’s history. Forms, in turn, are the actualization of human nature in history. Both human nature and the range of forms that nature can take are determined by the history of Jesus Christ. We will further consider the implications for Jesus Christ’s human essence in the following subsection.

Barth also reconciles the continuity of God’s life with the historicity of the God’s life in Jesus Christ through an appeal to form. He writes:

... if it is true that in the divinity of Jesus Christ we have to do with the unity and totality of the divine ... and that it is therefore directly confronted with the human, then it is obvious that although it is not changed it is given concrete form in Him. It is concretely determined as the essence of the Son of God who also assumes and adopts human essence. For all its difference is therefore addressed to this human essence. It condescends towards it with open-handed generosity. Even in Jesus Christ it is not itself human essence. But in Jesus Christ it is not without it, but absolutely with it. That God in Jesus Christ can and is pleased to do this, that this is indeed His supreme good-pleasure, is that which deserves our worship ... This does not take place at the expense but in the power of His divine nature. It is however, a determination which He gives it. It acquires in man its telos. Directed and addressed to human nature, it acquires a form, *this* form.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ IV/2, 27, modified. KD IV/2, 28.

⁶⁰ IV/2, 86-87.

God's essence changes form. What does Barth mean by this? Barth's explanation of this claim is fairly slim, but some of the lineaments of his claimed can be offered. First, God is given a new telos. God's essence changes form because it is directed at the human life of Jesus Christ. The form of God's life changes insofar as God enjoys a new telos, a new end. Barth is not saying that God does not remain God's own end. He is saying that God has God as an end insofar as it is God's end to give the entirety of God's life to humanity in Jesus Christ. Barth writes, ". . . He is everything divine, not for Himself only, but also, in His Son, for the sake of man and for him."⁶¹ God's life opens to human life in Jesus Christ. In the language of II/1, God seeks and finds fellowship not only in God's self but in a creature as well. God adds a human partner to God's fellowship.

Consider how Barth has defined form. Form is the unity of identity and non-identity. Since God's form entails the opening of God's life, Barth seems to be saying that God's life achieves its own triunity through this new outward quality. The divine essence, which he calls the "free love . . . of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit," can and does change form without "change or diminution or increase."⁶² But, here, the human essence of Jesus Christ, that which is actualized only in a unity with the Son of God, becomes a conduit for the love between the Father and the Son. The free love of the Father, Son, and Spirit take on a new internal dynamic in that Son's humanity mediates that love. Barth writes with regard to the Father, ". . . it is the God of this divine essence who . . . gives Himself up to the lowliness of the human being of the Son of God. The Father, He Himself, gives Himself up."⁶³ That is, God elects that the Father will give himself to his Son insofar as His Son is incarnate. In a corresponding move, the Son gives

⁶¹ IV/2, 86. See pages 84-89 and 73-76 for many more versions of this claim.

⁶² IV/2, 86.

⁶³ IV/2, 86.

himself to the Father, offering himself as a human being. Thus, Barth will write, “. . . the divine essence . . . has to become actual . . . It needs the *novum* of the execution of the eternal will and decree in which God elected man for Himself and Himself for man. . . The being and . . . the work – all that Jesus Christ does and says as the Son of God and Son of Man, includes this new thing in itself, the new actualization of divine essence . . .”⁶⁴ Jesus Christ is the Son of God and the Son of Man, and thus the divine essence receives a new conduit for the obedience that unifies the Son to the Father. God has elected to run God’s triune love through the being and act of a human being, and so has changed immutably the shape of God’s own’s life and essence.⁶⁵

The Form of the Human Essence of Jesus Christ

Barth lays out various implications for human essence, insofar as it is transformed in Jesus Christ. First, as we saw above, Jesus Christ exalts human essence in that he achieves the free, obedient repentance that other human beings are meant to achieve as a

⁶⁴ IV/2, 114.

⁶⁵ Again, it is important to note how this is different from the nineteenth century Lutheran *genus tapeinoticum*, which Barth rejects out of hand. For these “kenoticists,” God gives up certain characteristics in order to make the divine essence compatible with a human essence. For Barth, this move is predicated on a union of natures abstracted from the history of Jesus Christ and also indicates a competitive view of the divine and human essences (IV/2, 79-81; IV/1, 180-192). I take the interpretive point about non-competitive transcendence from Kathryn Tanner. By comparing Hellenistic theology with various kinds of Christian theology (especially Thomas Aquinas and Karl Barth) she claims that “...God transcends the world as a whole in a manner that cannot be properly talked about in terms of simple opposition within the same universe of discourse. Direct contrasts are appropriate for distinguishing beings within the world; if God transcends the world, God must transcend that sort of characterization, too.” (Kathryn Tanner, *God and Creation in Christian Theology: Tyranny or Empowerment?* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1988, 42). Jones sums it up nicely: “. . . for Barth, the self-limitation of God in the incarnation is the consequence of God’s sovereign self-determination, not its anterior condition of possibility . . . There need be no acclamation of God’s divestment of attributes (omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, and so on) that do not square with Christ’s human existence . . . God’s elective love has less to do with a power that must necessarily forgo the glory of God’s immanent interrelating, more to do with the exuberant and transformative overflowing that stops at nothing to secure companionship with humankind” (*Humanity of Christ*, 216). In Barth’s depiction of the ramifications of the incarnation in the divine life, God changes form only in an encounter and confrontation with human life in Jesus Christ. As we noted above, the divine essence is determined, in all its depth, toward a self-giving. But, as Barth likes to say, God does not give God’s self away (IV/1, 185). God’s form changes in the encounter, but God loses or gains nothing with regard to God’s perfections.

result of his assumption of a sinful nature – that is, Jesus Christ restores humanity to its created integrity by confronting and overcoming its sin. Second, Jesus Christ exalts human essence in that his human essence “bears and serves” divine power and authority.⁶⁶ As Jesus Christ becomes fully obedient as a human being, his life, death, resurrection, ascension and return testify to, and thus fully accompany, divine lordship.⁶⁷ Third, Jesus Christ exalts human essence in that his human essence is glorified.⁶⁸ The divine glory, the sum of the divine perfections, is given to the human essence in Jesus Christ – this is the focus of my discussion in this subsection of the chapter.

Barth’s point with regard to glorification of human being seems to be twofold. First, he wants to say that the depths of the divine essence now absolutely includes human essence. Barth writes, “As he adopts it, making it His own existence in His divine nature, He does not deify it, but He exalts it into the *consortium divinitatis*, into an inward and indestructible fellowship with His Godhead, which He does not in any degree surrender or forfeit, but supremely maintains, when He becomes man.”⁶⁹ The key word here is fellowship. Human essence is brought into the deepest possible fellowship with the divine essence without also becoming the divine essence. Glorification is not an infusion of the divine essence into human essence, thereby deifying the creature.

Glorification is pitted against deification, but only in order to claim that the human

⁶⁶ IV/2, 98.

⁶⁷ IV/2, 97.

⁶⁸ IV/2, 100: “In Jesus Christ, the Son of Man who is also and primarily the Son of God, our human essence is given a glory and exalted to a dignity and clothed with a majesty which the Son who assumed it and existed in it has in common with the Father and the Holy Ghost-the glory and dignity and majesty of the divine nature. As His human essence it shares the Creator's precedence over all His creatures.” The *genus majesticum* (the communication of the divine nature as such to the human nature as such) - something Barth wants to avoid - involves “either a deification of the creature, or humanization of the Creator, or both” (IV/2, 79). Barth also that Jesus Christ does not need deification, he is God (IV/2, 71, 153).

⁶⁹ IV/2, 100.

essence is placed “in closest proximity to God.”⁷⁰ The human essence of Jesus Christ is the “clothing,” “temple,” “form” and “organ” of the divine life.⁷¹ The strategy of deification will have to involve either some transmutation of divine or human essence, or will involve some protection of the divine life vis-à-vis something like an essence-energy distinction in the Palamite tradition. Barth wants to retain a description of absolute intimacy between divine and human essence, which requires the loss of the theme of deification. Even more, Barth wants to secure, through this constancy of divine and human life, the mutuality that can and does exist between God and humanity in Jesus Christ, due to God’s free election to be God for creatures.⁷² If we do not “describe the being together of God and man in Jesus Christ as on both sides a real being together” then that mutuality is threatened.⁷³ Barth exhibits that God is the “unchangeably true God” whose unchangeable life is to become “unchangeably true man” for the sake of reconciliatory intimacy with all of humanity.⁷⁴ The human essence is glorified in that it achieves, in Jesus Christ, “an inward and indestructible fellowship with His Godhead,” not an outward and extrinsic relationship achieved through the donation of God’s energies into human life.

⁷⁰ IV/2, 100.

⁷¹ IV/2, 101.

⁷² So, Barth’s point about God’s immutability, or God’s constancy, is not simply to provide a bulwark against various forms of modern Pelagian or semi-Pelagian “self-justification” or to secure God’s capacity to fulfill his promises. Paul Molnar writes that, for Barth, “the resurrection, incarnation and atonement . . . are divine actions in the history of Jesus Christ which refer us away from ourselves and toward our justification by faith” (*Incarnation and Resurrection*, 19). Traditional Reformed theology also seemed motivated by such an enterprise, in the guise of Arminianism. For instance, Louis Berkhof writes that “it is important to maintain the immutability of God over against the Pelagian and Arminian doctrine that God is subject to change, not indeed in His Being, but in His knowledge and will, so that His decisions are to a great extent dependent on the actions of man” and he adds that “it is only as the self-existent and independent One that God can give the assurance that He will remain eternally the same in relation to His people” (Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, combined edition [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996], 59, 58).

⁷³ IV/2, 40.

⁷⁴ IV/2, 41.

Second, he wants to be able to say that the worship of God and the knowledge of God in other human beings happens by virtue of the glorification of human essence in Jesus Christ. Since the human essence of Jesus Christ is “the form which He does not lose,” God’s own inward glory has the humanity of Jesus Christ as its medium.⁷⁵ Jesus Christ unveils and achieves an exaltation of human nature beyond its creaturely capacities, apart from how those capacities were disfigured by sin. He writes, “The man Jesus is the royal man in the fact that He is not merely one man with others but *the* man for them (as God is for them), the man in whom the love and faithfulness and salvation and glory of God are addressed to man in the concrete form of a historical relationship of human to human: and this in spite of their own adamic form (*Adamsgestalt*).”⁷⁶ In other words, Jesus Christ’s exaltation of human nature is indeed an exaltation of the human nature he shares with other human beings. Those human beings share that nature with him insofar as he has a history with him. He presents to them the form of their own humanity, and in that presentation establishes their humanity. Thus, when Jesus Christ presents himself as a fellow human being who is also brought into an inward fellowship (i.e. glorified), then the Christian community responds with joyful worship.⁷⁷ Despite the counter-form of their lives, through Jesus’ presence “their own being is lit up in a new way by the kingdom of God which has come near to them in Jesus . . . that it is ordered by this in a new and very definite manner.”⁷⁸ As glory is that which draws the creation into worship, God is not worshipped without the medium of Jesus Christ’s human essence. But the recognition of Jesus Christ’s glorification evokes joyful worship because

⁷⁵ IV/2, 101.

⁷⁶ IV/2, 180/KD 201. Translation modified.

⁷⁷ IV/2, 182-183, 101-102.

⁷⁸ IV/2, 189.

that glorification of humanity happens in history, “Mensch zu Mensch.”⁷⁹ Natural theology, and thus what we might call natural worship, become impossible because God makes the human essence of Jesus Christ the form for God’s glory.⁸⁰

Barth becomes more poignant about what glorification effects in Jesus Christ when he describes how it is that the Son of God becomes sinless. He writes, “it is only another form of the one grace addressed to human essence in Jesus Christ that His humanity as that of the Son of God is determined by the fact that as the Son of Man He is fully and completely participant in the good-pleasure of God the Father but also in the presence and effective working of the Holy Spirit.”⁸¹ It is at this point that Barth addresses directly the divine conditions for Jesus Christ’s own growth, or Jesus Christ’s self-integration of his own vocation to repent on behalf of the rest of humanity. Humanity has this form of existence, Jesus Christ’s own form of existence, because Jesus Christ is sustained by the joy of the Father and the power of the Holy Spirit. He continues, “If He exists only as He is the Son of God, this does not mean that He is isolate, that He exists ‘only’ as the Son of God, and that He is therefore suspended . . . over the abyss of non-being . . . He is sustained outwardly by the inflexible Yes of the Father and His inexhaustible blessing, and enlightened and impelled inwardly by the comfort and power and direction of the Holy Spirit.”⁸² In other words, Jesus Christ can make progress toward the goal of own vocation and identity. The Father pre-establishes his pleasure – is moved by the Son’s own obedience before and as it happens – and the Spirit directs the Son – gives the Son the power to follow in that pre-conditioned obedience. The Father draws

⁷⁹ KD IV/2, 201.

⁸⁰ CD IV/2, 101.

⁸¹ IV/2, 93. See also pages 95-96 for similar formulations.

⁸² IV/2, 94.

and the Spirit pushes along, so to speak. Due to his dependence on the Father and the Spirit, the Son “takes the road which leads . . . to His death . . . (the) fulfillment and completion of his work.”⁸³ In other words, Jesus Christ grows in his substitutionary repentance, grows in his ability to accomplish the telos of his life. In doing this, he changes the shape of humanity. Humanity becomes freely and obediently repentant.

In this context, Barth also suggests that acknowledgement of texts such as Luke 2.52 and Hebrews 5.7-8 means that Christian theology has to reject any sort of deification or implantation of an “infused habit.”⁸⁴ Rejecting the deification of human essence and rejecting an infused *habitus* amount to the same rejection because Jesus Christ’s growth, given the New Testament’s recording of Jesus Christ’s weaknesses, cannot be attributed to the Son’s possession and control of the divine life. The Son’s growth, his form of human life, is attributed to the constant empowerment of the Father’s joy and the Spirit’s enlightenment. The human essence of Jesus Christ changes form as it receives God’s power to be moved and God’s power to move, but it does not control that divine power. It merely receives God’s power. It is radically vulnerable to the constant, yet faithful self-giving of the Triune life. Thus, Jesus Christ’s human essence does not possess an infused power which makes gains in self-initiation. Instead, Jesus Christ’s human essence responds consistently to divine power. In this Barth departs again from his Reformed scholastic heritage, which tried to make sense of the growth of Jesus Christ’s knowledge and will by appeal to a gradual increase of an infused habit, given by the Holy Spirit.⁸⁵ Barth’s objection is that “*Habitus* comes from *habere*, and therefore denotes possession.

⁸³ IV/2, 94.

⁸⁴ IV/2, 94.

⁸⁵ Heppe, 434-435. See also Richard Muller, *Dictionary of Latin and Greek Theological Terms* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1985), 134-135.

But grace is divine giving and human receiving. It can be ‘had’ only in the course of this history.”⁸⁶ In other words, the divine life can be received but never possessed. Possession would require an entirely different ontology; but Jesus Christ’s “life is an event and not a state or a *habitus*.”⁸⁷ The continuity of Jesus Christ capacity to pursue God’s will, the arc in which Jesus Christ moves toward his telos, is guaranteed only by the “electing grace of God.”⁸⁸ Jesus Christ does make progress toward the goal of his life, but not because he is infused with the life of God.

Barth rejects this infusion model of growth because of how his doctrine of God sets up the constraints. First, God has elected to give the entirety of the divine life to the creation in Jesus Christ. Barth says it briefly with regard to both the divine and human essences given to one another in Jesus Christ: “As He is, nothing is kept back.”⁸⁹ As his Reformed forebears have it, God gradually infuses a habit, or a power to perform particular actions. But, for Barth, what the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are doing in the history of Jesus Christ is giving the entirety of God’s life.⁹⁰ A *habitus* in Barth’s theological complex would mean that there simply could not be weakness on the part of Jesus Christ, for he would have the entirety of the divine life at his disposal. There is no graduated self-giving to Jesus Christ; there just is the Triune life constantly giving itself to a human life in its arc of growth. God can give the entirety of God’s life, according to Barth, because that happens in a history of confrontation and encounter in which the divine and human essence, in the acts of the persons who possess them, form and adapt

⁸⁶ IV/2, 90.

⁸⁷ IV/2, 99.

⁸⁸ IV/2, 94.

⁸⁹ IV/2, 75. See also IV/1, 215.

⁹⁰ IV/2, 324: “. . . He does not give the Spirit *ek metrou* to the One whom He was sent . . . He gives Him without reserve or limit – the fullness of the Spirit – so that His being as flesh is directly as such His being as Spirit also.”

themselves to one another. They are what they are because they have one another as their mutual telos. That is why Barth writes, “If the Word became flesh, if God became man, He necessarily existed as a man in human history, and trod a human way, and on this way had human wants, was subject to human temptations and influences, shared only a relative knowledge and capacity, and learned and suffered and died as a man . . . It was as this man that He was sustained by the Father and filled by the Spirit.”⁹¹ In this way Barth is able to maximize a description of the intimacy between God and humanity in Jesus Christ. For, God gives the entirety of God’s life to the creature, *as the creature*, constantly. In turn, the creature – the human essence here – can become absolutely and correspondingly vulnerable to the divine life. In Christ, the creature can, constantly, sustain an intimacy with God and vice versa.

Second, and only in a way that builds on what has just been said, God’s freedom to love the creature as the creature would be threatened by an affirmation of a divinization or divine habituation of the human essence. Barth equates deification or divine habituation, at least in its implications, with idea that the Son of Man “becomes a fourth in the Holy Trinity.”⁹² If God were to infuse grace, God would be infusing God’s self or replicating God’s self. Some sort of transmutation, from God to the human or the human to God, would result. However, if God’s love for the creature is to be absolutely gratuitous, then the divine love has to be that which overflows toward the creature – a love which does not require the creature in order to be the love that it is. Instead, for Barth, the Godhead “surrounds this man like a garment, and fills Him as the train of

⁹¹ IV/2, 95.

⁹² IV/2, 94.

Yahweh filled the temple in Isaiah 6.”⁹³ In other words, God elects to overflow in God’s love for a creature, that which is not God.

At this point, it is important to register a connection with Stanley Hauerwas’s once held critique of Barth. In Hauerwas’ early work, Barth’s rejection of an infused habit in light his “occasionalism,” makes it difficult for Barth to describe sanctification as growth.⁹⁴ This critique has received detailed response in the work of John Webster and Nigel Biggar because it does not deal with radicality of the doctrine of election and the ramifications that doctrine has throughout the latter parts of the *Dogmatics*. Hauerwas has recently acknowledged that “Webster and Biggar have to some extent provided a defense of Barth on this issue.”⁹⁵ Barth is indeed quite capable of recognizing the growth that occurs in Jesus Christ, which is also a new formation of human essence, because of the way that he depicts the differentiated intimacy between the divine and human essence in Jesus Christ. But, can *habitus* be rehabilitated (!) on Barth’s grounds? A reconceptualization of a *habitus* is possible, given what Barth is doing. Barth’s problem with *habitus*, essentially, has to do with the claim that God cannot be controlled by creaturely life – that is a job reserved strictly for the divine life. Barth’s interpretation of this concept seems to be important, given that in the Reformed scholastics *habitus* was a way to guarantee the status of the elect as elect in Jesus Christ.⁹⁶ But, *habitus* can simply mean the human reception of the joy of the Father and the power of the Holy Spirit which enables Jesus Christ (and others, of course) to offer themselves to God in the way that

⁹³ IV/2, 94.

⁹⁴ *Character and the Christian Life*, 169-178.

⁹⁵ Stanley Hauerwas, *With the Grain of the Universe* (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2001), 194.

⁹⁶ Maarten Wisse shows that, “Reformed theologians argued that after having received the habit of grace, one can never fall out of the state of grace, since the habit of faith *as part of the new creature* can never be lost” (“*Habitus fidei*: an essay on the history of a concept,” *SJT* 56 (2003): 180-181).

God offers God's self to humanity. In other words, "have" does not necessarily mean control. "Have" can simply denote the actual reception of a gift, which is how Barth defines the human side of grace.⁹⁷ If it is redefined in this way, it is perfectly compatible with Barth's objections. And, it allows theologians to use a very important verb – "to have" – without hesitation!

In part one, we have considered how the concept of glory plays a role in Barth's historical ontology of Jesus Christ's life and death, as that life and death determine the divine and human essence. We noted that the concept of form plays a role in explaining how human essence is stably fungible in the history of Jesus Christ. We also noted how Barth uses the term glorification in his description of the exaltation of the human essence in Jesus Christ, and how that effects his rejection of deification and habitus as ways explaining the exaltation of human essence. In part two, we turn to Barth's doctrine of the resurrection, which is where Barth discusses how the being-in-act of Jesus Christ turns toward and is shared with other human beings, i.e. the Christian community and Christian individuals who inhabit that community. In particular, how does Jesus Christ, the "Royal Man" who accomplishes his rule in the cross, continue his rule in creation? Our concern will be with how the category of glory and the concern for growth in the Christian community shape his argument.

⁹⁷ IV/1, 93, 110, 111. This gets us much closer to Aquinas' view of habit, which is only one way to specify the human reception of grace. For instance, when Aquinas discusses whether those given the habit of faith need other gifts in order to persevere, he is quite clear that habits can be lost. Thus, habits don't control God's life for Aquinas. See *Summa Theologiae*, I-II, 109.9: "in order to live righteously a man needs a twofold help of God--first, a habitual gift whereby corrupted human nature is healed, and after being healed is lifted up so as to work deeds meritoriously of everlasting life, which exceed the capability of nature. Secondly, man needs the help of grace in order to be moved by God to act. Now with regard to the first kind of help, man does not need a further help of grace, e.g. a further infused habit. Yet he needs the help of grace in another way, i.e. in order to be moved by God to act righteously, and this for two reasons: first, for the general reason that no created thing can put forth any act, unless by virtue of the Divine motion. Secondly, for this special reason--the condition of the state of human nature."

Part Two: Resurrection, the Spirit, and God's Triune Form

Barth ends his description of Jesus Christ as "The Royal Man" by noting that the cross becomes the telos of his disciples because it was first the telos of Jesus Christ. But, Barth claims rather quickly that this is not a testimony to the valiant ethics of Jesus' followers: "It is not so much a matter of morals as ontology."⁹⁸ If Jesus is to be Lord, then followers must result. Without a community, he would not be the Son of God and Son of Man. Jesus Christ's form of life draws them into a corresponding pattern of life: "The fact that this alone was and could be the outcome of his life stamps and characterizes their life too. It is in this form that they accept and believe the Gospel of His existence. It is in this form that they accept and believe Jesus Himself."⁹⁹ But, how is it that they can and do recognize this form of life as a glorious telos, as something to be desired and pursued? How is it that the Christian community's obedient action has any meaning when, as Barth avers, Jesus Christ has already accomplished the exaltation of humanity in his life and death? Given that Jesus Christ is Lord because he exalts, in substitution, human being and act, how is it that that exaltation affects the being and acts of other human beings? While Jesus Christ's life and death bear their own light, it is the resurrection which refracts that light into the creation, such that the disciples can recognize the cross as a form of life to be embodied among them, so that they can participate in the exaltation that Jesus accomplishes on their behalf. Barth's second run at the resurrection within the doctrine of reconciliation in 64.4 ("The Direction of the Son") addresses in particularly poignant ways how Jesus Christ gives the Holy Spirit to direct the community into its own correspondence to that form of life. But, Jesus Christ's gift of

⁹⁸ IV/2, 264.

⁹⁹ IV/2, 263.

the Holy Spirit is also a gift of the Triune form. As such, Jesus Christ gives the movement in God's own life so that, by participation, the community transitions from its beginnings in the cross and the good-pleasure of God to its eschatological end.

My analysis in this second part of the chapter has three basic parts, which correspond somewhat to the structure of "The Direction of the Son." In my reading, this subsection of the *Dogmatics* has three basic parts. First, he engages in a lengthy description of what it is he is trying to find in the resurrection, which boils down to this question: "What is the power of the existence of the one man Jesus Christ for all other men?"¹⁰⁰ In other words, Jesus Christ's form of existence empowers a Christian community and individuals, as we said above. But, more particularly Barth inquires into the power and authority that Jesus Christ wields as the royal man over the Christian community. The conclusion of this winding section is that the Holy Spirit is this power. Second, Barth unfolds what it means for the Holy Spirit to be the Spirit of Christ and the Spirit of God, such that the Holy Spirit's activity over the Christian community can be trusted. Third, Barth describes the direction – in accord with the title – that the Spirit performs in the Christian community.

My own argument comes in three parts. First, I will provide a sense of the pitfalls that Barth tries to avoid in his lengthy prolegomena to central claim about the Holy Spirit, and how the conclusion to the prolegomena allows him to alleviate those pitfalls. Second, I analyze Barth's account of the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of God, since the whole subsection builds toward that account and that is where we see the vocabulary of glory most intensified laced into his argument.

¹⁰⁰ IV/2, 265.

Third, I defend Barth against one line of critiques of Barth's doctrine of the Holy Spirit in light of my analysis, critiques that suggest Barth reduces the Spirit to the Son. Robert Jenson's influential article, "You Wonder Where the Spirit Went," credibly presents this line of critique. First, Jenson detects a dynamic in Barth's writing, such that "The *Kirchliche Dogmatik* presents a smorgasbord of cases in which the doctrine of the Trinity, as used, seems to be rather a doctrine of binity."¹⁰¹ Barth use of the doctrine outside of his formal presentation of it in volume I "invariably depends on taking the Father and the Son as parties of an action," while the Spirit is not such a party.¹⁰² More particularly, given the example of the Spirit's work in IV/3, "the personal agent of this work turns out at every step of Barth's argument to be not the Spirit, as advertised, but Christ; the Spirit is denoted invariably by impersonal terms."¹⁰³ This is not just in IV/3, however. Barth's theology in all of volume four, according to Jenson, "finds its warrants at every step in descriptions of a meeting between the Father and the Son," instead of "a meeting between the Spirit on the one hand and the Son with the Father on the other."¹⁰⁴ In sum, Jenson claims that Barth has difficulty conceiving of "the Spirit's entire salvation-historical initiative."¹⁰⁵ In the economy of the Triune's reconciliation of the world in Jesus Christ, the Spirit has no distinctive agency that cannot be reduced to the agency of Jesus Christ or the agency of Father and the Jesus Christ together. Others have said similar things. Philip Rosato claimed that, for Barth, "everything significant has been achieved by Jesus Christ," and thus Barth is "hindered from allowing the Holy Spirit's

¹⁰¹ Robert Jenson, "You Wonder Where the Spirit Went," *Pro Ecclesia*, Vol. 2, no. 3 (1993), 297.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 299.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 303.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 302.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 300.

activity in human history to have its own salutary and innovative character.”¹⁰⁶ Eugene Rogers claims that “Barth covers the illumination of the Spirit with the material objectivity of the Son.”¹⁰⁷ More pithily, Rogers writes, “there’s nothing the Spirit can do that Christ can’t do better.”¹⁰⁸ When Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit appear in the same context in doctrine of the reconciliation, Jesus Christ’s agency dominates and the Holy Spirit’s agency diminishes. My analysis throughout this second part of this chapter anticipates something of a defense of Barth with regard to certain aspects of these critiques. In the third section, where I take up the critiques directly, I will also engage more directly how Barth discusses the Spirit’s direction of the Christian community.

The Spirit as the Power of the Resurrection, and what such a claim avoids

The Pitfalls

Barth attempts to avoid two pitfalls. On the one hand, Barth essays to avoid any transgression of Jesus Christ’s lordship such that Jesus Christ’s life and death merely achieve the possibility of sanctification for others, as opposed to an event which is “determinative of all human existence.”¹⁰⁹ Barth claims:

. . . it belongs to the distinctive essence of all who live in the world that the decision which has been taken in Jesus Christ does actually affect them too and their being. Jesus Christ is their Lord and Head as well, and they too, whether they have known Him or not, are only provisionally and subjectively outside Him and without Him in their ignorance and unbelief; for objectively they are His, they belong to Him, and they can be claimed as His *de iure*.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁶ Philip Rosato, *The Spirit as Lord*, 157.

¹⁰⁷ Eugene Rogers, “The Eclipse of the Spirit in Karl Barth,” in *Conversing with Barth*, 175.

¹⁰⁸ Eugene Rogers, *After the Spirit* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 20. Cf. Joseph Mangina, “Bearing the Marks,” 270.

¹⁰⁹ IV/2, 267.

¹¹⁰ IV/2, 275.

Here we see again the implications of Barth's doctrine of election.¹¹¹ A common approach among other Reformed thinkers is to reserve participation in Christ to believers, such that only believers are sanctified.¹¹² Since all of humanity is elected in Jesus Christ, Barth claims that "When God was in Christ He reconciled the world to Himself (2 Cor. 5¹⁹), and therefore us, each one of us" and that "the case of all men is advocated and conducted by this One, all men being included in this One in the covenant as it is perfectly maintained and restored on both sides. There is no one, therefore, who does not participate in Him in this turning to God . . . There is no one who is not raised and exalted with Him to true humanity."¹¹³

Yet, once this move is made, Barth notes that Jesus' life and death becomes a problem for humanity's self-knowledge in Christ. He writes, ". . . if, to know ourselves as the saints of God . . . takes place as we look at Jesus Christ because we are this in Him and only in Him, this means that we can have this knowledge only as we look that which is concealed. For the being of Jesus Christ as Lord, as King, as Son of Man, as true man, is a hidden being."¹¹⁴ The pattern of our existence, insofar as it is caught up in the pattern of Jesus Christ's existence, is just as hidden as is Jesus Christ. Christian existence, the existence of Christian community, is hidden by the life of Jesus Christ as it has its

¹¹¹ See pages IV/2, pages 280 and 272 for references to the "divine decision."

¹¹² Concurrently, the Reformed tradition commonly distinguishes between passive and active sanctification in order to denote God's activity and human activity in the life of Christians and their communities. For instance, Herman Bavinck asserts that passive sanctification (sanctification as gift from God) "consists first of all in the fact that believers are set apart from the world and placed in a special relationship with God" (Herman Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics: Volume 4, Holy Spirit, Church, New Creation*, [Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008], 252). Barth does not avail himself of the distinction between passive and active sanctification because all of humanity is sanctified in Christ, all participate in Christ.

¹¹³ IV/2, 269, 271.

¹¹⁴ IV/2, 285.

fulfillment in his death.¹¹⁵ He writes, “If he is seen, and we in Him, it is not the kind of seeing of which we ourselves are or ever will be capable. We have no organ or ability for it, nor the corresponding will and resolution to use it.”¹¹⁶ Our identity is inaccessible to us because Jesus Christ is inaccessible.

Why? The cross conceals the identity of Jesus Christ and others because Jesus’ life and death is “has and reveals in this determination (to the cross) the character of an act of God.”¹¹⁷ As such, creatures do not have access to its meaning as creatures *per se*. But his point is also specific to his claim here – it is only because it is God’s act that Jesus’ life can become significant as it moves toward death and comes from death. Usually, human lives become significant and exalted despite their death, not because of their death.¹¹⁸ Yet, the resurrection manifests the reality that Jesus’ bearing toward death is an act of God. He writes, “. . . although the cross is the end and termination of the way Jesus it is also its aim and goal.”¹¹⁹ In describing Jesus Christ as the royal man, Barth wants to show that the life of Jesus Christ has its fulfillment, its meaning in its death. Jesus Christ’s death “was not simply a catastrophe. For the whole evangelical tradition (and not merely for Paul) it was the *telos* of His whole existence. He was the man who met and defeated mortality in His death.”¹²⁰

¹¹⁵ IV/2, 296: “This concealment rests on the truth and clarity with which he was the royal man and as such our Lord and Representative and Savior. It rests on the mystery of the cross. It is itself the mystery of His and our exaltation in His and therefore our humiliation . . .”

¹¹⁶ IV/2, 285.

¹¹⁷ IV/2, 294.

¹¹⁸ Apart from Jesus Christ, death becomes “the limit from which there is no return, no new thing.” Thus, it cannot embody the exaltation of human life; it only spells “the end of all human and creaturely life and creativity and work” (IV/2, 295). This phenomenological reason is simply the converse of a prior Christological commitment which closer to his concerns.

¹¹⁹ IV/2, 252

¹²⁰ IV/2, 164. Compare the following statement: “The passion of Christ is not for them a catastrophe which burst unexpectedly into His life. It is the necessary result of it. It is thus essential that it should be announced in it” (IV/2, 253).

Barth thus differs from someone like Albert Schweitzer who claimed that Jesus “had not succeeded in sending the sword on earth and stirring up the conflict. And until the time of trial had come, the coming of the Kingdom and His own manifestation as the Son of Man were impossible . . . his death must at last compel the Coming of the Kingdom”¹²¹ For Schweitzer, Jesus had failed to bring the kingdom of God in this life, and thus attempted to provoke God to bring this world to an end in his death. However, that attempt also failed. Thus, for Schweitzer, Jesus’ death does not accomplish the goal of his life. For Barth, Jesus Christ’s death is not describable as the lamentable termination of a young life which has not yet achieved its potential.

On the other hand, Barth is also distinguishes himself from someone like his teacher Wilhelm Herrmann. Herrmann was able to say about Jesus that “His life and death proclaim the conviction that no man who desires true life can do without him: everyone must concern himself with Jesus and must take to heart the fact of His personality.”¹²² In other words, for Herrmann, Jesus Christ’s death accomplishes what his life accomplishes. While his death may not be the goal of his life, his life and death are united by a common purpose, which was to “influence men that they would be able to live a life of power.”¹²³ For Hermann, the Christian religion is a matter of becoming “conscious of God’s communion . . . by the fact that the Person of Jesus reveals itself to us through the power of His inner life.”¹²⁴ For Herrmann, Jesus Christ is the herald and embodiment of the kingdom of God, which he defines as “the inner life of Jesus in its

¹²¹ Albert Schweitzer, *Quest of the Historical Jesus* (New York: Macmillan, 1968; reprint, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press), 389-390.

¹²² Wilhelm Herrmann, *The Communion of the Christian with God*, trans. J. Sandys Stanyon, ed. R.W. Stewart (Williams and Norgate, 1906; reprint, Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2002), 93.

¹²³ Herrmann, *Communion*, 92.

¹²⁴ Herrmann, *Communion*, 79.

characteristic majesty . . . He placed his whole desire in perfect surrender to God . . . the longing for the kingdom of God must mean, in Jesus' life, perfect surrender to God, or love to God with all the heart and soul."¹²⁵ That is, the cross, as well as Jesus' life, conveys the inner life of Jesus Christ, which, in turn, is how God mediates his communion with the soul. Herrmann writes, "He clearly saw that the impression which His death would cause would loose the spiritual bonds of those who had found Him and could remember Him."¹²⁶ In particular, Jesus' death conveys the experience of forgiveness. Herrmann explains:

. . . the forgiveness of God . . . is a religious experience. It must stand before us as an incomprehensible reality that the same fact that increased our grief for our unfaithfulness and weakness of will nevertheless is also perceptible to us as a word of God convincing us that He has reached down to us. The appearance of Jesus can become for us this expression of God's forgiveness as soon as we perceive in Him, as nowhere else, the nearness of God . . . His death, as He bore it and as He expounded it in words at the Last Supper, becomes to us the word of God that overcomes our feeling of guilt. The God who comes near us in Christ reconciles us with Himself by that death.¹²⁷

For Herrmann, the cross convinces those who receive it properly that despite the fact that they do not surrender themselves perfectly to God's presence and do not thus love one another properly, God continues to be present to them in Christ. More particularly, the cross convinces human being of their total inability to surrender to God unless they gain access to Jesus Christ's inner life. Left to themselves, they will reject the revelation of God's presence in Christ. However, he comments that "without forgiveness we should still remain without a free certainty of the reality of God"¹²⁸ Jesus Christ, in surrendering to God, also surrenders to their rejection in order that God's presence can absolutely

¹²⁵ Herrmann, *Communion*, 95.

¹²⁶ Herrmann, *Communion*, 89.

¹²⁷ Herrmann, *Communion*, 141-142.

¹²⁸ Herrmann, *Communion*, 99.

certain – not even the death of the one who mediates God’s presence deters God’s “seeking us and not giving us up.”¹²⁹ In other words, Jesus Christ clarifies his own inner life to other human beings in his death, an inner life that, in the end, embraces death so that that inner life of surrender to God might be more evident. His death fulfills the goal of his life.

Barth departs from his teacher most strikingly in that it is the resurrection which warrants the claim that Jesus Christ’s death was his *telos*.¹³⁰ In the end, for Barth, Herrmann’s approach entirely disregards the shock of the cross, that the resurrection presence of Jesus Christ allows the early witnesses to acknowledge that his death is a *telos* as well as a termination. From Barth’s perspective, Herrmann’s approach to the cross can only be reducible to something similar to Schweitzer, since Jesus Christ’s death can, in the end, be a disappointment. Since for Herrmann, Jesus Christ’s inner life was uniquely poignant and rich – “incomparably richer than that any feelings which arise within ourselves” – it is difficult to see how the continued inaccessibility to Jesus Christ own unique life, except through his lesser followers, cannot become a reason to despair of one’s communion with God.¹³¹ Barth claims that the cross is the *telos* of Jesus Christ’s life depends, at every level, on the event of Jesus Christ’s return from the grave in human flesh as one who rules.

But Barth continues. “The real problem,” Barth claims, “is the strict reality of the self-humiliation of God in His Son, which the Son of Man had to follow, and did follow, with the same strictness; the completeness of the divine but also the human will . . . the perfection with which He suffered as our Representative the death which we had

¹²⁹ Herrmann, *Communion*, 140.

¹³⁰ IV/2, 295.

¹³¹ Herrmann, *Communion*, 37.

merited.”¹³² Life can now come from death *because* Jesus’ death is the telos of Jesus Christ’s life. Jesus Christ has accomplished the telos of human life and act. The covenant between God and humanity receives its fulfillment in Jesus Christ’s being and act and no repetition of the union between God and humanity is either needed or permitted.¹³³ Jesus Christ’s human lordship is exercised in that he represents all of humanity in the fulfillment of the covenant. The cross is simply too much to believe – there is too much good news about humanity. It is too much to believe that humanity fulfills the covenant in Jesus Christ. These are acts of the Triune God, and as such, they signal more grace than human beings can realistically acknowledge.¹³⁴

¹³² IV/2, 301. Barth continues, “Everything derives from the event which in all its seriousness was not the end but the goal of human life and obedience and will and action of Jesus, and was therefore the will and act of God fulfilled and accomplished in Him” (IV/2, 302).

¹³³ IV/2, 59: “The incarnation of the Word is this fact, without precedence, parallel or repetition either in the divine sphere or (much less) in the human, natural and historical creaturely sphere.”

¹³⁴ Barth does not simply say that, due to some shared immaterial substance deemed “humanity,” all participate in Jesus Christ’s exaltation. Pace Van Driel’s claim that Barth’s language of assumption with regard to secondary substance is problematic because it allows Barth to say that individual human histories outside of Jesus Christ “are not objects of assumption . . . human agents seem to fall outside the reach of salvation” (*Incarnation Anyway*, 141). For some reason, Van Driel forgets to recognize that assumption in Barth’s landscape would simply be expressed as history, and that history would be the event of the resurrection. As Dale Dawson writes, “The problem overcome in the resurrection then is the historical distance between the time of Jesus in AD 1-30 and all other times” (Dawson, *The Resurrection in Karl Barth*, 69). Jesus Christ’s history is a “public” history, in which all participate because “there is no Jesus existing exclusively for Himself” (IV/2, 269, 281). Since Jesus Christ’s life depicts him as the Lord of all humanity, in whom God makes all of humanity the object of his rule, “there is no sinful man who is not affected and determined with and by His existence” (IV/2, 281). Compare also: “In the light of the miracle of Pentecost, Acts is bold to end the address of Peter with the proclamation (2³⁶): ‘Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly . . . that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.’ This . . . is . . . the alteration of their existence as it is effected by the Holy Spirit. ‘All the house of Israel’ is assembled in this sure knowledge of Jesus as it is to be received and fulfilled by the Holy Spirit. By this knowledge it is marked off from the nations and enters on its mission to them. By this knowledge men are divided, not into the good and bad, the elect and reprobate, the saved and lost, but into Christians and non-Christians. They are divided, we may add, in the relative and provisional way in which they can be divided in the relative and provisional state of human history, where sin and death are still powerful, this side of this æon. They are divided, we may add further, subject to the judgment of Jesus Christ on those who are divided in this way, on the relative and provisional genuineness of their division, and therefore on whether or not they are really Christians or non-Christians. And we must also add that this division has to be made continually. Each new day we are all asked whether we are Christians or non-Christians. Each new day we must cease to be non-Christians and begin to be Christians. Each new day we need the Holy Spirit for this purpose” (IV/2, 327-328).

Yet, if one develops the claim that Jesus Christ is in fact determining all human existence, it is far too easy to eliminate the reality of communal and individual sanctification.¹³⁵ This is the second pitfall. It is simply too much to believe that others can also participate *de facto* in that fulfillment of the covenant. Barth writes, “. . . we have . . . to avoid any error as to the meaning or extent or depth of the change which . . . the perfect decision taken in the existence of the Son of Man means for our existence.”¹³⁶

The authenticity and extent of the change that Jesus Christ enacts in other human beings must not be minimized.¹³⁷ In other words, Barth attempts to show that there is no competition or latent redundancy between the power enacted by Jesus Christ within the lives of other human beings and the radical self-involvement of human communities and individuals in Jesus Christ’s power.¹³⁸ Barth is trying to show “how we come to a serious

¹³⁵ Barth addresses three sets of dialogue partners by bringing this to the fore, as his preface to IV/2 indicates. First, Barth wants to show that “the Marian dogma of Romanism” is “made superfluous” by his description of humanity’s exaltation in Jesus Christ and “its anthropological implications” (IV/2, ix). Barth’s argument in IV/2 is that “the fact that the man Jesus is the whole basis and power and guarantee of our exaltation means that there can be no place for any other in this function, not even for the mother of Jesus” (Ibid., ix-x). Second, Barth says that he tries to make clear that there is “no break with the basic view which I have adopted since my parting from Liberalism, but only a more consistent turn in its development” (Ibid., x). The way he makes this clear is “to give particularly careful expression to the Christological section.” Barth is outlining a new way into the Christian life, against liberalism through his Christology. Third, Barth offers a friendly answer to the “concern of the Pietists” with regard to sanctification. Eberhard Busch has noted that, of course, Barth is not duplicating their concerns, but addressing it in his own way. First, Barth makes clear that “our sanctification consists solely of our participation by faith in our sanctification, which is already real in Christ” (“Karl Barth and Pietism,” 299). For Pietists, sanctification happens in others, not in Christ. Second, Busch claims that Barth’s definition of holiness as a matter of freedom to bond with another without giving up one’s self targets Pietists. Thus, the Christian community’s holiness is a matter of being “devoted” to the world (Ibid., 300). Pietists consider those outside the church as those who need to be recruited into a particular mode of experience, usually for the sake of their salvation. For Barth, the Christian community does recruit, but this is much of a much larger landscape in which healing comes as human beings discover their vocation as witnesses of God’s glory in Jesus Christ. In some ways, these groups can be lumped together for Barth, as I mention below.

¹³⁶ IV/2, 267.

¹³⁷ This can happen in any number of ways. For instance, while recognizing that all human change is determined by the resurrection, it is possible to make the resurrection an unneeded component. One would simply be saying that all that happens is due to one particular cause over another. Or, while recognizing the objective power of Jesus Christ’s substitution, one could make the response of other human beings to God in Christ to be entirely dispensable to the story.

¹³⁸ Barth seems to largely agree with his former teacher Wilhelm Herrmann with regard to what ought to be avoided here. “Our exposition is concerned with the connection of the religious life with the objective

and transforming realisation of this enclosing and controlling of our anthropological sphere by the royal man Jesus, and therefore how we achieve this knowledge of ourselves in which we know and confess that we *are* Christians.”¹³⁹ In other words, Barth is trying to describe how it is possible for human beings to be transformed by the knowledge of their own objective participation in Christ. To participate *de facto* in Christ is to be transformed by the knowledge of one’s *de jure* participation in Christ.¹⁴⁰ Barth tries to show that the resurrection allows human beings to become *de facto* participants in Christ’s exaltation insofar the resurrection transforms our knowledge of ourselves as participants in Christ. For Barth, then, ontology and epistemology are largely

reality around which we find ourselves. But the objective reality of which we are thinking is something quite different from the thoughts of faith which are formulated in the common doctrine. These thoughts have no power to generate the communion of the Christian with God; they are only the expression of that sense of new life which comes with such communion. *But everything depends on being able to clearly grasp the objective reality which, by its sheer bulk, produces in the Christian the certainty that he is not without God in the world . . .* But we have no intention whatever of resolving Christianity into mere subjective feeling . . . this is just the fault we have to find with mysticism, that is disregards the link between the inner life of the Christian and its real foundation, and also that it allows feelings which have no distinct character to push aside thoughts concerning faith as if they were unessential. . . . If these be wanting, the most powerful emotions cannot enrich a man’s life. They neither give him anything new nor do they lead him out from himself; they leave him to experience and to enjoy only what he has already possessed in his previous condition” (Herrmann, *Communion with God*, 45-46). The difference here is that, for Herrmann, Jesus Christ’s inner life, as Jesus Christ surrenders absolutely to God in his inner life, is the definitive revelation that God comes to humanity. Only Jesus Christ definitively reveals this communion of God with humanity, and thus can create the rest of humanity’s resulting surrender. Barth is quite capable of referring to Jesus Christ’s desire, as I noted in the last chapter, but this is simply one aspect of Jesus Christ self-offering, which as a whole can only be referenced as a being-in-act. The inner life, the inner bearing, is not more primordial than activity for Barth, as it is in Herrmann (and in Schleiermacher).

¹³⁹ IV/2, 266.

¹⁴⁰ “There can be no question as to the being of Jesus Christ, and therefore our being in Him. What is needed . . . is its attestation in a corresponding way of thought, direction of will, type of attitude and orientation and determination of our existence which come to us in relation to it, and which we have to fulfil in relation to it, so that in response to the love with which God has loved us we love Him in return . . . How can His being, and ours in Him, fail to lead to a corresponding (the “Christian”) orientation and determination of our existence? But how is this possible except in relation to this being? How is it possible except in an awareness of it, i.e., as its reality acquires for us the character of truth, i.e., as we see and know and understand it. Reality which does not become truth for us obviously cannot affect us, however supreme may be its ontological dignity. It cannot lead to any corresponding (“Christian”) orientation and determination of our existence. It will necessarily remain unattested on our side—a word which has no answer, a light which has no reflection. Unrecognised, the love of God in Jesus Christ cannot awaken and summon us to its attestation and therefore to a response of love. Between this love, between Jesus Christ (and our being in Him) and ourselves, who have to correspond to His and our objective being, there arises for us the question of truth, the question of recognition” (IV/2, 296-297).

indistinguishable. To know that we belong to Jesus Christ is to exist in a way that corresponds to the knowledge of one's objective participation. The Christian community is able to recognize itself only by looking at Jesus Christ because his universal history is an ecstatic history that is lived on behalf of others, the community itself. Once we know that "we are His," then it can "happen and be that we are His."¹⁴¹ This explains why Barth's language in 64.4 vacillates between universal language and language particular to the Christian community and individual Christians. Barth's central point is that Christian communities and individuals come into love, service and obedience when they recognize the truth of their own objective participation in Jesus Christ.

Also, it should be noted that Barth is also concerned that the self-involving character of Jesus Christ's power of resurrection differs from other powers which are more powerful than human individuals and communities. It is not a power that overpowers violently, "that mechanically pushes, propels, thrusts or draws."¹⁴² The power which opens the cross to Christian communities and Christian communities to the cross cannot simply be "miraculous and sovereign."¹⁴³ Its sovereignty and miraculous nature must have a "distinctive character" that can be trusted, such that Christian communities do not need to "resist its operation, but yield to it."¹⁴⁴ Note, then, the purposes of Barth's doctrine of glory arise here again. In both locations, Barth looks for the resurrection to yield a power that does not undo Jesus Christ's lordship as the royal

¹⁴¹ IV/2, 266. Translation modified. See also: "Unrecognized, the love of God in Jesus Christ cannot awaken and summon us to its attestation and therefore to a response of love. Between this love, between Jesus Christ (and our being in Him) and ourselves, who have to correspond to His and our objective being, there arises for us the question of truth, the question of recognition" (IV/2, 297).

¹⁴² IV/2, 309.

¹⁴³ IV/2, 310.

¹⁴⁴ IV/2, 310, 311.

man over the Christian community, yet a power which does not empower human activity in Christ with violence.

The Holy Spirit as the power of the resurrected Lord

I begin with a problem. Barth wants to avoid detracting from Jesus Christ's lordship and from undermining the authenticity of the change incurred by the resurrection. Thus, just as we saw in chapters one and two, Barth uses imaging themes to express what happens between Jesus Christ and other human beings. In chapter one, the Christian community follows upon and images, but does not repeat, the election of Jesus Christ. So, too, here, Barth will often write along these lines from the point of view of Jesus Christ: ". . . the person of the One who was the Son of God and in this way and as such the Son of Man, includes in anticipation the elevation and exaltation . . . It is in the anticipation that takes place in this One that the sanctification of man has its root, and therefore the life of the Christian community, and Christian love."¹⁴⁵ But, looked at from point of view of the Christian community, Jesus Christ provides a model. He writes:

The community and its members live because they are *en Christo*, or, to use the other important expression, *suv Christo*. And to be 'with Christ' is to take part in His history, so that in His history that of the community and all its members has already happened, and has therefore to find in His history its model and pattern, to see itself again in it; the result being that the community and its members necessarily cease to be what they are if they are guilty of any arbitrary deviation from His history. This 'with Christ' determines their past and present and future; their whole history.¹⁴⁶

What is Barth getting at? Interpreting texts like this in Barth can be particularly vexing, since Barth also carefully claims at various points that Christian communities and individuals do not repeat the being of Jesus Christ. Examples of this include the following:

¹⁴⁵ IV/2, 274.

¹⁴⁶ IV/2, 277.

. . . on our side it can only be a question of accompanying or following, of a correspondence and not the repetition of an original.¹⁴⁷

It is the power, not to repeat the being of Jesus Christ and our being in Him, for this is not needed, nor is it fitting or even remotely possible, but rather . . . to see and . . . recognize it.¹⁴⁸

The incarnation of the Word is this fact, without precedence, parallel or repetition either in the divine sphere or (much less) in the human, natural and historical creaturely sphere.¹⁴⁹

It is not the cross of Christ. This has been carried once and for all, and does not need to be carried again. There can be no question of identification with Him, of a repetition of His suffering and death.¹⁵⁰

How do we reconcile these two kinds of statements? How does the Christian community not repeat the being and act of Jesus Christ while also corresponding to Jesus Christ's being-in-act, taking it as a model?

When Barth distances himself from "repetition," he has very particular way of describing participation in mind. It is a model which Barth smells in the approaches of someone such as Wilhelm Hermann, among others.¹⁵¹ Hermann attempts to suggest that the experience of Jesus Christ can be mediated through the experience of the Christian community, so that the ditch created by Lessing is a problem only if one is able to abstract oneself from a community of experience.¹⁵² For Barth, the sort of participatory repetition which threatens the uniqueness of the incarnation is a repetition that takes Jesus Christ to be providing a past example which requires a contemporary appropriation. That was precisely the model represented by Lessing which he rejects from the beginning of

¹⁴⁷ IV/2, 303.

¹⁴⁸ IV/2, 305.

¹⁴⁹ IV/2, 59.

¹⁵⁰ IV/2, 264.

¹⁵¹ Herrmann, *Communion*, 72-74, 189-195. Barth lumps many theologies into this camp, including Zinzendorf, Bultmann, twentieth century papal statements, Von Balthasar, and, to some extent, Thomasius (IV/1, 284-285, 658-659, 767-768; IV/2, 503-504).

¹⁵² IV/1, 287. See footnote 3 in chapter 3.

the doctrine of reconciliation. We could call this a fusion model, in which the past example of a way of being or acting becomes adjusted to one's own more proximate circumstances. The past example fuses with the contemporary's subject's contexts and needs.

Barth's model of *de facto* participatory repetition is a matter of representation, self-presentation, and dialogical response. First, representation. When Barth talks about Jesus Christ's existence as a pattern for the community, he means that Jesus Christ instantiates a pattern that the Christian community *finds itself following, and in that following, participates*. Jesus Christ is the essence of humanity – he is the concrete universal.¹⁵³ Jesus Christ's pattern can and does include the being and existence of the Christian community. For the pattern of humanity that is Jesus Christ includes all the possibilities that the Christian community might itself fulfill – and thus the Christian community treads in territory already opened by Jesus Christ. It is helpful to recall that in III/2, Barth refers to Jesus Christ as a “penetrating spearhead” for humanity's obedience to God's will.¹⁵⁴ On the one hand, as the head of the spear which has reaches its target (Jesus Christ is absolutely obedient), Jesus Christ accomplishes God's goal for humanity. On the other hand, human beings are Jesus Christ in that the spearhead carries the rest of the spear in the same direction, toward the same actuality. The full achievement of humanity's own sanctification in Jesus Christ makes possible *de facto* participation, if and when the resurrection happens.

¹⁵³ See IV/2, 269-270: “In this one humanity itself, our human essence, was and is elevated and exalted . . . To that in which a man is like all others, and therefore a man, there now belongs brotherhood with this one man, the One who is so utterly unlike him and all other men. To the human essence . . . there now belongs the fact that . . . it has now become and is participant in this elevation and exaltation.”

¹⁵⁴ III/2, 143. I was reminded of this text by Adam Neder's quotation and analysis (*Participation in Christ*, 31-32).

Second, Barth's model of repetition is one of self-presentation and dialogical response. Yes, Barth is quite clear that the claim "the crucified Jesus Christ has risen from the dead" means that "He discloses Himself to us with the same will and power and in the same act as He closes Himself off from us."¹⁵⁵ Yes, Barth says forthrightly, in lots of ways, that "He himself, Jesus Christ, declares his majesty. He declares Himself to be the royal man," that "as He bursts open from within the closed door His concealment, of His death, He reveals Himself as this exalted One."¹⁵⁶ That is, the resurrection is Jesus Christ presenting himself, in the mode of self-presentation. But, this sets up Barth's primary agenda, despite the title of the subsection. This also brings us to the conclusion of Barth's introduction to the "Direction of the Son" and the role of the Holy Spirit. Barth concludes that we "look to the Holy Spirit alone as the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and continuance, the principle and power of the Christian life."¹⁵⁷ Thus, in the economy of the transition from Jesus Christ to the Christian community in this subsection, we cannot quite say that there is an "eclipse of the Spirit."¹⁵⁸ As Barth says, the New Testament does not simply witness to the power of the resurrected Jesus Christ to present himself: "that the New Testament places us under the Word is not the end of the matter. The power on which it counts is the power to set us, the recipients of its witness, in a very definite freedom: the freedom to appropriate as our own conversion the conversion of man to God as it has taken place in Jesus Christ, the translation of man from a state of disobedience to one of obedience."¹⁵⁹ Yes, this is of course the power of Jesus Christ's own self-declaration to the Christian. But, note carefully what that means here: "it is the

¹⁵⁵ IV/2, 298.

¹⁵⁶ IV/2, 299.

¹⁵⁷ IV/2, 320.

¹⁵⁸ See the title of Eugene Rogers, "The Eclipse of the Spirit in Karl Barth."

¹⁵⁹ IV/2, 304.

power, not to repeat the being of Jesus Christ and our being in Him . . . but rather . . . to see and understand and recognize it, making a response of love to the One who first loved us.”¹⁶⁰ Barth is not eliminating some sort of correspondence to Jesus Christ. He eliminates a level playing field between Jesus Christ and the Christian community. But, he connects Jesus Christ and the Christian community through the power of the Holy Spirit. The Christian community does not identically repeat Jesus Christ because it is the work of the Holy Spirit. In other words, Jesus Christ is not identically repeating himself, since the Holy Spirit enables the response of the Christian community. If he was repeating himself, Barth would say that Jesus Christ, in declaring himself in the power of the Spirit, would be enacting a love for himself, since the Spirit gives the new freedom to love. The Spirit is not Jesus Christ’s power of self-love. For the rest of humanity, the Spirit is the power to love Christ in return. The Spirit allows for a dialogue between Jesus Christ and the Christian community.

Of course, the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Christ. “He is the Holy Spirit in this supreme sense . . . because He is not other than the presence and action of Jesus Christ himself: His stretched out arm; He Himself in the power of his resurrection . . .”¹⁶¹ Jesus Christ is royal man, the form of God’s rule in human flesh. Thus, Barth speaks about the renewed presence of Jesus Christ, such that the Christian community responds to the direction of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ directs history at each and every point, directs the Christian community at each and every point. In other words, Jesus Christ continues to direct the Christian community as its Lord after he dies, due to the resurrection. But, note very carefully how Barth explains himself. The Spirit is Jesus Christ in the power of his

¹⁶⁰ IV/2, 305.

¹⁶¹ IV/2, 323.

resurrection “in the power of His revelation as it begins in and with the power of His resurrection and continues its work from this point.”¹⁶² The Christian community lives in the Holy Spirit, “the power of His resurrection as *it demonstrates itself to us*.”¹⁶³ The Holy Spirit is the power “the New Testament counts on . . . in the confession that Jesus Christ has new life from the death in which he reveals Himself to us as the Lord, and ourselves as His.”¹⁶⁴ Barth’s overall point, as these quotes show, is that the resurrection is Jesus Christ coming, is Jesus Christ turning to us. But, the power in which the Christian community comes to Jesus Christ, in which the Christian community turns to Christ, is the Holy Spirit as the Holy Spirit is given and poured out in the Christian community. So, when the Christian community repeats the Yes of the Father in the cross, it is simply responding to Jesus Christ’s crucified presence after the cross, due to the resurrection itself.¹⁶⁵ Jesus Christ is the resurrected Lord who is continuing to address the Christian community, and so the Christian community repeats the “Yes” of Jesus Christ to their being in and with him. In the Spirit, the community responds to Jesus Christ. We will see more of the meaning and implications of this in the following section.

The Holy Spirit as the Spirit of Christ and the Spirit of God

In the second part of the “Direction of the Son,” Barth addresses how it is that the Christian community can trust in the power and authority of the Holy Spirit. The Christian community needs to see “how far this Spirit deserves our whole confidence, and claims our total obedience, and is our one and only hope.”¹⁶⁶ In other words, once Barth identifies that, according to Scripture, the power of the resurrected Lord is the Holy

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ IV/2, 307. Italics mine.

¹⁶⁴ IV/2, 301. Cf. IV/2, 304-305.

¹⁶⁵ IV/2, 355.

¹⁶⁶ IV/2, 360. Cf. 346-347.

Spirit, a new question emerges: How is that we can trust this Spirit? What makes the Spirit holy? As he writes, “Why is it that they are continually summoned and enabled to count on His authority and power with this exclusiveness and unassailable confidence?”¹⁶⁷ How can the Christian community count on the Spirit’s power and authority to “make witnesses of Jesus Christ” and to “create a fellowship . . . of brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ”?¹⁶⁸ We will see that Barth’s answer is laced with his doctrine of glory.

Christ and the Spirit, the Spirit and Christ

The short answer is that the Spirit is the Spirit of Christ, the presence and action of Jesus Christ himself, as we saw above. But, what does that mean? Barth claims that the New Testament refers to the Spirit as the Spirit of Christ for four reasons: the Spirit was given the man Jesus in the incarnation, Jesus Christ sends the Holy Spirit into the Christian community, the Spirit witnesses to Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit the Christian community knows itself as reconciled to God in Christ and thus “be with him.”¹⁶⁹ Barth runs through this list in order to establish the Holy Spirit’s identity vis-à-vis Jesus Christ. But, as the implications of this identity build, Barth establishes Jesus Christ’s identity vis-à-vis the Holy Spirit. When the Holy Spirit is shared with humanity, such that the Christian community is formed, it establishes Christian being and act *by the same power that establishes Jesus Christ’s being and act*. In other words, God’s being must be given again within creation, if the Christian community is to exist. Barth writes:

Recognition of this man can obviously take place only as a new act of cognition, i.e., one which shares in the newness of His being. It must . . . It must follow and accompany it. It must repeat it. . . in the power and mercy of the same divine act

¹⁶⁷ IV/2, 322.

¹⁶⁸ IV/2, 319.

¹⁶⁹ IV/2, 347. This series of claims is made explicitly in IV/2, 323-330.

of majesty which is the ground of His being the man Jesus speaks for Himself, expounds Himself and gives Himself to be known . . . He induces and initiates the human seeing and interpreting which attaches itself to the divine act of majesty in and by which He has His being . . . Where He . . . is known as the One He is, we always have this self-repetition and self-reflection of the divine act of sovereignty in the power and mercy of which He has His being, for this is not only His ground of being but also His ground of knowledge . . . He who is by the Holy Spirit is also known by the same Spirit. How else could He be known or expounded but in the event of His own self-exposition as it corresponds to the event of His existence?”¹⁷⁰

The life and death of Jesus Christ is the Triune God’s act and establishes the Triune life due to God’s election. Thus, since only God can recognize God’s acts, God completes God’s sharing of the Triune life in order that the human community can gain access to the meaning of Jesus Christ’s life and death. Due to the resurrection, the Holy Spirit is shared with the human community by Jesus Christ so that they can be subjectively what they already are objectively. They cannot recognize what they are in Christ until they become what they are in Christ. But, for that to happen, they must become a Christian community by the same power in which Jesus Christ becomes the Son of God and the Son of Man.

In other words, the resurrected Lord gives the Spirit – pours out the Spirit on Pentecost, the power in which he is resurrected.¹⁷¹ Thus, he gives of himself. There are two movements of self-giving happening here. First, the Son is giving himself, since the Spirit is “the power of the Son of God and the Son of Man: the power in which He humbled himself in order that in His humiliation as God he might be exalted and true man.”¹⁷² The Spirit makes up Jesus Christ’s identity and thus he gives himself in giving the Spirit. Second, the Resurrected Lord actually gives the Spirit. To give himself, Jesus Christ would need to give the Spirit, because the Spirit makes him who he is. But, the

¹⁷⁰ IV/2, 38-39. See also IV/2, 41-42, as Barth integrates talk of good-pleasure into the same point.

¹⁷¹ IV/2, 323.

¹⁷² IV/2, 323.

Spirit is not the same mode of being as the Son. Thus, just as the Spirit is not identical as a mode of being to Jesus Christ, the Christian community does not fuse Christ into itself. This is why Barth rehearses in this context of this quotation that he goes to the death in the Spirit, and raised in the Spirit, and a host of other events which show that “by Him (the Spirit) and in the power which He gave Him the man Jesus was a servant who was also Lord.”¹⁷³ In giving himself, Jesus Christ pours out the Spirit who, among other things, *acts upon* him. It is in the Spirit’s “power and operation” that “He is who He is and does what He does.”¹⁷⁴

The connections between Jesus Christ’s life, death and resurrection and the life of the Christian community become connections configured by the Spirit. So, for example, he claims that the appearance of the Holy Spirit at Jesus’ baptism shows that Jesus Christ “is from the very outset and throughout His existence the spiritual man, i.e., the true and exalted and royal man who lives by the descent of the Spirit of God and is therefore wholly filled and directed by Him. He is the man of the divine good-pleasure. And as this man, in order that the righteousness of God should be fulfilled and achieve its goal, He has subjected Himself to the baptism of repentance in solidarity with the whole people . . . And He is to actualise and fulfil this sign of baptism in the even greater concealment of His death on the cross.”¹⁷⁵ Barth here hints at the story we have seen earlier with regard to the life and death of Jesus Christ, and with regard to the divine empowerment of his life and death. Jesus Christ lives by the good-pleasure of the Father. Yet, what Barth brings to the surface at this point is that it is because of the Spirit that the good-pleasure of the Father is shared with and signaled to Jesus Christ. Just so, as Barth comments on

¹⁷³ IV/2, 323-324.

¹⁷⁴ IV/2, 323.

¹⁷⁵ IV/2, 324.

Romans 8.14-17 he writes that because unity with Christ is evoked by Holy Spirit, Christians “can move toward the glory, their own glorification in the light of God . . . What makes them Christians and divides them from non-Christians is that they can find themselves at the side of the One on whom there rests the good-pleasure of God.”¹⁷⁶ Just as the Spirit signals the good-pleasure of the Father, making Jesus Christ who he is, the Christian community unifies to Jesus Christ by that same signal of the Holy Spirit. In that signal, they become glorified.

The Holy Spirit: History in Partnership, Triune Distance-Crossing, and Glorification

Thus, the central claim of the “Direction of the Son” is that “As the Spirit of Jesus Christ He is no other Spirit in this totality of His presence and action than the Spirit of God or the Father or the Lord – the power of the transition, mediation, communication, and history which take place first in the life of God Himself and then consequently in our life, in the relationship of the man Jesus to us.”¹⁷⁷ What does this mean? Lots of things, but all of it exemplifies that the Spirit shares God’s triune form – God’s unity of identity and non-identity – that is part of what constitutes the meaning of the resurrection. As such, the Christian community not only has a beginning, but a movement from that beginning toward a telos.

Barth notes that the Christian community exists within a history that has a beginning, an end, and a transition from that beginning to end.¹⁷⁸ Its beginning is Jesus Christ, as Jesus Christ fulfills God’s goal of being for humanity. Its end is the Christian community, as “it is in order that it may occur that world history and time continue.”¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁶ IV/2, 328-329.

¹⁷⁷ IV/2, 347.

¹⁷⁸ IV/2, 336-337.

¹⁷⁹ IV/2, 334.

The third factor, the transition from Jesus Christ to the Christian community happens as “God Himself is revealed by God himself as the One who is with Jesus, and, because with Jesus, with Christendom.”¹⁸⁰ In other words, the Spirit and the Father are shown to be with Jesus Christ. What’s the upshot? For Barth, the transition between Jesus Christ and other human beings, in their own being and act, is overcome by the divine life because the trinitarian life already contains a history.

As we saw in chapter one, God’s life is defined by Barth as a seeking and finding of fellowship, from which emerges the Holy Spirit. The same description appears in the guise of history in partnership in IV/2:

. . . the partnership is not merely a first and static thing which is then succeeded by the history as a second and dynamic. The presence of the partnership means also the occurrence of the history. And the occurrence of the history means the eternal rise and renewal of the partnership. There is no rigid or static being which is not also act. There is only the being of God as the Father and the Son with the Holy Spirit who is the Spirit of both and in whose eternal procession they are both actively united.¹⁸¹

Throughout this section, Barth refers to the triune God as a history in partnership, such that the history between Jesus Christ and other human beings we noted above happens by participation in that history. The Father and the Son do not simply take on a history of partnership, they are a “history in partnership.”¹⁸² They are not simply two persons or modes of being, they are two persons who are a partnership of love. Barth here is affirming that neither power nor act are to have any priority in God’s life – God’s is not *actus purus* without also being *potentia*. While in II/1 Barth describes the Triune life as a seeking and finding fellowship, in this context, Barth uses the term history to specify the partnership which constitutes the Triune life. Barth is affirming that God’s eternity is not

¹⁸⁰ IV/2, 337.

¹⁸¹ IV/2, 344-345.

¹⁸² IV/2, 344.

timeless – God has a beginning, a middle and an end in the Triune life, because of the triune life.¹⁸³ However, even more, Barth seems also to be indicating that this rise and renewal includes newness. For instance, in IV/1, Barth specified the newness of the resurrection in relation to the cross in order to justify its historicity. Just so here, Barth wants to describe the Triune life as having newness and thus some sort of potential which is as basic to the Triune life as God's act. It is that potential in God which makes it possible for the Triune God to engage in history, and to bring history to its end, which in this context is the end of the ever-expanding Christian community.¹⁸⁴ The Christian community not only has its beginning in the electing good-pleasure of the triune God. It also has its movement towards its telos as it participates in God's own triune transition, through the giving of the Holy Spirit, who is that triune transition.

Barth also describes this triune history in partnership as divine distance-crossing. He writes, "God in the Holy Spirit . . . is the living God . . . who really turns to us as the One He is and not under a mask behind which He is really another, because in the first instance distance and confrontation, encounter and partnership, are to be found in Himself. In Himself, therefore, there is to be found the eternal form of the problem posed by them, and in Himself again the eternal form of the answer and solution."¹⁸⁵ For Barth, then, the distance between Jesus Christ's cruciform life and other human beings is overcome because other human beings are brought into the fellowship of the Triune life,

¹⁸³ See II/1, 608-640. See also the incisive summary and analysis on these points in George Hunsinger, "Mysterium Trinitatis: Karl Barth's Conception of Eternity," in *Disruptive Grace* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000), 186-209.

¹⁸⁴ See Barth's work on God's constancy in II/1, 490-522. For Barth, to participate in God's triune life is to participate in God's own eternal self-repetition of God's self-affirmation (492, 495, 496, 501). God's self-alteration is proven in that God has a real history with the creation (502) that includes "a fresh overflowing of the divine fullness" (505). The incarnation enhances the glory of God in the creation, intensifying the revelation of its history with God (513, 514, 509) – which is God's self-affirmation in the creation. This "leads the creation" to its redemption (502).

¹⁸⁵ IV/2, 343.

which includes both distance and the crossing of distance. The Triune God can and does overcome the distance between Jesus Christ and other human beings because the Christian community is drawn into a participation in God's triune distance-crossing – the Holy Spirit. "It is with the unity of God, and therefore with God Himself, that we have to do when we have to do with the Holy Spirit in the event of transition, the communication, the mediation between Jesus and us."¹⁸⁶ Thus, the Christian community can trust the power and authority of the Spirit because the Spirit is the Trinity's distance-crossing, the Trinity's history in partnership.

Barth approaches that distance-crossing and history in partnership from the perspective of God's humiliation in Christ and humanity's corresponding exaltation in Christ – for Jesus Christ's identity is the enactment of God's humiliation and humanity's exaltation. The Holy Spirit's power and authority must give the Christian community confidence that these are divine acts.

The work of the Holy Spirit provides a witness that God humiliates God's self in Jesus Christ because the Holy Spirit sets the Christian community "before and on its eternal basis in the *doxa* of God, in the freedom in which God, the Father and Son, is exalted and lowly."¹⁸⁷ The chief question is whether the humiliation of God from the incarnation to the cross is actually an act of God's freedom and glory, whether these acts can actually be attributed to God. At hand is the question of divinity itself. Does the humiliation of God require that God become fragmented or diminished? Does God have to alienate himself from himself for the cross to be possible? Does God have to attenuate

¹⁸⁶ IV/2, 341. As George Hunsinger writes, for Barth, the Holy Spirit "is the act in which the Father and the Son mutually love one another – their ineffable communion, their inseparable unity, their unbroken peace to all eternity. The Holy Spirit is the love in which God dwells eternally in and for himself" ("Mediator of Communion," 152).

¹⁸⁷ IV/2, 352.

God's own life for God to be able to live and die within the creation? All of these questions, for Barth, are simply projections of our own limitation unto death upon God.¹⁸⁸ For us to take on the identity of another would require a death or transmogrification of our bodies and souls, and so we project that limitation onto God's life. Thus, Barth turns explicitly to the question of God's freedom and glory: How is it that God is unique? What is God's unique glory and freedom?

In particular, the Spirit's presence must be able to open up the possibility that the Father's command and the Son's obedience "do not confront one another in neutrality, let alone exclusiveness or hostility, but in the peace of the one free divine love."¹⁸⁹ Is it glorious for God to be commanding and obedient within God's life, or is it a sign of its diminishment or of the original absence of God's glory? The distance between Jesus Christ and other human beings is simply a creaturely correspondence to the fact that "distance and confrontation, encounter and partnership . . . the antitheses in God's own being and life, antitheses which are eternally fruitful" happen in God insofar God is "Father and Son."¹⁹⁰ Thus, he writes, "God was always a Partner. The Father was the Partner of the Son, and the Son of the Father. And what was and is and will be primarily in God Himself is history in this partnership . . . the Father's eternal begetting of the Son, and the Son's eternal being begotten of the Father, with the common work which confirms this relationship . . . it takes place eternally that the one God is not merely the Father and the Son but also, eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son, the Holy Ghost."¹⁹¹ Barth makes clear, that for him, the Spirit is "the fellowship, the unity, the

¹⁸⁸ IV/2, 343.

¹⁸⁹ IV/2, 352.

¹⁹⁰ IV/2, 343.

¹⁹¹ IV/2, 344.

peace, the love . . . in which God was and is and will be from and to all eternity . . . the fellowship of the Father and Son.”¹⁹² In other words, the Spirit is the “transition,” “mediation,” “communication,” and “history” between the Father and the Son.¹⁹³ Just as the distance between Jesus Christ and other human beings is a creaturely reflection of the distance between the Father and Son, the transition between Jesus Christ and other human beings is a “correspondence of the union of the Father and the Son in the Holy Spirit.”¹⁹⁴ Again, these two correspondences, as we have seen before, are predicated on the subjective participation effected by the Holy Spirit.¹⁹⁵ Since the Holy Spirit effects a *de facto* participation in the Triune life, the Christian community has both a distance from Jesus Christ and a union with Jesus Christ. The Spirit plays the same role between Jesus Christ and the Christian community as the Spirit does between the Father and the Son.

Barth then approaches the same question from the angle of exaltation, for “in the humiliation of the Son of God there is actualized and revealed the exaltation of the Son of Man, and our own exaltation in Him as our Brother and Head.”¹⁹⁶ This is the problem of the cross’ excess, as we saw above - the coincidence of the humiliation and exaltation of the cross is too good to be true. Since Jesus Christ is “so genuine and glorious a man” who exists in “blinding light,” it is impossible to recognize him as an exaltation of human life, in himself and “as the life which we are also given.”¹⁹⁷ So, how can it be that with the Spirit “we are adapted to receive the grace of His fullness, or even to realize the

¹⁹² IV/2, 341.

¹⁹³ IV/2, 344.

¹⁹⁴ IV/2, 346.

¹⁹⁵ IV/2, 346: “We for our part, as history in partnership is the portion which is allotted us in his free grace, genuinely exist in participation in Himself, in his triune life, and in the problem of this life, and its answer and solution.”

¹⁹⁶ IV/2, 355.

¹⁹⁷ IV/2, 354.

presence and fullness of divine, and therefore of human, glory”?¹⁹⁸ How can it be that the exaltation of humanity ends in a death, that the “royal man . . . is alive in His death and exalted in His abasement”?¹⁹⁹ How can we have not only “a *theologia crucis*, but a *theologia resurrectionis*, and therefore a *theologia gloriae*, i.e., a theology of the glory of the new man actualised and introduced in the crucified Jesus Christ who triumphs as the Crucified”?²⁰⁰ This is a particular problem because the theology of the *crucis* and the humiliation of God have as their telos a theology of glory and the exaltation of humanity: if the exaltation of humanity cannot be accessed, then accessing the humiliation of God is to no avail.²⁰¹ Without subjective access to the exaltation of Jesus Christ, the Christian community cannot be free for “joy and thankfulness.”²⁰²

Barth’s solution to the problem is to argue that the Holy Spirit activates the Christian community’s freedom to rejoice by taking the community into the Triune God’s self-glorification. Indeed, the Holy Spirit is seems to be the triune glorification itself, the unity of identity and non-identity in God’s life. In other words, the gift of the Holy Spirit is a gift of entry into the ways in which the Father and Son glorify one another. Barth writes:

He shows Himself to be the Spirit of truth by leading us to, and placing us on, the eternal basis of this matter in the life of God Himself. The Father who glorifies the Son, the Son who glorifies the Father, and therefore the living God Himself

¹⁹⁸ IV/2, 354.

¹⁹⁹ IV/2, 357.

²⁰⁰ IV/2, 355.

²⁰¹ IV/2, 358, 359, 357, 356.

²⁰² IV/2, 356. It is at this point that Dale Dawson misunderstands the problematic for Barth, because he downplays the role of glory in Barth’s work. For Dawson, the question Barth is asking about the Spirit’s witness from the perspective of the exaltation is “How can the antithesis of our exalted human being in him and our human being apart from him mean anything but the destruction of us in our alien and opposed anthropological sphere?” (165). That problem is not a problem with which Barth is particularly concerned in IV/2 – that is Barth’s concern in IV/1. Here, the issue is how one can recognize how it is that Jesus Christ’s determination to the cross is actually the exaltation of human life, and how the cross is the crowning of human life.

speaks and acts when the community and the Christian can believe and confess that Jesus is the Victor-the Victor in our place. We have to do with Him, and we live in harmony with His life, when we believe and confess this as stimulated and empowered by the Spirit.²⁰³

The glory of God is a matter of exchange. First, the Father and the Son glorify one another, enjoy an enacted unity in the Spirit in and through human history.²⁰⁴ On the one hand, the Father unifies Himself to the Son as the Son enters a creaturely life. Thus, Barth is willing to say that the Father, too, suffers.²⁰⁵ For the Father, given that he shares a peace, a life, a love, the Spirit with the Son, suffers a creaturely suffering with Jesus Christ – he becomes humiliated with the Son. It is important to note that this makes sense as explication of the glory that the Father takes in the Son. In chapter one, we defined joy as the power to be moved by another and then later saw it defined as an experience of gratitude for an accomplished goal. Both are in play here, since the Father’s suffering depends on his power to be moved by His Son. Suffering is an experience that depends on the receptivity of joy in another. Also, in some way, the Father takes pleasure in the achievement of the cross. In that pleasure, he acclaims and declares the achievement of the Son within human history through the resurrection. On the other hand, the Son glorifies the Father – unites himself to the Father – by becoming obedient to the point of death as an incarnate human being. Consider, again, the category of joy. Joy, as the power to be moved by another, accounts for the Son’s capacity for obedience, since he takes joy in the Father’s command. Joy, as the gratitude for an accomplishment, issues

²⁰³ IV/2, 357.

²⁰⁴ IV/2, 345-346.

²⁰⁵ Barth carefully guards this claim, however. It is “the alien suffering of the creature” that the Son suffers, and that the Father suffers with him (IV/2, 357). This does not mean, as Paul Jones points out, that there is “adventitious change to God” (*Humanity of Christ*, 148). This results from God’s “sovereign act of self-transformation upon which God decides . . . for Barth, God qua God is never not humanized; God qua Son is never not the Christ who undergoes suffering” (Ibid., 148-149).

forth as he completes the Father's command. In this way, too, the Son's suffering, too, depends on that joy.

Second, within this two-sided dynamic, the Son is "investing it (the creature) with the reflection of his glory; which is that of the Father."²⁰⁶ That is the goal of the Father and the Son, in the Spirit: to exalt humanity and invest it with God's glory. The glorification of humanity does not succeed the cross, as it does in virtually all other Christian dogmatic schemes, the glorification of humanity on the cross is itself the fulfillment of the Father's humiliation. Jesus Christ's existence is "lit up by the glory of God" because the glory of God takes place in and through the plane of human history.²⁰⁷ The Father and Son, because they are what they are in acts of being unified and differentiated in this history, light up Jesus Christ's history with their glory. The Father and Son have enacted the unity of their identity and non-identity through the life and death of Jesus Christ.

Third, since the Spirit is this exchange of glory between the Father and the Son, the gift of the Spirit awakens "true knowledge and faith."²⁰⁸ The resurrection, because it amounts to a sharing of the Spirit of the Son and the Father, allows the Christian community to trust in God's glorification on the cross. In other words, since the gift of the Spirit is a means by which the Christian community can participate in the glorious exchange of the Triune life which constituted the cross, can recognize the exaltation of humanity. It is that very participation in the Spirit which establishes and constitutes their own *de facto* participation in the identity and work of Jesus Christ. Thus, they can trust in the exaltation of humanity in the Son as they engaged in acts of corresponding obedience.

²⁰⁶ IV/2, 358.

²⁰⁷ IV/2, 358.

²⁰⁸ IV/2, 359.

At this point we can see that Barth's argument is not simply that there is a divine glory or a divine distance-crossing in the immanent life that is untouched by the resurrection and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Just as we saw in Barth's treatment of Jesus Christ's life and death, the history of Jesus Christ reverberates into God's immanent triunity – that includes the resurrection: "If the resolution to this problem is the intervention, the presence and action of the Holy Spirit, if God himself assumes (*nimmt . . . an*) this problem in the Holy Spirit, then we are summoned to understand already as a Spirit problem, that is, in its resolution in the Holy Spirit. However, to see and to understand that it is entirely not first our human, earthly-historical problem, but first a divine problem: the problem of God's own being, his answer and resolution, in and with which he . . . also answers and resolves our problem."²⁰⁹ Barth continues, "What we regard as the purely human and earthly antitheses of here and there . . . were and are already, in their original and proper form, quite apart from us and before the world was, the antitheses in God's own being and life."²¹⁰ It is, as Adam Eitel has argued, that, for Barth, "the resurrection was nothing less than the historicization of the intra-triune activity of God's own being."²¹¹ In other words, the unity between Jesus Christ and the Christian community is an "exercise" within God's own triune love.²¹² As Barth puts it, the Spirited union of Jesus Christ and the Christian community is not an "external" participation, but an "internal participation" in which God does not "reserve"

²⁰⁹ IV/2, 342-343/KD IV/2, 382-383. Translation modified.

²¹⁰ IV/2, 343.

²¹¹ Adam Eitel, "The Resurrection in Jesus Christ," 45.

²¹² IV/2, 346.

(*zurückbehielte*) himself.²¹³ God exercises God's own divine being in the resurrection through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. But, what does Barth mean?

All of this highlights the identity and work of the Holy Spirit. Adam Eitel's argument about the "historicization" of the triune being in the resurrection has one major flaw – it does not consider how the historicization of the triune being in the resurrection differs from how God's immanent life is historicized in the life and death of Jesus Christ. One difference is that, as we saw in the last chapter, the Father opens his good-pleasure in the Son's obedience to the Son in raising him. But, secondly, in "The Direction of the Son," the newness to which Barth refers is, first and foremost, the procession of the Holy Spirit. The existence of the Spirit indicates that God is "free Lord of His inner union" because the Father and the Son are "the common source of the Spirit" and have their "common work" in having the Spirit proceed from them.²¹⁴ For Barth, if the Son and the Father simply had the relationships of being begotten and begetting, they would be "two mutually conditioning factors in reciprocal operation."²¹⁵ In other words, God would simply be the idealization of "the circular course of a natural process."²¹⁶ Instead, God is really God, God is really free, in being triune. The Father and the Son are not simply bound to one another, they enact their relationship in a common work – the procession of the Holy Spirit. The Father and Son produce their own life together, as they live with one another. Barth repeats on numerous occasions in this section that God has an eternal love apart from the creation. For instance, he writes, "This history in partnership is the life of

²¹³ IV/2, 343/KD IV/2, 383. Translation modified.

²¹⁴ IV/2, 345, 344.

²¹⁵ IV/2, 345.

²¹⁶ IV/2, 345.

God before and above all creaturely life.”²¹⁷ In part, the point of statements like these is to establish God’s divinity, especially God’s freedom. God freely takes up relationship apart from the creation. However, even more, the point of these locutions is to point up the fact that the procession of the Spirit is the basis of God’s manifold relationship to the creation. From election to the final return of Jesus Christ, the procession of the Spirit enables God’s turn toward the creation. God’s freedom to love within God’s life is God’s freedom to love the creation. As he writes, “. . . because he is the God of triune life, He does not will and do anything strange by so doing (in his life *ad extra*).”²¹⁸

The newness to which Barth is referring is the manifold relationship to the creation. However, Barth’s current concern is the transition between the Christian community and Jesus Christ, which happens as the Christian community receives the Holy Spirit. Thus, given what we have seen about the resurrection as the history in which the Christian community is brought into the divine life, for Barth, then, the Christian community is created by God as the Holy Spirit’s procession is enacted *in the creation*. For Barth, Acts 2 is simply the Christian community’s participation in the procession of the Holy Spirit. As “the history between the Father and the Son culminates in the fact that in it God is also *Spiritus Sanctus Dominus vivificans, qui ex Patre Filioque procedit*,” just so the transition between Jesus Christ and other human beings is being brought to culmination because “it is an event in His essence and being and life. It falls straight down from above into the sphere of our essence and being and life, repeating and

²¹⁷ IV/2, 345. See also the following: “the problem . . . with its answer and solution is primarily His own . . . He knew himself from all eternity, the Father the Son, and the Son the Father” (344); “the height and depth are both united, not merely in the love in which God wills to take man to Himself, and does take Him, but first in the eternal love in which the Father loves the Son and the Son the Father” (352).

²¹⁸ IV/2, 346.

representing itself in the occurrence of that history.”²¹⁹ Thus, God’s capacity to proceed the Spirit does not simply enable God to establish a partnership with creation. God’s procession of the Spirit becomes the act, through the gift of participation, in which God unites the Christian community to Jesus Christ. God lends the procession of the Spirit to the Christian community, in order that the community might be united to Jesus Christ.

Should We Wonder Where the Spirit Went?

We return to the line of critique we mentioned earlier. Is it true that, in the economy of reconciliation, Barth reduces the Spirit to a power of the Son?

The above analysis should demonstrate that, indeed, the Spirit is not reduced to the Son in the economy of reconciliation. Indeed, given the title of Barth’s section – “The Direction of the Son” – it is surprising how much Barth appeals to the Spirit as the way of being which secure the Christian community’s confidence in the divineness of Jesus Christ’s life and death. While he announces at various points, as we noted above, that the Spirit is the presence of Jesus Christ, this is not reductionistic. For the central claim appeals to the Spirit as something shared between the Father and Son. If Barth were to reduce the Spirit to the Son’s power, his argument would not work. The Son, on his own, would be testifying to his loyal relationship to the Father. The Spirit must be present as a unique figure, since part of the issue is whether the Father’s command and pleasure are correlated with the Son’s obedience. We can acknowledge that the Son’s life and death is really an act of God because it is a Triune act, and thus Barth cannot reduce the Spirit to a power of the Son.

Even more, note how, for Barth, the Son directs the Christian community in the third part of this section. Barth writes, “if we first describe the being and work of the

²¹⁹ IV/2, 345, 341.

Holy Spirit, and therefore the direction of the Son of God, as an indication, we are to understand by this that a definite place is fixed . . . The Holy Spirit . . . shows us where we always and unreservedly belong.”²²⁰ While Barth says that this is about the “Direction of the Son,” an attentive reading of this last section will note that the Holy Spirit is usually the subject of the sentences, which Barth will simultaneously qualify as the direction of the Son – as is the case in this quotation. Barth, too, in his own reflection on these pages acknowledged the toggling of agents “The Direction of Son”: “More and more the Holy Spirit has forced Himself upon us as the true theme of this section, and He must now be our constant theme . . .”²²¹ Indeed, we might wonder, as Barth does here, where the Son went in these pages.

But, piling up examples of the Holy Spirit as the subject of sentences does not refute the case that “Spirit-talk appears for variety or ornament.”²²² The Holy Spirit is “witness” because he “lights up the life of the man Jesus as the life of the Son with the Father and the Father with the Son.”²²³ The Spirit can direct the Christian community to the truth of what Jesus Christ accomplishes on behalf of all because he is the triune love from which the divine decision emerged and the power in which it was sustained. As such, the Spirit and the Son direct the Christian community to “Be what thou art.”²²⁴ Since they have been claimed by the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of Jesus Christ, they “share in the exaltation of the royal man Jesus” as they “yield to this claim.”²²⁵ The Christian community is freed, in the truth of the Spirit’s witness, to pursue the “wohl-gefälligen”

²²⁰ IV/2, 363.

²²¹ IV/2, 339.

²²² Rogers, “Eclipse of the Spirit,” 174.

²²³ IV/2, 359.

²²⁴ IV/2, 363 and elsewhere.

²²⁵ IV/2, 377.

activity that amounts to an “undivided attention and readiness, without reserve” to give their lives completely to the task of its communal witness to the cross of Jesus Christ.²²⁶ Because of the reliability of the Holy Spirit’s witness, the witness of the Son who loves and is loved by the Father, the Christian is made “a seeker,” one who grows in their readiness to pursue the end that has been claimed for her.²²⁷

Thus, the critique made by Jenson and Rogers needs serious qualification. Without a doubt, in this section, the Spirit has the “salvation-historical initiative” which Jenson claims Barth has difficulty “conceiving.”²²⁸ In the economy of reconciliation, the Spirit initiates a witness to Jesus Christ by initiating entrance into the relationship between the Father and Son. Barth is indeed doing in the economy of reconciliation what Rogers thinks he does not accomplish: the Spirit should “witness, celebrate and secure” the “good-pleasure of the Father and the work of the Son.”²²⁹ Similarly, Rowan Williams thinks that Barth makes “pneumatology” into “an exercise designed simply to explain how we know what Christ does.”²³⁰ Instead, Williams wants Barth to indicate that “The Spirit’s witness is not a pointing to the Son outside the human world . . . it is continuing state of sharing in the mutuality of Father and Son; it is forgiven and justified life.”²³¹ But, that is precisely what the Holy Spirit does. He is the distance-crossing unity, the exchange of glory, and the history of partnership between the Father and the Son that “falls straight down from above into the sphere of our existence” so that the Christian community can and does “genuinely exist in participation in Himself, in His triune

²²⁶ IV/2, 377-378/KD, 421.

²²⁷ IV/2, 376.

²²⁸ Robert Jenson, “You Wonder Where the Spirit Went,” 300.

²²⁹ Eugene Rogers, “Eclipse of the Spirit,” 186.

²³⁰ Rowan Williams, *On Christian Theology*, 118.

²³¹ *Ibid.*, 120.

life.”²³² In the economy of reconciliation, the Spirit is clearly an agent. Without that agency, Barth would have no way of warranting the confidence of the Christian community.

Yet, the critique is not simply about the economy of reconciliation. The critique is also about the immanent Trinity, and whether the Spirit has agency in God’s immanent life. Jenson thinks that since Barth makes the history of salvation “eternally actual in God,” then dynamics in the immanent Trinity show up in the economic Trinity.²³³ The *vinculum amoris* is to blame, since the Spirit is the relationship between the Father and the Son, not a third party in the relationship.²³⁴ Rogers’ critique is similar: “if the Spirit is not the giver of gifts and exerciser of freedom ‘antecedently in himself,’ then he cannot be so also for us.”²³⁵ Indeed, Rogers provides multiple attestations to the fact that this sort of logic is found throughout Barth’s work.²³⁶ Barth’s work on this score is vulnerable here. I have carefully noted the Spirit’s initiative in the economy, but Barth does not match that initiative in the economy with an initiative in the immanent Trinity. This indeed threatens his work. This is where the critique should be centered, as I will mention again in the conclusion to the dissertation.²³⁷

²³² IV/2, 341, 346.

²³³ Jenson, “You Wonder Where the Spirit Went,” 299. Rogers concurs (“Eclipse of the Spirit, 174; *After the Spirit*, 23).

²³⁴ Jenson, “You Wonder Where the Spirit Went,” 299-300.

²³⁵ Rogers, “Eclipse of the Spirit,” 182.

²³⁶ *Ibid.*, 181-182.

²³⁷ These critiques will also say that Barth reduces the Spirit into the Son so that the Spirit cannot be reduced to anthropological dynamics and sources, which is how Barth reads Schleiermacher, among others (Rogers, “Eclipse of the Spirit”; Jenson, “You Wonder Where the Spirit Went,” 297; Nicholas Healy, “Karl Barth’s ecclesiology reconsidered,” *Scottish Journal of Theology*, 57(3), 292). Barth’s concern to avoid any anthropological grounding of a relation to God in his doctrine of the Holy Spirit is shared by others (Hunsinger, “Mediator of Communion,” 155-157; Philip Rosato, *The Spirit as Lord*, 47-65; Travis Ables, “The Grammar of Pneumatology in Barth and Rahner: A Reconsideration,” *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 11, no. 2 (April 2009), 211-212). Ables differs from the others, since he thinks that Barth is quite justified in appearing to reduce the Spirit to the Son, for this reason. Also, Jenson suggests, but does not argue forcefully, that Barth avoids the mediation of the church. If the Spirit was given

Conclusion

This chapter surveyed Barth's Christology in IV/2, with a focus on the doctrine of the resurrection in the section "The Direction of the Son." In a preparatory section, I considered Barth's treatment of Jesus Christ as the one who exalts humanity in his life and death. In that cursory treatment, I took advantage of a recent reading of Barth's Christology offered by Paul Jones, such that, for Barth, God achieves God's own identity in the life and death of Jesus Christ. My goal was simply to note how the vocabulary of glory functions within this dynamic, especially noting how the concept of form plays a role in organizing Barth's description of the divine and human essence. One finding was that the concept of form allowed Barth to track changes in the divine life which do not alter the divinity of the divine life. Another finding was that glorification is a way for Barth to name the depth of the divine self-giving, such that all of the divine life is offered for human participation. This also shed light on why Barth rejects deification and *habitus* as concepts which explain participation in the divine life by Jesus Christ or other human beings.

In the second part of the chapter, I provided a close reading of "The Direction of the Son," in order to show how the sharing of the triune life draws out the growth of the Christian community. In IV/1, Barth describes the sharing of the triune good-pleasure as the trigger for the beginning of a new time after the cross. In IV/2, Barth describes the sharing of the Holy Spirit as the history in partnership, the distance-crossing, and the glorifying form of the triune life as that which sustains the movement of the Christian

economic initiative, then the church would be the "active mediatrix" of faith, a point Barth could not affirm. Jenson, "You Wonder Where the Spirit Went," 303. Cf. Reinhard Hutter, "Karl Barth's 'Dialectical Catholicity,'" *Sic et Non*, "Modern Theology" 16 (2), April 2000, 137-157. Yet, Barth is quite capable of affirming the church as a mediation of faith (see IV/1, 750-751 and chapter five of this dissertation).

community towards its goal. God gives God's own triune transition in the resurrection, such that the Christian community can move towards its own telos by participation. In other words, in IV/1, the joy of God's glory is more operative and, in IV/2, the form of God's glory is more operative. I also argued, against various critiques of Barth's doctrine of the Holy Spirit, that this establishes the Holy Spirit as a distinctive agent within the economy of reconciliation. Insofar as the Spirit is given, God's own triune history enacts the Christian community's growth and God's own witness of the relationship between the Father and the Son gives the Christian community confidence in the divine identity of Jesus Christ.

The last two chapters have dealt with the substructure of glory in Barth's Christology, especially in the doctrine of the resurrection. In the next chapter, I consider how the substructure of glory returns to the surface structure of Barth's Christology. Likewise, with regard to ecclesiology, our focus thus far has been on the reception of God's acts of election and reconciliation. Now, the focus will turn to the mediation of that reception between human beings in and through the Christian community – events that Barth accounts for by attending to Christ's prophetic office and the doctrine of glory.

Chapter Five:
The Eloquent Telos: The Resurrection, the Church's Mission and God's Glory in
Church Dogmatics IV/3

“We have not seen the Jesus of the Gospels and the whole of the New Testament properly if we do not finally take account of the fact that the light in which we have tried to see Him is the light of His death as it shines forth in His resurrection, and that it is in this way that it is the light of His life, the light of the world.”¹

“. . . upon his individual works he has engraved unmistakable marks of his glory, so clear and so prominent that even unlettered and stupid folk cannot plead the excuse of ignorance”²

“A mute and obscure God would be an idol. The true and living God is eloquent and radiant.”³

Barth's doctrine of glory twice washes into the superstructure of the *Church Dogmatics*. The first emergence is in II/1, as we have noted. The second emergence is in IV/3. In IV/3, Barth entitles his Christology “The Glory of the Mediator.” Barth uses glory in IV/3 in order to signal that the character of reconciliation demonstrates the sovereignty of the Triune God over that reconciliation. Jesus Christ not only effects reconciliation, but Jesus Christ's reconciliation is its own revelation, from beginning to end. Reconciliation is glorious: “it declares itself as reality. It displays itself. It proclaims itself.”⁴ The basis of Barth's appeal, which now comes to the surface of his argument, is a point we have been arguing throughout the dissertation: Just as the Triune God is self-expressive, the reconciliation of the world to the Triune God in Christ is self-expressive.⁵ Since God is glorious or self-expressive, establishing the accessibility of Jesus Christ's reconciliation in the creation requires that one work from Jesus Christ outward. We

¹ IV/2, 250.

² John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 1.5.1.

³ IV/3.1, 79.

⁴ IV/3.1, 8.

⁵ IV/3.1, 10.

cannot examine individual or communal capacities for the power to recognize this reconciliation or to mediate that recognition to others.⁶ Instead, for Barth, the reality of God's glory demands that we examine the mediation of Jesus Christ to other human beings strictly from Jesus Christ, asking how it is that Jesus Christ declares himself to the Christian community and through the community to the rest of creation. All of this is simply an analysis of how glorification happens within the cosmos: how God imparts his glory to the creation in Jesus Christ, how Jesus Christ responds to that gift by glorifying God, and how God performs that initiating and responsive action in the Christian community and the rest of creation.

Barth's Christological project in IV/3 also concerns Jesus Christ's prophetic office. The bulk of Section 69.1, which is Barth's introduction to the problem of this volume, is a long excursus on the history of Christian considerations of Jesus Christ's prophetic office. In some ways, it takes the form of a genealogy. He claims that prophetic office of Jesus Christ, while recognized and explained in patristic and medieval sources, comes into its own first in Reformed theology, and then spreads into other confessions. While Reformation and post-Reformation deliberations suffer from various defects, Barth thinks that this renewed attention to Jesus Christ as prophet arises because of the exigencies of the modern church in the modern world. Barth thinks that the Christian church has been involved in "a period of deep shadow" since the Renaissance and Reformation.⁷ Due to the developments since then, the church has been "thrust aside and pushed into a corner or ghetto." While Barth marks a number of unfaithful responses to

⁶ As John Webster mentions in his essay on Barth's Christology in IV/3, "the 'subjective' aspect of reconciliation – its effectiveness in human knowledge – is a function of itself. It is not the result of a co-ordination between God's reconciling act and some other reality, nor the work of an agent other than God the Reconciler" ("Eloquent and Radiant," 132).

⁷ IV/3.1, 19.

this situation (such as critiquing the Christian tradition in order to show its symphony with modernity), he notes one dynamic above others: the church “has shown a new awareness, hardly paralleled since the first centuries, of its commission to the world and mission within it.”⁸ The church is aware that it “has to say to the world something strange, unknown and supremely necessary; that it has to pass on a message; that it is not there for itself alone but has the responsibility towards those without of confronting them with the Gospel in order that they may participate in the salvation which . . . is certain that it has itself.” Barth claims that, pressed by this situation and impelled by this conviction (at least in part), the modern church concerns itself with Jesus Christ’s prophecy as it seeks to become a church renewed by God’s word, engages in Christian mission, fights against practical atheism in its renewal movements (although the Gospel’s relevance to structures and powers is only in its beginnings), considers again what counts as the Word of God, questions the clergy/laity distinction, and seeks greater church unity.

In offering this genealogy, Barth is not simply clearing ground for his own work, setting it against previous modes of reading scripture. He is showing the reader what Christian practices and theologies he hopes to critique and bolster. All of these practices and questions, which emerge from the church’s renewal of mission in the modern age, have to do, at their heart, with the communication and mediation of Jesus Christ’s life and death. Barth queries just how it is that Jesus Christ communicates himself to other human beings, and how other human beings are involved in that communication. For example, when he discusses ecumenical practice, he mentions that Christian unity is being reconceived (in documents such as the *Barmen Declaration*!) in “teleological and dynamic terms as a union which derives from Jesus Christ and is thus union for Him,

⁸ IV/3.1, 20.

namely for the attestation of His work in the world and for the world.”⁹ For Barth, Christian unity is not to be considered an end in itself or something for which the church anxiously toils. This type of ecumenical theology, for Barth, is misguided because it does not clearly recognize the ecclesial ramifications of the theo-ontology established in Jesus Christ. Its ecclesiology is wrong because its Christology is wrong. The same pattern holds for any of the questions or practices Barth mentions here and throughout IV/3, all of which involve the communication and mediation of Jesus Christ throughout the rest of creation. Barth aims in IV/3 to set ecclesiology, Christian anthropology, and cosmology and Christology right as he considers the prophetic office of Jesus Christ.

In this chapter we will survey Barth’s argument, focusing our attention on how IV/3 displays the Triune God’s own self-glorification through the Christian community to the rest of humanity and even the rest of creation. But, more narrowly, this chapter asserts two theses that correspond to the two parts of the chapter. Part one of this chapter considers Barth’s Christology in IV/3, although as with chapters 3 and 4, the focus will be on Barth’s doctrine of resurrection. Part two of this chapter considers Barth’s ecclesiology in IV/3. I argue that, for Barth, Jesus Christ glorifies himself through the presence of the Holy Spirit by promising, in the Christian community’s life, the binding of God’s self to creation, the corresponding completion of creation at his return, and God’s own future. Each discrete treatment of the resurrection in the doctrine of reconciliation narrates a type of historical progression, like the progress of a shadow cast in a sundial. Not only does the Christian community have its beginnings in the Triune God’s own joyful beginning, turned toward creation (chapter 3/IV/1). Not only does it have its movement in God’s own transition, turned toward creation (chapter 4/IV/2). But,

⁹ IV/3.1, 36.

the Christian community also has its end, and thus its movement toward this end, in God's own future. This is how God's life, in Jesus Christ, draws the Christian community into its own mission and telos, which is also the telos of the rest of human history and the rest of creation. Second, in part two, I argue that the being and act of the Christian community draws others into itself because its mediation of the sending of Jesus Christ - especially through gathered worship - corresponds to God's glory and the future glory of the humanity and creation.

Part One: Jesus Christ, Mediator of Glory

Barth structures the initial sections of the Christology of IV/3 just as he structured the Christology of IV/1 and IV/2. After clarifying the question and relevance of his work in the entire volume, he offers an historical ontology of Jesus Christ as the "Light of Life," an ontological history of "Jesus as Victor," and a treatment of the resurrection as the event which makes Jesus Christ's self-expression of the triune life and victory accessible to the rest of creation as "The Promise of the Spirit." Part One of this chapter has three basic sections which correspond to the three parts of Barth's Christology in IV/3. In the first two sections, we will briefly survey Barth's arguments in "Light of Life" and "Jesus as Victor" in order to prepare ourselves for his approach to the doctrine of resurrection in "The Promise of the Spirit." "The Light of Life" is particularly important for our concerns because it also provides a set of basic opening moves which reverberate throughout IV/3. Also, note that "The Light of Life" and "Jesus is Victor" have a relationship to the "The Promise of the Spirit" that is not precisely paralleled in the Christological sections of IV/1 and IV/2. In both IV/1 and IV/2, Barth's Christology ends with the final section dedicated to the resurrection, in distinction from Christ's life and

death. However, Barth claims in “The Promise of the Spirit” that “His work, His being and action were not augmented by the resurrection. . . Yet without this event following His life and death . . . it would have lacked . . . the prophetic character of His being and action. His life would still have the life of the world, but it would not have been light shining in this world and illuminating it.”¹⁰ Thus, Barth constantly alludes to and mentions explicitly the resurrection in 69.2 and 69.3.¹¹ In “The Promise of the Spirit,” Barth finally makes plain that the resurrection is the event which unveils Jesus Christ to the rest of creation and makes the creation the theatre of God’s glory. In light of this statement, one could even read 69.2 and 69.3 as a huge series of formal statements, which have the resurrection as their content. We will qualify this claim somewhat below, but this is why considering the first two sections are important for understanding the last Christological section in IV/3.

Glory Incarnate: Why Jesus Christ is “The Light of Life” and the Creation is “The Theatre of God’s Glory”

Barth’s thesis in “The Light of Life” is threefold. First, Barth claims that Jesus Christ is the self-expression of the Triune God in the world because he incarnates God’s glory. Thus, secondly, he is the only self-expression of the Triune God in the world. Thirdly, since Jesus Christ glorifies the Triune God in the world, the entirety of creation can and does become a theatre of God’s glory.

Part of Barth’s agenda in “The Light of Life” and throughout IV/3 is a definitive circumvention of the challenges posed by Feuerbach.¹² Without this argument, Christian

¹⁰ IV/3.1, 282.

¹¹ IV/3.1, 223-224 and 38-43 (69.3 and 69.2, respectively), for example.

¹²“ Is this supposed Prophet, who supposedly speaks to us and to whom we supposedly listen, any more than a speaker fashioned and instituted by ourselves in order that by His imaginary existence we may affirm and strengthen ourselves, yet without His really saying or our hearing anything but what we put on

theology is not immune to Feuerbach's claim that theology simply projects an idealized vision of humanity onto God. Christian theology falls into this trap when it poses the question of epistemological justification or warrant, when it asks how it is justified in ascribing glory to Jesus Christ's life.¹³ Barth's rule for avoiding Feuerbach's claims was that "one must be certain that man's relation with God is in every respect, in principle, an irreversible relation."¹⁴ Thus, Barth reconsiders the question that Christian theology faces at this juncture. If Christian theology takes seriously that God is glorious in Jesus Christ, then the Christian theologian realizes that the "his only possible question . . . is not whether and how this voice will show itself to be the voice of truth, but whether and how he himself will show himself to be a hearer."¹⁵ In other words, Christian theology recognizes that a question is being put to it: whether the Christian theologian, the Christian community, possesses "right conduct in the face of the content of this presupposition and assertion, of our obedience to the voice of Jesus Christ."¹⁶ It is only when the Christian community recognizes that it has to give an account before God of the possibility of a corresponding, obedient and thus authentic form of life that Feuerbach's claims can be avoided. The Christian community is not using other authorities – reason, affections, laws, etc. – to establish that God is glorious. Instead, in its theological work, and especially when it tackles the question of God's self-expression in Christ, it asks itself how it is possible and actual that its life is illumined by the light of Jesus Christ.

His lips and thus say to ourselves? Before we go any further, it is as well that we should face this question, which is, of course, only a modification of the old question of Ludwig Feuerbach" (IV/3.1, 72).

¹³ IV/3.1, 72-73.

¹⁴ "Ludwig Feuerbach," in Karl Barth, *Theology and the Church*, trans. Louise Pettibone Smith (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), 231.

¹⁵ IV/3.1, 78.

¹⁶ IV/3.1, 78.

In this context, Barth states his first claim most exhaustively in a programmatic statement: “to the extent that the life of Jesus Christ as such is also light, name, revelation, truth, Logos; to the extent that glory belongs to it as such, to this extent it is His life, existence, act, work, and deed in His third and prophetic office.”¹⁷ Put more simply, Barth is saying that Jesus Christ’s life opens itself to others. Barth unfolds this claim by linking and coordinating four key terms: light, life, prophecy, and glory. He links light and life first. He asserts that “as He lives, Jesus Christ speaks for himself, that He is His own authentic witness, that of Himself He grounds and summons and creates knowledge of Himself and His life. . . . As He lives, He also shines out.”¹⁸ On the one hand, Jesus Christ’s life bears witness to itself and opens itself to others. Jesus Christ’s own life has its own light, is its own light. No other power of illumination, interpretation or mediation conveys the truth, meaning and reality of Jesus Christ’s life to others. On the other hand, Jesus Christ does not simply self-illumine. For Barth, Jesus Christ’s life illumines others: “as He lives, He is Himself the light which shines on men, in His community and the world, revealing Him to men, and men to themselves and also the world to men.”¹⁹ Even more, to say that Jesus Christ is the light of life is say that “He is neither its (the statement “Light of Life”) penultimate content, nor a symbol of a deeper layer of meaning, but is irreducibly and ultimately that to which the statement refers.”²⁰

¹⁷ IV/3.1, 48.

¹⁸ IV/3.1, 46.

¹⁹ IV/3.1, 46.

²⁰ John Webster, “Eloquent and Radiant,” 134. Hans Frei notes a similarity between Gnostic readings of the Gospel and certain forms of existentialist readings of the Gospels, such that the Gospels fit into the category of myths that indirectly indicate for their readers of “the sense of alienation in the world” or that “the closest one can come to an authentic sense of identity is the fully cognizant acceptance of the state of alienation, realizing paradoxically that one has not identity of one’s own” (*Identity of Jesus Christ*, 142). Put more broadly, to make a Gospel into myth is to say that it is “the external and expressed mirroring of an internal experience that is both elemental within the consciousness and yet shared by a whole group” (*Ibid.*, 174) and thus an event such as the resurrection is “the most appropriate way of grasping the mysterious

The truth, meaning and reality of other human beings and the rest of creation is illumined by the life of Jesus Christ, but Jesus Christ is not a symbol of the lives of others. In Jesus Christ, the truth and significance of Jesus Christ's life as well as the lives of all other creatures can be accessed because his light is what constitutes his own life and the life of others, as we will continue to see in more depth.

Next, prophecy. As in IV/1 and IV/2, Barth picks up and modifies the scholastic tradition's delineation of Jesus Christ as prophet, priest and king. As we noted earlier, Barth was attracted to the *munus triplex* because it allowed him to unite ontology and history, being and act, albeit in ways not actualized by the scholastic tradition. For Barth, the scholastic tradition sometimes treated the "Mediatorial Office of Jesus Christ" as though the work of Jesus Christ does not identify him. For instance, Heppe claimed that, at Jesus' baptism, "Jesus' humanity received that spiritual anointing which it needed to execute the office of the Mediator."²¹ Heppe is able to make this claim because Jesus Christ can be who he is – the fully divine second person of the Trinity who has fully assumed a human nature – without also taking on a particular series of works or activities. For Barth, Jesus Christ accomplishes and achieves his identity insofar as he acts. Thus, Barth opens his exposition of "The Light of Life" with the claim that "Jesus Christ lives."²² This means that "God Himself, exists only as He does so together with this One who also exists as man . . . His (Jesus Christ's) existence is act . . . it is being in spontaneous actualization . . . It is as he lives that the living God lives."²³ For Barth,

sense of what it is to be human" (Ibid., 105). Barth is trying to follow the Gospels in making Jesus Christ the subject-matter of the story while including others in that story without reducing Jesus Christ to the important task of illuminating the internal and hardly expressible internal experience of humanity.

²¹ Heppe, *Reformed Dogmatics*, 448. See also John Webster's summary of how Barth departs from Calvin on the prophetic office of Jesus Christ ("Eloquent and Radiant," 128-132).

²² IV/3.1, 39.

²³ IV/3.1, 39-40.

God's existence is achieved in Jesus Christ's unique existence as the intersection of divine and human history. Again, Barth does not say this because of a pre-conceived ontology which is applied to scripture. Instead, Barth attempts to describe the divine ontology by reference to scripture and the history of the creation and covenant which unfolds there. As Hans-Wilhelm Pietz puts it, Barth's "Christologisches Denken in der Dogmatik" is only undertaken in "Entsprechung zu diesem ereignishaften In-Beziehung-Sein von Gott und Mensch" in Jesus Christ.²⁴ But, once Barth conceives of God's being as a pattern of activity, Jesus Christ's acts and offices can no longer be withheld from his identity proper. Yet, this tradition of identifying Jesus Christ as a prophet, priest and king also allows Barth to express his ontology with due precision. Barth's ontology can make more sense of the claim that Jesus Christ *is* a prophet. Jesus Christ is "the Revealer by His very existence and not on the basis of special election and calling."²⁵ He does not simply take on prophetic activities in order to be a mediator between humanity and God. Instead, he would not be who he is – the Son of God and Son of Man – if he is not a prophet.²⁶

Yet, the coordination of these three terms hinges on their relationship to the fourth term: glory. Jesus Christ's life is light and prophetic because he is the incarnation of God's triune glory and thus the achievement of human glory. Barth rehearses his doctrines of glory from II/1: glory is both God's power to manifest and proclaim God's self, to create honor, worth and recognition in others and is the human worship

²⁴ Hans-Wilhelm Pietz, *Das Drama des Bundes* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1998), 14.

²⁵ IV/3.1, 52.

²⁶ It must be mentioned that the scholastic tradition did describe Jesus Christ as the mediating prophet as well. For instance, Heppel opens his discussion of the *munus triplex* with the claim, "The purpose of the manifestation of the eternal Logos in the flesh is in order that he may be a mediator between sinful man and the righteous and holy God" (*Reformed Dogmatics*, 448). Barth would entirely agree with this claim, yet would say that it must be affirmed within a more scriptural ontology – something like his actualistic ontology.

(“praising, magnifying, extolling, honoring and glorifying God”) which confirms, corresponds to and participates in God’s glory.²⁷ As he writes, “The glory of Jesus Christ embraces both the *gloria* of God and the human *glorificatio* which it deserves and exacts.”²⁸ Since Jesus Christ incarnates God life, “Where God is present as active Subject . . . life is not just possibly or secondarily but definitely and primarily declaration, and therefore light, truth, Word, glory. A mute and obscure God would be an idol. The true and living God is eloquent and radiant.”²⁹ More particularly, Jesus Christ’s life is light and prophetic because he is the Son of God incarnate: “If He is eloquent and radiant in creation and history, this is on the basis of, and in correspondence with, the fact that from all eternity He is not merely the Father, but also the eternal Word as the Son of the Father, and that in the Son He has the reflection of His own glory. Hence it is not accidental or external to Him, but essential and proper, to declare Himself. He does this as He is God, and lives as such. It is in this glory of God that Jesus Christ lives.”³⁰ Given that God is glorious in that God is Triune and that the Triune God incarnates the second person of the Trinity in Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ’s life shares, unveils and declares itself. For, in Jesus Christ’s history, God’s original self-expression takes place in created history. Jesus Christ’s power to illumine and prophecy results from the fact that God’s glory is lived in the history of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ’s life is light and prophecies because he is the incarnation of God’s glory, God’s power of self-declaration.

There are three moves embedded in these claims that constitute Barth’s circumvention of Feuerbach. First, all of this means that God’s life can only be known

²⁷ IV/3.1, 47-48.

²⁸ IV/3.1, 48.

²⁹ IV/3.1, 79.

³⁰ IV/3.1, 79-80. Cf. IV/3.1, 48.

“through itself,” and thus nothing other than God’s life can ground knowledge of God’s life. No amount of constructive projection would allow one access to God’s life. In particular, the relationship between the Father and Son warrants Barth’s claim that God is glorious apart from the creation, and thus is not limited by a need for a creation in which to disclose himself. Apart from God’s election, the creation is not related to God’s glory. Properly speaking, for Barth, Christian theology does not ascribe glory to God when it speaks of God’s glory, it is responding to God’s eternal self-expressiveness, God’s glory which could but does not happen without a creation.

Second, God’s glory is disclosed and shared with other human beings only through an encounter with Jesus Christ, not through a projection of one’s own needs on Jesus Christ. As such, the life of Jesus Christ illumines and thus impels human activity. Jesus Christ is “our Fellow, Neighbor, and Companion (*Mitmensch, Angrenzer, Nachbar*)” who bears “our human form (*menschliche Gestalt*).”³¹ Thus, Jesus Christ acts as he “encounters us, speaks with us, addresses us in terms of I and Thou.”³² Barth revisits his anthropology of creation, such that human beings are what they are as they live in response to Jesus Christ who lives in and for them. But, at this juncture, Barth points out that Jesus Christ’s encounter with other human beings both confronts and promises. In encounter, Jesus Christ “reveals the life of God which He lives to be the life of our God, the life of grace to be that of the grace which is directed to us and all men, the eternal life that of the real life ordained and promised to us.”³³ In his encounter with other human beings, he shows other human beings what they cannot achieve on their own and what has been achieved for them in Jesus Christ: Jesus Christ is both the glory of

³¹ IV/3.1, 83/KD, 91-92, revised.

³² IV/3.1, 83.

³³ IV/3.1, 85.

God and the glory of humanity. In other words, Jesus Christ responds to God's glory among other human beings, and thus discloses the shape of authentic humanity, of humanity itself to others who know him. When he does this in encounter with other human beings, he imparts to other human beings their own humanity.

Third, since God is glorious in God's self (even if there were no creation), the life of Jesus Christ as enactment of God's glory in history is an act of grace. As such, it impels human being and action, human gratitude. For Barth, gratitude becomes a creaturely mode of existence only when God's self-disclosure and self-impartation are acts of utter freedom. Gratitude becomes possible when human beings can recognize that God's election to share God's glory within the creation is not necessitated by God's relationship to the creation – it is, utterly, a gift. God could be absolutely glorious apart from anything done by the creation, and that lack of necessity, given God's election to God's self in Christ, provokes the gratitude of the Christian community. Thus, Feuerbach's threat is circumvented, since God's grace is utterly unpredictable and surprising – it “cannot be provoked, let alone projected or produced by man.”³⁴ In this context, Barth defines grace as “God's self-disclosure and self-impartation as it takes place towards man but is grounded in His own divine being.”³⁵ Again, God is *graciously* glorious because God is triune. God is *gracious in God's very life*, even if there were no creation. For the Father has the freedom “to be in and for Himself, yet not to be only in and for Himself, but eternally to disclose and impart Himself in the Son and with the Son in the Holy Spirit.”³⁶ God is thus free to graciously self-disclose and self-impart God's self to the creation because God graciously self-discloses and self-imparts within God's

³⁴ IV/3.1, 81.

³⁵ IV/3.1, 81.

³⁶ IV/3.1, 81.

life. Even if there were no creation, God “transcends Himself. He discloses and imparts himself.”³⁷ But the story is that God indeed self-transcends within God’s self, as God relates to the creation. Barth continues, “He does this first in Himself and then and on this basis to man in His eternal election and in its temporal and historical fulfillment.”³⁸ God self-transcends as the Father, Son and Spirit as God’s self-transcends in becoming related to the creation. Since God’s life is “the life of grace, it is this eloquent and radiant life.”³⁹ As such, God’s life illumines and changes the lives of other human beings. As God discloses and imparts God’s self – that is, glorifies God’s self – within the creation, the creature is thus drawn into a life of gratitude.

The life of gratitude that Barth is naming here is worship. God’s own self-expressiveness – not some second-hand image of God’s self-expressiveness – is made available within God’s creation. God’s eternal light, the light in which God illumines God’s self, becomes available to us within the creation. Thus, our lives can and are illumined – our lives can be characterized by “praise of God” – because God’s expression is shared in Jesus Christ.⁴⁰ While it is true that human beings glorify God in obedient and corresponding worship, that happens only because God first glorifies himself among human beings in Jesus Christ. The fact that glory draws out and induces the liturgical action of human beings is demonstrated first and foremost by Jesus Christ. For, as Barth says, “as true Son of Man He is also the normative original of the praise to be ascribed to God by man, the prototype of all doxology as the self-evident response to, and

³⁷ IV/3.1, 81.

³⁸ IV/3.1, 81.

³⁹ IV/3.1, 81.

⁴⁰ IV/3.1, 79.

acknowledgment of, the self-demonstration which has come to man from God.”⁴¹ For Barth, Jesus Christ’s existence does not simply unveil that glory is the “supreme characteristic of the divine being and action.”⁴² Indeed, just as glory is the supreme characteristic of the divine being and action, worship is also the supreme characteristic of human being and action. Indeed, *because* glory is that supreme characteristic of the divine life, it is the supreme and defining characteristic of human life. For worship – “the praise to be ascribed to God” – is “merely a confirmation of the divine self-declaration which takes place in and with the divine life-act.”⁴³

Barth’s point, is, again, against Feuerbach. Human beings cannot recognize the propriety and necessity of human worship of God apart from Jesus Christ. Human beings would not be defined by worship without Jesus Christ’s life of encounter, fulfilling the graceful election of the Triune God.

But, more positively, Barth’s point is that human beings are drawn into worship by Jesus Christ because God shares Jesus Christ’s glorification of God with human being in encounter. The glory of God draws out the worship of human beings because it first draws out Jesus Christ’s own worship. Human being are drawn into what they *cannot be drawn into* apart from Jesus Christ. They are drawn into worship because Jesus Christ discloses and imparts the transcendence and graciousness of both God’s glory and humanity’s worship in Jesus Christ. Once human beings recognize that Jesus Christ defines human being and act as a life of praise on behalf of all before God’s glory, they undertake a *de facto* participation in that praise. Even more, that *de facto* participation is a praise and gratitude not simply for the gracious presence and action of God’s life, but is

⁴¹ IV/3.1, 48.

⁴² IV/3.1, 47.

⁴³ IV/3.1, 48.

in recognition the worship of other human beings (other than Jesus Christ) are also not necessary. For Jesus Christ's life enacts, on its own, the "covenant of grace."⁴⁴ Jesus Christ, on his own, enacts the human glorification of God in his worship. Yet, this is only to emphasize the graciousness of the Triune God, since the glory of God in Christ makes room for the being and act of other human beings. The Christian community is the community of human beings who recognize that, while they are unnecessary for the fulfillment of the covenant, they have been included in the fulfillment of that covenant. In this context, this means that they are unnecessary for the human worship of the Triune God, but, in encounter with Jesus Christ, are included in that worship of the Triune God. The overwhelming graciousness of God's glorification of all human beings through Jesus Christ provokes their praise and worship.

The second part of Barth's thesis in "The Light of Life" is that Jesus Christ "is the light of life in all its fullness, in perfect adequacy; and negatively, it means that there is no other light of life outside or alongside His, outside or alongside the light which He is."⁴⁵ God is not expressed anywhere outside of Jesus Christ: neither the creation as a whole or in its parts, nor the Christian community, nor sacraments, nor the Bible is the expression of Jesus Christ. And, as an implication, human being and act, and creation as a whole are unknowable outside of Jesus Christ.

No creaturely sites outside of Jesus are the self-declaration of God in the world because that happens only insofar as God's expression is self-expression: "the Word of God is His eternal Word which is incomparably and absolutely good . . . in the fact that it

⁴⁴ IV/3.1, 81.

⁴⁵ IV/3.1, 86.

is spoken to us directly by God Himself.”⁴⁶ No expressions of God can have the authority of God unless it is God in God’s self doing the speaking directly. Barth again cuts off any difference between the *Deus absconditus* and the *Deus revelatus* by saying that God is “exhaustively, unreservedly and totally revealed to us in Jesus Christ as the one Word of God.”⁴⁷ The final warrant for Barth’s claims here is that Jesus Christ’s “life is the one and only life.”⁴⁸ What Barth means is that God’s life is lived absolutely in Jesus Christ, “in terms of our common humanity.”⁴⁹ In other words, revelation and ontology are convertible in Barth, since God’s life is absolutely invested in the life of Jesus Christ. We cannot depend on any other creaturely site of expressiveness for access to the divine life because God has given God’s self without reserve in Jesus Christ. He is God incarnate, and thus God speaks directly in Jesus Christ.

This thesis does not mean, of course, that communities have to have lived during Jesus Christ’s lifetime in order to know the Triune God and their own lives. Barth is saying, unequivocally that “He is the total and complete declaration of God concerning Himself and the men whom He addresses in His Word.”⁵⁰ Yet, Barth is not saying that Jesus Christ does not reveal the life of the Triune God and creaturely life in and through the multiple points of creation identified in the last paragraph. All creatures, if they are to express the Triune life and the creaturely life as a creaturely life, “can only directly or indirectly attest but not repeat or replace or rival, so that their own goodness and authority are to be measured by whether or not, and with what fidelity, they are witnesses

⁴⁶ IV/3.1, 98.

⁴⁷ IV/3.1, 99. See the reference to the *Deus absconditus* on page 100.

⁴⁸ IV/3.1, 87.

⁴⁹ IV/3.1, 106.

⁵⁰ IV/3.1, 99.

of this one Word.”⁵¹ In other words, the Bible, the Christian community, and anything else in all of creation does declare the Triune God and creatureliness of created life, but only if they give witness to Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ’s life “delimits” these creaturely expressions as they attest to Jesus Christ.⁵² However, apart from that delimitation, they are mute about God’s life and the creaturely life of creatures *qua* creatures. They are not the self-declaration of God in the world, but they can and do intersect with God’s self-declaration in the world. Jesus Christ can and does reveal himself in and through creaturely media – the Bible and Christian community, for example – but those media are not themselves revelation.⁵³

Barth now sets himself up to explain his third thesis about creaturely expressiveness which extends beyond the Christian community and the Bible. For Barth,

⁵¹ IV/3.1, 98.

⁵² IV/3.1, 97.

⁵³ Here Barth repeats his claims from the beginning volumes of the *Dogmatics*. The difference, however, is twofold. First, Barth is simply not willing to say that the Bible and Christian community are the Word of God. In I.1, Barth was willing to say that “presupposing that we are right about the fact described, that by the Holy Scripture the Church is summoned and directed to its proclamation and empowered for it, this implies that Holy Scripture, too, is the Word of God. . . The Bible is God’s Word to the extent that God causes it to be His Word, to the extent that He speaks through it” (I/1, 109). Now Barth is only willing to refer to the Bible and the preaching of the Christian community as “true words” which are in “the closest conjunction” with the “one Word of God” (IV/3.1, 114, 101). Kimlyn Bender has pointed out that “especially in the final volumes of the *Church Dogmatics*, Barth often speaks of a parallelism of action, rather than an embodied action, so that divine and human activity are portrayed as in conjunction, rather than in terms of the divine acting in and through the human, Christ acting in and through the church” (*Karl Barth’s Christological Ecclesiology*, 279-280). Bender refers to George Hunsinger as the source of this insight, but not any particular written source. Hunsinger hints at this when he writes, “Divine grace and human freedom, Barth insists, simply cannot be coordinated in this way, that is, in a relation of conceptual symmetry or interdependence . . . systematic coordination is possible only for realities that are creaturely. ‘It all be very true with regard to ‘nature’ and ‘supernature.’ But theology is concerned, not with the encounter between nature and supernature, but with the encounter between nature and grace, or concretely, with the encounter between the human being and the Word of God.’ (I/2, 791 rev.)” (*How To Read Karl Barth*, 217-218). Bender roots this pattern of thinking in Barth’s view of election and reconciliation, such that the “finality and perfection of Christ’s work” is always protected by Barth (Bender, *Barth’s Christological Ecclesiology*, 280-281). However, as we will see below, Barth is quite willing to refer to the reception of reconciliation as revelation, since Jesus Christ is the prophet who reveals himself in the resurrection. The finality and perfection of Christ’s work is not an issue for Barth, given the reality of the resurrection as the investment of God’s glory. This is the chief problem with Bender’s extensive treatment of Barth’s ecclesiology - it fails to reckon with the resurrection, and thus fails to reckon with the glory of God.

as we have mentioned, Jesus Christ's self-expressiveness does not eliminate or elide the actuality of the creation's self-expressiveness, but instead establishes and orients the creation's self-expressiveness. Barth states his thesis in this way:

. . . the creaturely world, the cosmos, the nature given to man in his sphere and the nature of this sphere, has also as such its own lights and truths and therefore its own speech and words. That the world was and is and will be, and what and how it was and is and will be, thanks to the faithfulness of its Creator, is declared and attested by it and may thus be perceived and heard and considered . . . by the shining of the one true light of life, by the self-revelation of God in Jesus Christ, they are exposed and characterized as lights, words and truths of the created cosmos, and therefore as created lights in distinction from this one light. Yet they are not extinguished by this one light, nor are their force and significance destroyed . . . as the cosmos persists in all its forms and media before, during and after the epiphany of Jesus Christ, so it shines, speaks and attests itself before, during and after this event.⁵⁴

Barth draws some fine lines in this thesis, but the end result of these claims is a commitment to the possibility and actuality of something akin to natural theology. In Barth's thinking, the creation does not express the Triune God apart from the history of Jesus Christ. However, for Barth, the creation can and does bear witness to the Triune God as it bears witness to itself, due to the history of Jesus Christ.⁵⁵ This is not revelation – only God can reveal – but it is an expression of, a witness to, God in Jesus Christ.

⁵⁴ IV/3.1, 139.

⁵⁵ Barth's work in this final section of the "The Light of Life" is in dialogue with the Calvin's approach to the creation as a site of revelation, such that Calvin refers to it as the theatre of God's glory (IV/3.2, 137). Randall Zachman traces Calvin's first use of the theatre language to his 1546 commentary on I Corinthians (*Image and Word in the Theology of John Calvin*, [Notre Dame: Univ of Notre Dame Press, 2007], 33). For Calvin, the creation, as creation, is the revelation of God's glory – God's status and nature as we saw in chapter one – is made visible through the created order: "the glory of God is written and imprinted in the heavens, as in an open volume which all may read . . . at the same time, they give forth a loud and distinct voice, which reaches the ears of all men, and causes itself to be heard in all places" (John Calvin, *Comm.* Ps 19.4). There are multiple differences between Calvin and Barth, but they can be defined along two lines. In terms of the objective presentation of God's glory, Calvin thinks that the creation simply is God's revelation, although it is not accessible as such apart from Jesus Christ and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. For Barth, the creation does express Jesus Christ, and participates in God's glory through that expression, but it is not to be identified as the revelation God's glory. I consider the differences in their reception below. Some of the key sources for Calvin's view of creational revelation are from the opening chapters of Book I of the *Institutes*. Calvin makes clear that his opening comments do not concern knowledge of God as "God the Redeemer in Christ the Mediator," but instead concern "the primal and

Again, Barth's claims here are not meant to seal off the creation from the Creator. They are counter-factuals which prepare the reader for Barth's claim that the expressiveness of creation *is brought* into God's self-expressiveness in the life and death of Jesus Christ. Even if the declaration of creation is not revelation, it is a declaration of God's glory: "The meaning of the being and existence of the world created by God is to be the fitting sphere and setting of the great acts in which God expresses and declares Himself . . . the revealing of this action, and therefore the prophecy of Jesus Christ, is the one truth and the one light. But as this light rises and shines, it is reflected in the being and existence of the cosmos . . . as it shines in the cosmos, it kindles the lights with which the latter is furnished, giving them the power to shine in its own service."⁵⁶ As creatures left to their own creaturely ability, creatures cannot express God's life and their own relationship to God's life. But they have not been left alone! They speak "concretely in the context of and in harmony with that which God Himself says concerning His action towards man, concerning what He is and does for man, and what man may be and do for Him."⁵⁷ When Barth revisited his being-act ontology at the beginning of "The Light of Life," he made the claim that if Jesus Christ defines both the life of God and the life of

simple knowledge to which the very order of nature would have led us if Adam had remained upright" (*Institutes*, I.1.2). Apart from the history of Jesus Christ, for Calvin, God shows God's self human beings in the created order: "upon his individual works he has engraved unmistakable marks of his glory, so clear and so prominent that even unlettered and stupid folk cannot plead the excuse of ignorance . . . the Lord began to show himself in the visible splendor of his apparel, ever since in the creation of the universe he brought forth those insignia whereby he shows his glory to us, whenever and wherever we cast our gaze" (*Institutes*, I.5.1.). In contrast to Barth, knowledge of God as Creator does not originally depend on the incarnation, since for Calvin the history of fallenness is part and parcel of the history of the incarnation (*Institutes*, II.12.5). Not only that, but Calvin claims God gives all human beings a *divinitatis sensum* – God "has implanted in all men a certain understanding of his divine majesty" (*Institutes*, I.3.1.) Objectively, God shows himself throughout the entirety of creation, that's what Calvin means by referring to the creation as the theatre of God's glory (See Zachman, "Manifestation and Proclamation," 192; "Calvin as Analogical Theologian," 213). Subjectively, God implants this capacity – the *divinitatis sensum* or seed of religion - in all human beings to receive this revelation.

⁵⁶ IV/3.1, 153.

⁵⁷ IV/3.1, 164.

humanity, then he also defines the life of the rest of creation.⁵⁸ Again, Barth does not simply affirm the creation's constant dependence on the Creator. His claim is that God has determined not to be God without the creation. According to God's own determination, God would not be the God that God is without the creation as a whole, since Jesus Christ is a human being, one who lived "in the relative dependence of a single member in the natural and historical of the created world."⁵⁹ God lives in the manner of a creature, and the creature lives in dependence on the rest of creation. Thus, God is God as God lives with the whole of creation. Even more, that means in this context that the Triune God never expresses God's self without the whole of creation. Since there is never a time in which God does not shine, God's Word shines "as the light which makes all other lights what they are, and without which they would have no power to shine, and would not actually do so."⁶⁰ In other words, the creation's expression of God's life and the relation of humanity to God's life happen in dependence on the life of Jesus Christ. But, even more, it is the expressiveness of the creation in general that depends on the life of Jesus Christ. For Barth, the creation would not unveil itself, or anything else for that matter, if it did not participate in the life of Jesus Christ. While Barth will not call the creation the revelation of God because then the creation would no longer be the creation. But, it does participate in the revelation of God and thus speaks, in its own activity, of its own createdness and of the creator.⁶¹ The creation is not the light of life, but it is a light.

Jesus is Victor: Why Jesus Christ's Glory is a Drama

⁵⁸ IV/3.1, 40: "The Creator, God Himself, exists only as He does so together with this One who also exists as a man, and each and everything in the created world exists only together with this One who also exists as man. As God exists only together with this One . . . His existence as such is the fact in which God and world . . . do exist together in an inviolable and indissoluble co-existence and conjunction."

⁵⁹ IV/3.1, 40.

⁶⁰ IV/3.1, 160.

⁶¹ See IV/3.1, 160-164 in particular.

In 69.3, entitled “Jesus is Victor,” Barth argues that the history of Jesus Christ’s self-expressiveness is a drama enacted within the creation. The purpose of my analysis of this subsection will be simply to provide a few markers which link “The Light of Life” and “The Promise of the Spirit,” markers that are filled out in “The Promise of the Spirit.”

There is one influence on Barth’s work at this stage which help orient the reader to his purposes. Barth responds to the critiques of G.C. Berkouwer.⁶² Berkouwer had discerned that Barth’s theology had an “accent” on “the triumphant character of grace” that he “pursues . . . with increasing clarity” from the two editions of the *Römerbrief* to the *Dogmatics*.⁶³ Berkouwer had no objection to an accent on the triumph of grace. He objected to the way that the “a priori triumph” in the doctrine of election lead to “an obscuration of the history of redemption.”⁶⁴ This objection had many forms: Barth’s framing of evil and sin as an impossible possibility due to its relationship to God’s election makes evil and sin into only “apparent” realities;⁶⁵ the demonic becomes unreal insofar as it is “fallen, conquered power” in eternity;⁶⁶ evil becomes naturalized;⁶⁷ and eschatology is “overshadowed.”⁶⁸ Put in summary form: Barth’s version of sovereign grace undercuts history as “full of tension and drama, of calling and responsibility.”⁶⁹ Thus, Barth sets out, as Hans-Wilhelm Pietz has suggested, to show Berkouwer and others like him that his Christology is indeed “the unfolding of a drama” because it

⁶² Berkouwer, *The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth*.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 37.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 380.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 371, 364.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 376.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 380.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 366. Others propose newer versions of this. Cf. Edwin Van Driel’s claim that, for Barth, “creational entropy explains why in the eschaton creation cannot see a restoration of human agency” (*Incarnation Anyway*, 124).

corresponds to the history of Jesus Christ, not a set of eternal principles.⁷⁰ For, “something static – a principle – cannot correspond, according to Barth, to the dramatic character of Christology.”⁷¹

Barth aims to show in this section that the self-expressiveness of God in Christ is “historical in a distinctive and outstanding way” vis-à-vis the aspects of Christology discussed in IV/1 and IV/2.⁷² Barth provides two basic reasons for this claim, from which many implications result. First, for Barth, it is the revelation of Jesus Christ in the rest of creation which creates the rest of history. Barth is always talking in two ways about history. On the one hand, for Barth, “History is the life of all men actualized in Jesus Christ. It is the history of the covenant fulfilled in Him.”⁷³ Jesus Christ’s life and death enacts representatively and actually, the life of all humanity and all human beings, whether they know it or not - *de jure* universal history is enacted. On the other hand, Jesus Christ enacts a history of prophecy in which this *de jure* universal history “proves itself to be a history which encroaches and impinges upon us men no matter who we are . . . history in which we have a share whether we realize it or not.”⁷⁴ How is this universal history of Jesus Christ proven? Insofar as human beings experience a *de facto* “confrontation with Jesus Christ” in which Jesus Christ is “approaching man, encroaching and impinging upon him.”⁷⁵ Barth puts it succinctly, “the revelation and knowledge of Jesus Christ is the history in which he confronts man with Himself, in

⁷⁰ Pietz, *Drama des Bundes*, 14. Christian Collins Winn points out that Barth “Though Barth felt that Berkouwer could affirm his formal definition of ‘Christological thinking,’ he was very doubtful that Berkouwer knew how to put it into practice” (“*Jesus is Victor!*”: *The Significance of the Blumhardts for the Theology of Karl Barth* [Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2009], 233). See IV/3.1, 174-175.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 19-20.

⁷² IV/3.1, 211.

⁷³ IV/3.1, 181.

⁷⁴ IV/3.1, 183.

⁷⁵ IV/3.1, 183.

which man and his history are thus drawn into the history of Jesus Christ.”⁷⁶ Jesus Christ’s particular life and death is a universal history enacted on behalf of all - the particular becomes universal. The unveiling of that life and death is Jesus Christ, in his universality, enacting a particular history with individual human beings and groups - the universal becomes particular. Confrontation between the person of Jesus Christ and other human beings can only be a historical event, and it is the historicity of that event which confirms the historicity of Jesus Christ’s life and death. In other words, the one who enacts a history on behalf of all comes to know other human beings in confrontation and those confronted respond accordingly. History is enacted in Christ and enacted with Christ.

For Barth, this history enacted with Christ is the result of his prophecy: “In his prophecy He creates history, namely, the history enacted in Christian knowledge.”⁷⁷ Jesus Christ is the Prophet, the one who unveils the universality of his history in the particular histories of individual human beings and groups. This is not to say that Jesus Christ merely creates Christian history, Christian existence. As we have seen, Barth indicated often that what Jesus accomplishes in his life and death has as its goal the *de facto* alteration of individual human histories. The same affirmations exist here: “this history of Jesus Christ took place once, in its very singularity it really takes place, and therefore shines and speaks, for all times and in many other times . . . this distinctive element is simply the occurrence, shining and speaking of the history of Jesus Christ in all its external modesty and all its inner yet outwardly pressing glory.”⁷⁸ Jesus Christ, as Prophet, establishes the history of humanity at large, since he accomplishes reconciliation

⁷⁶ IV/3.1, 187. See also IV/3.1, 191.

⁷⁷ IV/3.1, 212.

⁷⁸ IV/3.1, 224.

on behalf of all humanity. But, Jesus Christ is prophet insofar as he bursts outward into the lives of other human beings, and that is possible, in the end, because Jesus Christ is the glory of God incarnate. It is God's glory, given the accomplishment of Jesus Christ's life and death, which makes possible an authentic history between God in Christ and other human beings. Human beings simply could not have access to the universal history accomplished in Jesus Christ if it were not for the fact that Jesus Christ participates in the self-declarative power of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

The second reason that prophecy and glory are associated with the historicity of Jesus Christ is that Jesus Christ's confrontation with other human beings is also a victory over their resistances to Jesus Christ. Barth notes that Jesus Christ's glory and prophecy is "spoken with a relative and provisional but unmistakeable restraint."⁷⁹ Jesus Christ attenuates the self-declaration of reconciliation in order to draw creatures into an opposition. Why does Jesus Christ do this? Barth writes, "in order to exclude it and destroy it, it must do so step by step and therefore in a history."⁸⁰ For Barth, as Pietz puts it, "the light shines - as the light in the darkness and in war against the darkness."⁸¹ This is similar to Barth's approach to victory over nothingness in IV/1 – nothingness must be assumed if it is to be destroyed. However, while the description of Jesus Christ's victory in IV/1 might appear absolute – Jesus Christ has died in subjection to this power and risen in its defeat – Barth is here acknowledging that Jesus Christ's victory over the power takes place within the particular histories of human beings. Jesus Christ's victory over nothingness is accomplished universally and particularly. Not only does Jesus Christ

⁷⁹ IV/3.1, 167.

⁸⁰ IV/3.1, 167. See also IV/3.1, 191.

⁸¹ *Drama des Bundes*, 21.

defeat nothingness on behalf of all, he also defeats nothingness in all the unique particularities of individual human histories, “step by step,” as he says.

Jesus Christ allows these resistances in order to enact a dramatic, resounding victory. He writes, “As Jesus Christ confronts man, He confronts with His prophetic Word this element which is quite unworthy in its sinister sordidness and shame, integrating it into His own history, letting it play the role of His opponent, allowing it to show its nature, desires and ability in contrast with Him, exposing Himself to its opposition yet also constituting Himself the Opponent of this opposition, causing this adversary to put to Him the question and problem for which He has the answer. It will be a far superior answer. It will confound the adversary. It will remove the question and show the problem to be ridiculous. But it will still be the answer to the question put by the existence of this adversary.”⁸² Just as we saw in IV/1, Jesus Christ’s victory happens as a matter of declaration, as a practical project of unmasking the powers of nothingness. Jesus Christ defeats the powers of nothingness in individual histories because he expresses both the Triune life of God and what the Triune God accomplishes on behalf of humanity in Jesus Christ.⁸³ Jesus Christ declares his own life and death in and by the glory of the Triune God in the contested environment of particular human histories in order to upstage those powers. Thus, when Barth says that the creation is a theatre for God’s declarative action, in part he means that God’s defeat of the powers in individual histories declares the truth of God’s own power and glory. God’s glory is simply the

⁸² IV/3.1, 187.

⁸³ IV/3.1, 237-250.

history of Christ's defeat of the powers in individual human lives.⁸⁴ The creation is the theatre of that defeat.

The resistances that concern Barth in this context are epistemological, but only as a lived epistemology, an onto-epistemology. For example, the action of human pride ratifies nothingness when it commits itself to a vision of a self-sufficient God who would not stoop to a participation in creation.⁸⁵ Or, the action of human sloth validates nothingness when it recommends that human beings become spectators of the possibility of God's self-validation, a wait and see approach to reconciliation and redemption.⁸⁶ In other words, in IV/3, pride and sloth and other resistances take the form of worldviews which present a "counter-truth" in practice to the history of Jesus Christ.⁸⁷

⁸⁴ " . . . it is an unconditional certainty of victory in the fact that it is clearly based on the unconditional superiority of Jesus Christ to His opponent, to the resisting element in man" (IV/3.1, 266).

⁸⁵ IV/3.1, 252.

⁸⁶ IV/3.1, 244.

⁸⁷ IV/3.1, 254. What are the differences between Calvin and Barth on how the self-declaration of the creation is received? As we saw, although Calvin does not seem particularly concerned to provide a theological warrant for his claim that creation is God's revelation, this provides the starting point for a narrative of the fall of human beings, the need for the work of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit to restore knowledge of God the Creator through knowledge of God the Redeemer, as well the helps provided by the practices of the church. Thus, in the *Institutes*, Calvin immediately addresses whether human beings, given their fallen nature and practices, are able to receive the manifestation of God in the creation: "As experience shows, God has sown a seed of religion in all men . . . while some may evaporate in their own superstitions and others deliberately and wickedly desert God, yet all degenerate from the true knowledge of him. And so it happens that no real piety remains in the world . . . They do not apprehend God as he offers himself, but imagine as they have fashioned him in their own presumption" (*Institutes*, I.4.1). On the other hand, for Calvin, knowledge of God as Creator is never entirely erased by human sinfulness: "that seed remains which can in now wise be uprooted: that there is some sort of divinity; but this seed is so corrupted that by itself it produces only the worst fruits" (*Institutes*, I.4.4). Indeed, it is the shape of human sinfulness – its penchant for idolatry – which proves that this is the case. Given that a human being "prefers to worship wood and stone rather than to be thought of as having no God," this shows that "this is a most vivid impression of a divine being" and that impression is "impossible to blot this from man's mind" (*Institutes*, I.3.1). The marks of God's glory in the world, in combination with the *divinitatis sensum*, is to provoke a knowledge of piety in which God is revered, loved, and worshipped (*Institutes*, I.2.2). In other words, the fact that human beings can and do produce idols and perform idolatry is clear evidence for the fact that human beings have been implanted with receivers of God's glory that can be suppressed but never eliminated – it is that ontological structure which creates the possibility for idolatry. Cornelis van der Kooi, in *As In a Mirror: John Calvin and Karl Barth on Knowing God*, trans. Donald Mader (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 71-2, says that "It is a form of knowing that thrusts itself upon us, which can be repressed, but which man can never shake off for good . . . while the direct realization of God can be disrupted, it cannot be destroyed by sin." As a result, while, for Calvin, "true knowledge of God as Creator is not available outside Christ," a knowledge which is suppressed and repressed condemns all human beings before God. (Ibid.,

For Barth, how does Jesus Christ defeat practiced counter-truth? By convincing human beings, through his defeat of their resistances, that he has a *de jure* victory and will have an absolute *de facto* victory over those resistances. How does that happen? First, using the Fourth Gospel in particular, here Barth rehearses we have encountered before : Jesus Christ draws human beings into the love of the Triune God as that love is

82). Van der Kooi argues that for Calvin, God's manifestations in creation do not "produce the spiritual fruit for which they were intended" (Ibid., 82) and are "insufficient for faith" (Ibid., 86). This sets up Calvin's view that "knowledge of God as Creator must also be purified through Scripture" (Ibid., 86).

With regard to the reception of God's self-declaration, both Barth and Calvin claim that it is not received appropriately, due to human sinfulness. For Barth, the prophecy of Jesus Christ must overcome human resistance to his own self-declaration in their many falsehoods. However, Barth differs from Calvin in three basic ways. First, for Barth, as we saw in "The Light of Life," human beings do not receive the self-declaration of God the Creator because of their very creatureliness – their being and act as entities that are not divine poses an absolute obstacle because only the Triune God has the capacity to recognize and know the Triune God. Creatures, apart from a participation in God's own recognition and knowledge of God's self, cannot recognize God's self-declaration in the created order.

Second, for Barth, these human resistances to the divine glory are resistances to the glory of Jesus Christ. For Calvin, as Cornelis van der Kooi puts it, "The revelation of God has a teleological structure which certainly find its completion in the knowledge of Christ, but which is not determined by Christ in all its components . . . there is indeed a soteriological Christocentrism, but not of a fundamental Christocentrism." (Ibid., 84). For Calvin, even though human beings substitute "empty speculations" for obedience to God's self-declaration throughout the creation, those empty speculations are not direct resistances to God's revelation in Christ. With regard to reception of God's glory in creation, Calvin follows Paul in Romans 1 in saying that this issue is one of "foul ungratefulness" (*Institutes*, I.5.4). That is, although the marks of God's divinity as the creator and provider of creation abound, human beings "raise up in his stead dreams and specters of our own brains, and attribute to anything else than the true source the praise of righteousness, wisdom, goodness and power" (Ibid., 1.5.14). For Calvin, human resistances to revelation in creation are simply resistances to God's many gifts in creation, all of which are marked by God's glory. Human beings resist revelation by their ingratitude and idolatry, in the face of God's self-revelation in creation. For Calvin, this is not a resistance to God's revelation in Jesus Christ. For Barth, all revelation is the revelation of Jesus Christ, and so all resistances to revelation are resistances to the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Third, as a result of exhaustively locating God's self-declaration within Jesus Christ's own history, Barth has no need to posit a residual creational awareness of the Creator which self-condemns human beings. On the one hand, there is no knowledge of God the Creator without knowledge of Christ, according to Barth. The incarnation confirms that the constancy of creation results from God's faithfulness, apart from the incarnation that cannot be recognized. On the other hand, human beings involve themselves in "self-alienation" as they resist the revelation of God in Christ throughout the creation (IV/3.1, 271). But, they are not resisting a revelation of God of Creator that is not linked to the revelation of God the Redeemer (in Calvin's language). They are resisting Jesus Christ, although they do not recognize that they are resisting Jesus Christ. They produce false ideologies and worldviews in order to resist knowledge of Jesus Christ. There is no universal knowledge of Jesus Christ, there is universal obstruction of knowledge of Jesus Christ, apart from the power of the Holy Spirit. Unless human beings come to a *de facto* participation in their own reconciliation by the power of the Holy Spirit, they merely condemn themselves as they resist the prophecy of Jesus Christ. What needs to be further explored is whether Barth is indeed producing a kind of Christological universal theology here – not a natural theology that in any way produces true knowledge about God as Creator, but a universal obstruction of God's self-revelation in the creation. In other words, it is a kind of willed ignorance – a lack of knowledge which one resists out of sloth, pride or ingratitude.

expressed or glorified in Jesus Christ.⁸⁸ Jesus Christ, as the Word of God, brokers an unveiling of the Triune love of God – the love of the Father and the Son – as collateral for its proclamation. Other counter-truths turn on the capacities of creatures to depict the divine.⁸⁹ Thus, the final and absolute victory of Jesus Christ is assured.⁹⁰ Secondly, Jesus

⁸⁸ IV/3.1, 235: “Their fellowship, unity and indwelling are . . . described as their action and being in free and mutual affirmation and surrender, the Son loving the Father and being loved by Him . . . This love is the content of the Word of declaration of Jesus . . . because it is the revelation of perfect love in God Himself that even in its conflict with darkness it has and maintains its positive character, its superiority and invincibility. IV/3.1, 237: “in the revelation of the glory of Jesus, in the love of the Father for the Son and the Son for the Father, in the light of the love which shines in the darkness, there is no alternative since this light is absolutely, unequivocally and exclusively the positive light of life.”

⁸⁹ IV/3.1, 240.

⁹⁰ What accounts for the differences between Calvin and Barth? Do their differences stem from the fact that Barth is working in a post-Kantian intellectual milieu, which affects how he can describe the metaphysical connectivity of the material world? Van der Kooi suggests this line of thinking, but is commenting on Barth’s doctrine of God in volume one of the *Church Dogmatics* (*As in a Mirror*, 75-84). Does their difference come from Barth’s embrace of a certain brand of neo-Kantian epistemology? As van der Kooi develops in reference to Herman Cohen, in following J.F. Lohmann’s work (*As in a Mirror*, 289-293). See J.F. Lohmann, *Karl Barth und der Neukantianismus* (Berlin/New York, 1995). Bruce McCormack makes similar claims in *Karl Barth’s Critically-Realistic Dialectical Theology* (66-77), although McCormack pairs this with Barth’s doctrine of election after 1936 (458-463). This is important in terms of the genetic influence on Barth’s conceptual structures, but Barth’s arguments in “The Light of Life” seem to turn on his use of I Corinthians 2 (especially 2.11), and his doctrine of election. In other words, his neo-Kantianism seems to gain some support from I Corinthians 2 and his doctrine of election comes from a reading of scripture that will enable him to solve some of the problems he identifies in the doctrine of election both in the twenties and after his encounter with Maury in 1936. In other words, Barth and Calvin appear to simply disagree on the material content of dogmatics and on the hermeneutical priorities of dogmatic theology. Calvin studies have radically demolished the idea that Calvin’s doctrine of election structures the entirety of his thought. Richard Muller presents a brief Calvin historiography which mentions how this approach has been dismantled (*The Unaccommodated Calvin*, 3-17, esp. 9-10). However, Muller’s claim that a direct comparison with Barth will not help us understand Barth probably does not do justice to the fact Barth differentiates himself from Calvin throughout his work (*Ibid.*, 187). Muller’s point would be that then we should be considering how Barth reads Calvin, not Calvin himself. However, when Barth does not provide this sort of commentary in these pages, or in this period of his work, we have to make do with a direct comparison. While it is too much to say that the distance between Calvin’s difference from Barth has to do with his doctrine of election, it is not too much to say that *Barth’s distance from Calvin* has to do with the way that Barth’s doctrine of election determines everything which happens after II/2. While Calvin’s doctrine of election does not determine his approach to the human reception of God’s theatre, it is compatible with it. For Calvin, the reprobate who do not fruitfully receive Jesus Christ are now justifiably condemned, given the structure of the universe. For instance, as Calvin comments the purposes of the psalmist in psalm 19 to assert that every human being has “no pretext for ignorance” and the psalmist says this “in order the more severely to upbraid men for their ingratitude” (*Comm.* 19.2; Cf. *Institutes* III.23.8-9.). In other words, human beings are condemned on the basis of their ingratitude for God’s creation (among other things). Election may not structure Calvin’s thought thoroughly, but this does show a consistency between his doctrines of election and reprobation and his doctrine of glory. However, for Barth, his unique doctrine of election, shaped in his decisions in 1936 and 1937, determine everything he accomplished in the *Church Dogmatics* thereafter. For Barth, in Jesus Christ, God has elected to be God for all of humanity and all of creation and thus the resurrection reaches out to all in order that all might participate *de facto* in that reconciliation. Thus, all resistances to the revelation of the Creator are

Christ “reveals the self-affirmation of God as His affirmation of the world.”⁹¹ In Jesus Christ “God did not love Him alone but also loved the world, and that He was not loved by him alone but also by the world.”⁹² Human beings, human beings who ratify nothingness, are thus “drawn into the movement of the love of God as the world which is loved by God and loves Him in return.”⁹³ Barth says here what we saw in chapter four, only now in light of the resistance human beings offer. Due to the perfection of the triune love, the Triune God owes absolutely nothing to the creation, neither love offered nor love requited.⁹⁴ While creatures will commit themselves to counter-truths which attempt a way from the creation to the Triune God, Jesus Christ defeats these attempts because his life and death re-enact the world in a history of grace *and* gratitude – thus grace and gratitude are human and divine reality within the Triune God. Barth adds now that this grace includes the fact that the Triune God mediates that Jesus Christ’s *de jure* achievement in and through Jesus Christ’s followers.⁹⁵ Despite God’s lack of obligation,

resistances to the absolute self-investment of God in Jesus Christ, and the self-condemnation of humanity comes about because of its resistance to the full breadth and depth of God’s resulting self-revelation. The third reason that Calvin and Barth differ on the description of creation as revelation may be due to the fact that Barth is a bit more adventurous as a Trinitarian theologian. Barth asserts that “the prominent place occupied by” the incarnation “has something corresponding to it in the essence of God, that the Son forms the centre of the Trinity . . . We must even say that the Son or Logos of god already displays the beauty of God in special way in His eternal existence and therefore within the Trinity, as the perfect image of the Father” (II/1, 661). For Barth, the creation does not declare God as its creator apart from Jesus Christ because the perichoresis of the Trinity necessitates that the Father be known in the Son, which makes it fitting for God to election the incarnation as a means of self-investment in the creation. Perhaps Calvin’s reticence about speculation about the perichoresis of the Father and the Son in relation to the essence of God allows him more room to say that the creation is purposed for revelation, and can be described as revelation.

⁹¹ IV/3.1, 236.

⁹² IV/3.1, 236.

⁹³ IV/3.1, 236.

⁹⁴ IV/3.1, 227.

⁹⁵ IV/3.1, 236. Barth also notes that Jesus Christ’s glory induces human surrender because Jesus Christ is able to appeal to the “Real Man,” to the true humanity that he establishes and reveals. He writes, “The Word of grace is for this man. And this man is for the Word of grace. Between these two there is an original and indestructible conformity (*Übereinstimmung*). And it is in this conformity that there consists . . . the superiority of the One who speaks this Word in the face of the whole world of opposition and contradiction brought against him” (IV/3.2, 272/KD 760, translation modified).

Jesus Christ takes in witnesses and participants – yet another mode by which God’s grace is expressed in the light of God’s glory.⁹⁶

The Promise of the Spirit and the Glory of the Christian Community

Glory as the Theme of the Resurrection

Barth’s third and final major treatment of Christ’s resurrection within volume four of the *Dogmatics* shares the same general agenda as Barth’s other two treatments of the resurrection: how Jesus Christ’s life and death can and does effect other human individuals and groups.⁹⁷ Given that the Christology of IV/3 has to do with Jesus Christ’s self-mediation in his prophetic identity, the most significant layer in that concern has to do with the conditioning of human individuals and groups as the mediation of Jesus Christ’s life and death, insofar as they mediate Jesus Christ’s prophecy to themselves and

⁹⁶ As we saw in chapter one, Calvin does not make a direct appeal to the doctrine of the Trinity in order to unfold the meaning of God’s glory. That is, for Calvin, God is not glorious because God is triune. God is both glorious and triune, but Calvin does not take the essence of God’s life to be constituted by the relationality of the triune life. One implication of that view is that Calvin will not appeal to the trinity of God as a means of unfolding the persuasiveness of the biblical story – that is, in order to show that the reception of God as Creator and Redeemer is not a case of God simply overpowering and coercing human identity. That does not mean that Calvin simply asserts the power and inscrutability of God throughout his work. For example, with regard to providence, Calvin appeals to the goodness of God in connection with the power of God. As Randall Zachman points out, “Calvin found the thought of God’s immutability and power when taken isolation to be terrifying” (*Image and Word*, 455). Zachman faults Susan Schreiner for saying otherwise at one point, but Schreiner clearly states the same view, although she points more to Calvin’s appeal to God’s wisdom that remains secret (Schreiner, *Theatre of His Glory*, 34). Calvin also refers to the graceful love of God as manifest especially in the cross which persuades and draws out human faith: “it must be that the grace of God wholly draws us to himself and inflames us with the love of him by whom we obtain a serious awareness of it. If Plato affirms this of His Beautiful, of which he saw only a shadowy idea from afar, this is much more true with regard to God” (*Comm. I Peter 2.3*, as cited in Zachman, *Image and Word*, 279). The life and death of Jesus Christ are unneeded for Calvin and are a matter of grace, but for Calvin that is not due to perichoresis. For instance, in contrast to some undesigned “Sophists,” who think that Christ’s death merited his exaltation, Calvin writes, “As, then, a mirror, though it has splendor, has it not for itself, but with the view of its being advantageous and profitable to others, so Christ did not seek or receive anything for himself, but everything for us. For what need, I ask, had he, who was the equal of the Father, of a new exaltation?” (*Comm. Phil. 2.9*, as referenced in Zachman, *Image and Word*, 277). But, again, this follows what was identified in chapter one. Jesus Christ is glorious because He is God, not because He is the Son or the Word. Why would it not be advantageous to Jesus Christ to become incarnate and to die on behalf of all of the elect? Barth would say it would not be advantageous because God is triune, while Calvin will not make such an appeal because it appears to be improper speculation about God’s essence, which cannot be known by human beings.

⁹⁷ IV/3.1, 276-277.

the rest of creation.⁹⁸ I noted above that Jesus Christ's prophecy creates history for Barth, and now he will clarify: the resurrection is the event in which Jesus Christ enacts that prophecy. I argue that, for Barth, Jesus Christ glorifies himself through the presence of the Holy Spirit by promising, in the Christian community's life, the binding of God's self to creation, the corresponding completion of creation at his return, and God's own future. Thus, the Christian community is drawn into mission, which is to bear witness to its telos, which is same telos as the rest of human history and creation.

Near the beginning of "The Promise of the Spirit," Barth immediately reminds his readers that Jesus Christ is "never in any respect without His own, men, Christians, but that always in all respects He is what He is and does what He does with them, in them, and through them."⁹⁹ All belong to Jesus Christ's life as all are *de jure* participants in Jesus Christ. But, not all are *de facto* participants in Jesus Christ's life since not all are participants in Jesus Christ's light.¹⁰⁰ But, how is it that the resurrection specifies participation in Jesus Christ's self-mediation? What's the specific claim in the "Promise of the Spirit"? Barth writes, "In the glory of the Mediator as such there is included the fact that He is in the process of glorifying Himself among and in and through us, and that we are ordained and liberated to take a receptive and active part in His glory. In this respect as in others, namely, in the glory of His mediatorial work, Jesus Christ is not

⁹⁸ IV/3.1, 277, 291. Barth hints at this question frequently in "Jesus is Victor" (see IV/3.1, 193, 197). While Barth's concern in IV/1 and IV/2 has to do with how it is possible for human beings to responsively participate in the humiliation and exaltation of Jesus Christ's life and death, Barth now turns to how God makes it possible for human beings to mediate Jesus Christ's life and death to one another. R. Dale Dawson aptly describes Barth's agenda in "The Promise of the Spirit": "the glorious Mediator is in the process of glorifying himself in and among and through the human person such that the human person is ordered and set free for an active and receptive participation in his glory" (*The Resurrection in Karl Barth*, 95, see also p. 175). However, it is also the Christian community, as a community, which is set free.

⁹⁹ IV/3.1, 284.

¹⁰⁰ IV/3.1, 278.

without His own.”¹⁰¹ The resurrection is the Triune God investing God’s glory in the creation in order that the creation might have a history with God after the death of Jesus Christ – a history shared by all. However, the resurrection also creates the Christian community, creates *de facto* participation in Jesus Christ’s life and death, because the Triune God invests God’s glory in the Christian community in particular. *De facto* participation in Jesus Christ’s life and death is identical to committed or fruitful participation in the glory of the Triune God. Mere *de jure* participation is identical to a resistant or unfruitful participation in the glory of the Triune God.

In other words, all of Barth’s descriptions of the resurrection in the doctrine of reconciliation up to this point are ways of referring to the fact that the resurrection is what it is – the communication of Jesus Christ to the rest of humanity – because the resurrection is Jesus Christ sharing the triune glory with other human beings. For Barth, “the particular event of His resurrection is thus the primal and basic form of His glory, of the outgoing and shining of his light, of His expression, of His Word as self-expression, and therefore of His outgoing and penetration and entry into the world around and ourselves, of His prophetic work.”¹⁰² What does Barth mean when he says that the resurrection is the “primal form” of Jesus Christ’s glory? The resurrection is the event in Jesus Christ’s history in which the glory of the Triune God is leveraged for the salvation of creation in general and the induction of the Christian community.¹⁰³ In other words, given God’s election of humanity in Jesus Christ, God would indeed not be glorious apart from the creation, and it is the resurrection which effects that link between God’s glory

¹⁰¹ IV/3.1, 278.

¹⁰² IV/3.1 281.

¹⁰³ IV/3.1, 283. Barth references clearly here the salvation of all creation in Jesus Christ through the resurrection, although his particular focus is humanity in these pages.

and the creation: “In his glory he radiates His being and action for the world out from himself into the world in order that it may share it. In his revelation, shining as light, He discloses and manifests and announces and imparts Himself, moving out from Himself to where he and His being and work are not yet known and perceived . . .”¹⁰⁴ God’s self-expression does not happen without the salvation of the creation it effects.

Thus, Barth claims in “The Promise of the Spirit”:

His work, His being and action, were not augmented by the resurrection . . . Yet without this event following His life and death . . . this alteration of the situation between God and man as accomplished in Him would have remained shut up in Him . . . Without this event it would have lacked the glory and revelation and therefore the prophetic character of His being and action. His life would still have the life of the world, but it would not have been light shining in this world and illuminating it . . . the world reconciled to God in Him would then be practically and factually unreconciled as though nothing had happened, for it would be in no position . . . to reconstitute itself as such.¹⁰⁵

As we noted above, this helps the interpreter make sense of the fact that Barth constantly alludes to and mentions explicitly the resurrection in 69.2 and 69.3: Barth is finally making plain that it is the resurrection which is the event which unveils Jesus Christ to the rest of creation and makes the creation the theatre of God’s glory.¹⁰⁶ However, a statement like this should be vexing for the interpreter of Barth, since Barth has established that Jesus Christ’s being, since it incarnates the glory of God, declares itself. If Jesus Christ incarnates God’s glory, then the resurrection would not be needed as that which declares the life and death of Jesus Christ - if Jesus is the Prophet, he is always the

¹⁰⁴ IV/3.1, 280.

¹⁰⁵ IV/3.1, 282. Dale Dawson notes that quotes like this, compared to others which declare the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross (for instance, about a dozen lines above this quote), creates a problem that can only be overcome if we accept his claim that Barth acknowledges “the Father’s act upon the Son is a divine act accomplishing something above and beyond the death of Jesus Christ” (*The Resurrection in Karl Barth*, 184). Dawson’s point is apropos, but Barth’s claims are not particularly contradictory, if we make a distinction between the *de jure* and *de facto* accomplishments of Jesus Christ.

¹⁰⁶ IV/3.1, 223-224 and 38-43 (69.3 and 69.2, respectively), for example.

Prophet. Barth does clarify himself somewhat in a programmatic comment on the resurrection in IV/2:

. . . this light is not entirely absent even in the pre-Easter sequence. On the contrary, this sequence is itself the completed act of God. If the event after the death of Christ confronts and accompanies it with all the singularity of another act of God-the divine act of the revelation of the first completed act- this does not exclude the fact, but includes it, that in anticipation the first act participated already in the second, i.e., that it had already the character of revelation, and was actually revelation.¹⁰⁷

That is, Barth appeals to an “anticipation” of the resurrection in Jesus Christ’s life and death. He must do this because he utterly rejects anything which would undercut the identity of Jesus Christ as the Son of God and the Son of Man.¹⁰⁸ If Jesus Christ does not declare himself in his life and death, it suggests the man Jesus is not identical to the second person of the Trinity. As we saw, Barth considers this to be one of the advantages of his way of integrating the older, scholastic description of the states of Christ with his identity as Son of God and Son of Man. If the Son of Man lacks glorification without the resurrection, then the two states description threatens the unity of Christ’s person. Yet, this is only to point out what Barth is denying, and to affirm what must be affirmed in Barth’s largest moves in his theology of the prophetic office of Jesus Christ. How does revelatory power of the resurrection differ from the revelatory power of Jesus Christ in his life and death? In other words, what’s distinctive about the resurrection as the outpouring of God’s glory, such that the outpouring of glory in Jesus Christ’s life and death anticipate its newness? I summarize this newness under two headings: 1) the resurrection as the actualization of God’s binding to the creation and 2) the resurrection as the restraint of God’s future.

¹⁰⁷ IV/2, 135.

¹⁰⁸ IV/2, 136: “Even in His humiliation as the Son of God-to come to our present question-did He not also exist as the exalted Son of Man in such a way that He was also manifest as both?”

Resurrection as the Actualization of God's Binding to Creation

One of Barth's most important claims in "The Promise of the Spirit" is the way that he relates the three modes of Jesus Christ's resurrection presence. His control for the relationship between these three modes is the Easter occurrence and the subsequent appearances to the disciples – in other words, the first mode of resurrection presence. Barth's entry point, similar to what he affirms in IV/1 and IV/2, is that the resurrection is "His new coming as the One who had come before"; the resurrecting Jesus Christ is identical to the crucified Jesus Christ.¹⁰⁹ Among other reasons we located in previous chapters, Barth makes this affirmation in order to solidify the ontological link between the *de jure* work of Jesus Christ and the *de facto* work of Jesus Christ. The resurrection is Jesus Christ insofar as Jesus Christ is "putting into effect what was done in Him for all men and for the whole created order."¹¹⁰ Barth does not link the Christian community to Jesus Christ through a history of personal influence, through an affirmation of God's abstract power, or through the hermeneutical appropriation of Jesus Christ's life. Instead, Barth's point is that the resurrection is first and foremost the presence of Jesus Christ insofar as "he has death behind him."¹¹¹ Jesus Christ comes again to the entirety of creation. Without this continuity, the Christian community could not be liberated to follow in the wake of Jesus Christ, to offer its own prophetic task in the entirety of creation.¹¹² For it may simply be a church driven into the world by doubt, not by its confidence in the resurrection. Without this continuity, the Christian community could be attempting to alleviate its own doubt through the validation of new recruits.

¹⁰⁹ IV/3.1, 291.

¹¹⁰ IV/3.1, 291.

¹¹¹ IV/3.1, 291.

¹¹² IV/3.1, 288.

Barth outlines the distinctiveness of Easter in order to describe more fully Jesus Christ's current resurrection presence – which is the resurrection presence that this section is meant to describe and uphold. What is the distinctiveness of Easter in IV/3? First, God “has publicly bound and committed Himself . . . for the world and man.”¹¹³ The resurrection is a “once for all event,” a “pronunciation of the great divine Yea and Amen to which God will be as faithful as He is to Himself.”¹¹⁴ Given the resurrection, “there can and will be no going back for God.”¹¹⁵ For Barth as well as for T.F. Torrance, the resurrection “affirmed the reality of God's creation even for God, as well as the reality of God for the creation.”¹¹⁶ The Christian community's confidence in the pronouncement of Easter, and by extension, the world's confidence, debouches from nothing less than God's life, which becomes collateral for the creation's inclusion in the history of Jesus Christ. God has bound the creation to God's life because God has bound God's life to the creation in the resurrection.

Second, the Christian community's confidence also originates in the placement of this binding. God does not bind God's self to the creation in a “supra-heavenly realm,”; instead, God binds himself in “our sphere.”¹¹⁷ In sum, “Not only did God break out from his transcendence, but He broke out into the this-worldliness of His creation.”¹¹⁸ Thus, Easter is distinguished also by the fact that as God's self-glorification happens in the creation, the creation becomes irrevocably altered, in correspondence to God's self-binding. The resurrection is “the alteration of the situation between God and the world by

¹¹³ IV/3.1, 288.

¹¹⁴ IV/3.1, 296, 297.

¹¹⁵ IV/3.1, 297.

¹¹⁶ Thomas Torrance, *Space, Time and Resurrection*, 80.

¹¹⁷ IV/3.1, 298.

¹¹⁸ IV/3.1, 312.

the reconciliation of the world to God accomplished in Him.”¹¹⁹ Barth claims that when the Gospel of John states that “we beheld his glory” (Jn. 1.14), it is saying that the disciples saw “the full extent of His work and influence as achieved in his life and death” because it “passed into the reality of world-occurrence.”¹²⁰ Without Easter, there is no alteration of the creation *de facto* – it would be achieved in substitution, but it would not effect those for whom Jesus Christ is the substitute. Given the resurrection, reconciliation can and does happen not merely *pro nobis* but *in nobis*. Barth appropriates the “once for all” label for the resurrection in order to mark the resurrection as an event which alters the world absolutely – “the world is not the same as it was before.”¹²¹ Barth’s claim is meant to be as comprehensive as any of his other claims: the *creation* is what it is *de facto* because of the resurrection. Barth writes, “since this declaration has a retroactive force when it takes place within it, it is not the same as it would necessarily have been had it not taken place. Now that Jesus Christ is risen from the dead, no man who has lived or will live is the same as he would have been if Jesus Christ had not risen.”¹²² Put simply: “the new creation has taken place in the resurrection of Jesus Christ.”¹²³ Just as the cross alters the situation between God and all of humanity (and the rest of creation), before and after Jesus Christ, just so the resurrection is a once for all event which draws the rest of creation – *before and after Jesus Christ* - into an appropriation of or resistance to Jesus Christ’s life and death. Either way, Jesus Christ’s resurrection alters creation and all of history totally, universally and definitively.

¹¹⁹ IV/3.1, 312.

¹²⁰ IV/3.1, 301.

¹²¹ IV/3.1, 301.

¹²² IV/3.1, 301.

¹²³ IV/3.1, 300.

The third distinctive is an explanation of the first two. What is the newness of Jesus Christ's Easter presence which passes into and irrevocably alters the cosmos? Barth points out that since it is a life after death, Jesus Christ's new life "can only be the eternal life which is given by God after the manner of His own life."¹²⁴ For, "God alone is above death and after it."¹²⁵ This is not mere continuation of his life before death, it is that life lived in "participation in the sovereign life of God."¹²⁶ Barth is absolutely clear that this is no evaporation of finite materiality and temporality into the divine life.¹²⁷ Instead, "in his participation in the glory of God, in which He was previously concealed from them, He now appeared to them."¹²⁸ Barth's point is not that Jesus Christ did not participate in the glory of God before the resurrection, but that, given the resurrection, that participation in the divine glory is made evident insofar as his creaturely life changes "form."¹²⁹ His spatial-temporal existence has changed, and so it can reveal what was previously concealed: his ongoing participation in the life, the glory, the joy and form of the Triune God.

But his new diaphanous form does not simply illuminate his human participation in eternal life, it conveys the creation's *de facto* participation in his divine life. God's eternal life is lived in Jesus Christ's life and investment of God's life becomes diaphanous in Jesus Christ's new form : "His temporal and spatial life shone as His eternal life."¹³⁰ In the resurrection, God "did break out from His transcendence . . . into

¹²⁴ IV/3.1, 311.

¹²⁵ IV/3.1, 310.

¹²⁶ IV/3.1, 311.

¹²⁷ IV/3.1, 311-312.

¹²⁸ IV/3.1, 312.

¹²⁹ IV/3.1, 308.

¹³⁰ IV/3.1, 313.

the this-worldliness of His creation.”¹³¹ Again, the issue is not that God’s eternal life was not invested in Jesus Christ previous to this, but that God is “again present in the midst of world-occurrence.”¹³² God breaks out again, since the resurrection is the conveyance of God’s eternal life through Jesus Christ’s new diaphanous form to the rest of creation. Barth writes, “. . . in the appearance of the one man Jesus in the glory of God there was made immediately present as a new but concretely real element in the existence of the world the goal given to the world in and with its reconciliation to God, its future of salvation as redemption from the shadow of death and the antithesis which pursues it, its future of salvation as its completion by the creation of its new form of peace, its being in the glory of God.”¹³³ In other words, Jesus Christ appears in this new form in history in order to convey this new form of existence to the rest of history and the rest of creation. He comes to bring the new creation, which happens because, in the resurrection, “His glory moved out to grasp the world and us men.”¹³⁴ The triune God’s joy and form is shared with creation in the resurrection, and thus the creation is given a new form. Or, in other terms, Jesus Christ makes himself – as the conveyance of God’s eternity, God’s glory - the future goal of all creation: the creation is clothed in “divine glory,” and thus God enacts “the perfecting of its creation by the new creation of its form in peace with God and therefore in and with itself.”¹³⁵ Barth now makes concrete what was mostly a formal discussion in “Jesus is Victor.” He makes the parable of the kingdom’s seed concretized in the resurrection: “the presence of the future in this event is the new seed of

¹³¹ IV/3.1, 312.

¹³² IV/3.1, 312.

¹³³ IV/3.1, 314-315.

¹³⁴ IV/3.1, 323.

¹³⁵ IV/3.1, 315.

life planted in world-occurrence.”¹³⁶ In other words, the conveyance of the Triune glory to the rest of creation is a history in which the rest of creation is drawn into own growth toward final redemption. Easter is the seed which induces the creation as a whole, and the church in particular, towards its own telos. Easter is what draws the Christian community into its own growth.

This is precisely why Barth entitles this subsection “The Promise of the Spirit.” Barth divides up the phrase, and notes that he is speaking of the Spirit as “the particular mode of the coming again and therefore the presence and action of Jesus Christ in the place and time between His resurrection and His final appearing” and he is speaking of promise because “Jesus Christ as the hope of all is present to us as the One who promises and is promised.”¹³⁷ Jesus Christ is the one who promises himself as the fulfillment of history. The resurrection is the self-giving presence of Jesus Christ: “Jesus Christ . . . in the glory of His coming again in its first form, gives to men the sure promise of His final appearing, of the conclusion of His revelation, and therefore of the redemption and perfecting of the world reconciled in Him, of its participation in the life of this new cosmic form, and therefore of its own eternal life. And in so doing He gives it the sure

¹³⁶ IV/3.1, 316. One of the basic metaphors in “Jesus is Victor” is that Jesus Christ’s self-expression is a seed that produces fruit. For Barth, the parable of the Sower in Matthew 13 indicates that Jesus Christ’s self-expression – his Word – goes out to all men and is heard by all men. The “point of the parable” is that “there is a division within the one world to which the Word of the kingdom is spoken and among the men to whom it is declared without distinction” (IV/3.1, 189). The difference is that in some “the seed is hindered from growing and is thus sown in vain, but in others it brings forth fruit and thus justifies the work of the Sower . . .” (IV/3.1, 189). Those who are fruitful are “growing unhindered to maturity,” which refers to “reception, acceptance, appropriation and comprehension” (IV/3.1, 190). *De facto* participation in Jesus Christ grows in two ways, as we saw in chapter 2. The human community which accepts Jesus Christ’s prophecy is growing numerically. But, Barth is also careful to point out that individual Christians also grow, because all individual Christians are involved in the onto-epistemological resistances which Jesus Christ has allowed in order to defeat. Both Christian and non-Christians are “both those who know and those who do not know, all being determined by the great antithesis that the light shines, but the light shines in the darkness” (IV/3.1, 192). The difference between them cannot be boiled down to the fact that a repetition of constancy or faithfulness enacted in and with the Holy Spirit occurs. The difference between them is that with Christians “it is knowledge which is predominant and ignorance is giving ground” (IV/3.1, 192).

¹³⁷ IV/3.1, 351.

promise of His presence and assistance in its temporal being directed to this goal.”¹³⁸ It is Jesus Christ’s present presence which acts as a pledge of his future presence, both in the time before the eschaton and at the eschaton itself.

Why not more? Why not now? Glorious Grace as Restraining God’s future

A subplot of this subsection emerges at this point. Upon making these claims, Barth immediately asserts that the resurrection becomes its own problem. If the new creation that is Jesus Christ has entered the world, effecting a transformation throughout the rest of creation, why not more change? Why is “the actual alteration of our existence . . . hidden”?¹³⁹ Barth clarifies the problem: “The problem is that it is too great . . . it is too great to be limited to the one event which took place then and there . . . it transcends its spatial and temporal limit. It must work itself out in another event filling and controlling all times and places . . . Hence the question . . . Why has the self-revelation of Jesus Christ in the world and in our lives taken place only at that point? . . . how could it commence there without at once reaching its goal everywhere and perfectly?”¹⁴⁰ If the resurrection is this powerful, what is holding back the creation? In this subsection, Barth is not merely making concrete all of his previous explorations of the resurrection and giving a preparatory account of the Christian community’s mediation of Jesus Christ’s reconciliation. He is also trying to answer the questions that the resurrection itself creates. If Easter is that which has changed all of history, why doesn’t history manifest more change, more transformation?

¹³⁸ IV/3.1, 351.

¹³⁹ IV/3.1, 317.

¹⁴⁰ IV/3.1, 324.

Barth provides one constraint as he answers this. Barth asserts that the three modes of Jesus Christ's presence are, together, "one event."¹⁴¹ Just as Easter must simply be the resurrected presence of the crucified one, just so the other modes of Jesus Christ's resurrection presence must be the presence of the crucified one. He writes that "the one and total coming in other forms has its primal and basic pattern in the Easter event, so that we might well be tempted to describe the whole event simply as one long fulfillment of the resurrection of Jesus Christ."¹⁴² What he means to say is that "always in all three forms it is a matter of the fresh coming of the One who came before."¹⁴³ Barth thus concludes that "It is not more in one case or less in another. It is the one thing taking place in different ways . . ."¹⁴⁴ Jesus Christ is not giving more of himself in one mode of the resurrection in comparison to the others. Jesus Christ's final return is not the completion of his resurrection self-giving. Instead, it is simply another mode of his presence; the Crucified one comes as he is in a different way. Thus, Barth continues to secure the link between the Christian community's action and the life and death of Jesus Christ. But, he is also working to occlude the appearance of "the being and rule of a *Deus absconditus* limiting and even questioning the being and action of God in Jesus Christ."¹⁴⁵ If each layer of the resurrection presence of Jesus Christ offers more of Jesus Christ than what was offered before, Barth claims that we open ourselves to the specter of a more thorough-going transcendence – a God behind the God of the cross or of Easter. God's own unity is at stake if the resurrection event offers more of Jesus Christ than what

¹⁴¹ IV/3.1, 293.

¹⁴² IV/3.1, 293.

¹⁴³ IV/3.1, 293.

¹⁴⁴ IV/3.1, 293. Chris Collins Winn missteps here, reading too much of the Blumhardts into Barth when he writes that "Though Jesus Christ is really present, he is not present in his fullness . . . in our faith, love and hope in Jesus the Victor . . . creates a longing for the full truth of Jesus' triumph" ("*Jesus is Victor!*," 261).

¹⁴⁵ IV/3.1, 297

was offered before, at Easter or on the cross. If God offers more of God's self or if Jesus Christ offers more of himself at any stage, then a rift emerges between the immanent and economic Trinity.

Barth's first answer to this question: Jesus Christ enacts a history of progress in his revelation so that all human beings, in all their authenticity as free creatures, can participate in Jesus Christ's prophecy. Jesus Christ is never not present: "He Himself is fully present and active . . . neither the Christian nor the non-Christian is left to himself in his creaturely freedom."¹⁴⁶ The present time has its telos in the revelation of reconciliation, but the delay of that perfected revelation allows for the exercise of freedom in all human beings. All human beings are reconciled and all human beings are given time, and each human being "makes use of its freedom in analogy to the teleology of the revelation of the accomplished revelation."¹⁴⁷ In other words, the goodness of creation continues, and so human beings can exercise their powers and yearnings. In the resurrection, "all we who exist in this sphere, whether Christians or non-Christians, are drawn into the history of salvation and given a part in it."¹⁴⁸ However, without acceptance of reconciliation and the history which has been created for the glorification of that reconciliation, the encounter with Jesus Christ is "unfruitful" and amounts to the "sorry freedom of prisoners, thinking and speaking and acting at random."¹⁴⁹ Human beings who do not accept their reconciliation may be free with regard to their capacities to act, to think, to plan, to digest, etc. But, they do not exercise the freedom of reconciled being, and so they are prisoners, those who live de facto in an absolute time without telos.

¹⁴⁶ IV/3.1, 350.

¹⁴⁷ IV/3.1, 336.

¹⁴⁸ IV/3.1, 350.

¹⁴⁹ IV/3.1, 337, 338.

Thus, the Christian community is the site in the human community “where the prophetic work of Jesus Christ does not take place in vain, but is fruitful” and where the creation “must serve the demonstration and expression of his freedom.”¹⁵⁰ It cannot be forgotten that Barth’s overall question in this subsection concerns how it is possible for other human beings to participate in the glory of God and the prophetic task of Jesus Christ, how it is possible for other human beings to mediate the reconciliation of Jesus Christ. The Christian community and others through whom Jesus Christ speaks in parables can mediate reconciliation to the creation insofar as “His coming in the promise of the Spirit” is “His direct and immediate presence and action among and with and in us.”¹⁵¹ However their mediation is to be specified, it cannot be specified as a new creaturely mediation that fills in the vacuum of Jesus Christ’s absence. The Christian community and others can mediate Jesus Christ because Jesus Christ mediates himself, by his own immediate presence. The time of the resurrection expands so that the Christian community grows in its witness, in its provisional participation in the self-witness of Jesus Christ. For the Christian community, “everything is conditioned and controlled on the basis of the commencement of the revelation of Jesus Christ, toward its completion, and by the dynamic of its course.”¹⁵² The Christian community’s freedom grows as it is on pilgrimage: “They are Christians as or to the extent that they are really on the move as pilgrims.”¹⁵³ Barth writes, “the Holy Spirit, Jesus Christ Himself in the power of the resurrection sets them on their way in this world which is not yet redeemed and perfected . . . He continually permits and commands and helps them to become and

¹⁵⁰ IV/3.1, 340.

¹⁵¹ IV/3.1, 350.

¹⁵² IV/3.1, 340.

¹⁵³ IV/3.1, 343.

be Christians step by step on this allotted way to the indicated goal.”¹⁵⁴ Fruitful freedom is a freedom expressed in the Christian community. Fruitful human freedom is freedom that expands in its own capacity to provide a provisional witness to Jesus Christ reconciliation and the unveiling of that reconciliation in the redemption of the cosmos. Human freedom finds its provisional telos, in the time before the second coming, in a witness to the reconciliation of Jesus Christ and the coming illumination of the cosmos by that reconciliation.

Barth’s second answer to this question is an elaboration of a point he begins to make in “Jesus is Victor,” where he discusses the end of the battle ensuing between Jesus Christ’s prophecy and the resistant falsehoods produced in history, about history. Jesus Christ is Lord of history. Jesus Christ is out to “show himself as Victor in the fight against darkness.”¹⁵⁵ The point he makes all along in “Jesus is Victor,” as we noted above, is that Jesus Christ directs this battle in order to win over humanity and history not only universally, but particularly. In other words, Jesus Christ restrains the power of the resurrection in order to enact a step by step victory in all the unique particularities of history. To know Jesus Christ is “know him as the living One, the Risen from the Dead . . . to receive . . . direct and unconditional certainty of the final victory which is still awaited but which comes relentlessly and irresistibly . . . He cannot experience any reverses, halts, or retreats on the way to this goal . . . it means the constant increase of light in darkness.”¹⁵⁶ In “Jesus is Victor,” Barth’s point is that Jesus Christ’s resurrection presence provides a certainty of the end of history, that history will achieve its end because it is being drawn into its own future through Jesus Christ’s self-manifestation. In

¹⁵⁴ IV/3.1, 353.

¹⁵⁵ IV/3.1, 330.

¹⁵⁶ IV/3.1, 263.

“The Promise of the Spirit,” he emphasizes that Jesus Christ makes progress toward a goal he has not yet accomplished:

He moves from His commencement, i.e., from the reconciliation already accomplished in Him, to the accomplishment of which there also belongs its revelation in His rising again from the dead . . . He clearly moves forward from this place where He gives it. He clearly moves forward from this place, from this commencement. Although it has taken place even as revelation in His resurrection, His work in its form as revelation is not ended or concluded. As the Revealer of His work He has not yet reached His goal. He is still moving towards it. He is marching from its beginning in the revelation of His life to the end of His not yet accomplished revelation of the life of all men and all creation as enclosed His life, of their life as the new creation on a new earth and under a new heave.¹⁵⁷

History does not experience more alteration because Jesus Christ, who enacts this history “is only on the way to the end” and “is still a Warrior and Pilgrim on the way to the goal.”¹⁵⁸ It is not so much that Jesus Christ accompanies history and the Christian community as it works towards the goal presented in Jesus Christ. Instead, history and the Christian community are being drawn into the pilgrimage and battle of Jesus Christ, as Jesus Christ is still in transition, still in conflict. The creation is involved in a struggle towards its end because Jesus Christ involves it in his struggle towards its end. God slows down the redemption of creation and human history in order to allow human history (and the creation) to be involved in its redemption, so that human history might catch up.¹⁵⁹

God’s own life makes it possible for God and human beings to be in a *de facto* covenant relationship, a relationship that is not only fulfilled in Jesus Christ but also given over to other human beings. God gives God’s self as a human being in Jesus Christ such that God now expects God’s own future as a human being, in which the Christian

¹⁵⁷ IV/3.1, 327.

¹⁵⁸ IV/3.1, 329.

¹⁵⁹ Cf. T.F. Torrance’s description of the ascension: “The ascension means that Christ holds back the physical transformation of the creation to the day when he will return to make all things new, and that meantime he sends the Church to live and work in the form of a servant within the measures and limits of the on-going world of space and time” (*Space, Time and Resurrection*, 149).

community and the rest of creation participate. As he writes, “it is not in the first instance the world, or the Church . . . but He Himself, the Resurrected, who is still on the way. . . . He first is still a Warrior and Pilgrim.”¹⁶⁰ He continues, “It is He first who bears the burden the persisting wickedness He does this now as the Resurrected from the dead as once He undertook and did it in Gethsemane and on Golgotha, with all the affliction and pain which this entailed and which He did not refuse It is as the One who came before that He has come again, risen and alive He first, who alone is a match for and superior to this enemy even in the last round of the conflict, sighs, and weeps and entreats and prays, as He previously did.”¹⁶¹ In other words, God gives the gift of himself as a human being who is a pilgrim, a warrior – God gives himself in human form. The Triune God gives access to the divine life in human form, and so Barth recognizes that Jesus Christ is the one who expects the future. Barth carefully says that the basic movement here is not one of “solidarity” in which “he adapts Himself to our situation.”¹⁶² Yet, Barth affirms quite clearly, as we see here, that Jesus Christ is the Pilgrim who suffers and prays now as he suffered and prayed before the resurrection. So, given the identity of Jesus Christ as fully God and fully human, such that God’s life is given absolutely in Jesus Christ in the history of Jesus Christ, Barth is saying that Jesus Christ expects a future which he himself creates. And so, Jesus Christ’s ongoing involvement in history in and through the Holy Spirit is a mode in which he draws other human beings into solidarity with his expectation of the future: “it is in company with Him that all expectant humanity and the world . . . still find ourselves on the way.”¹⁶³ In other words, the

¹⁶⁰ IV/3.1, 329.

¹⁶¹ IV/3.1, 328-329. Or, as Barth puts it elsewhere, “Jesus Christ Himself is in transition” (361).

¹⁶² IV/3.1, 329.

¹⁶³ IV/3.1, 329.

resurrection makes it possible for other human beings to participate in the hope that Jesus Christ instantiates, a hope which emerges from a pilgrim whose resurrection assures us of the victory of reconciliation and the victory of redemption. The fullness of God is not held back insofar as Jesus Christ undergoes an expectant vulnerability to the future he creates, and thus allows other human beings to participate in that expectant vulnerability to the eternal God who brings redemption.

This brings us to Barth's last answer to the question. God delays Jesus Christ's return in order to enact a missionary community in tandem with God's own mission. Barth writes, "The main concern of the ongoing of the history of the prophecy of Jesus Christ which fills our time is with non-Christians . . . It is for their sake that it must go forward, that Jesus Christ as the living Word of God is still on the way today. Their conversion from ignorance to knowledge, from unbelief to faith, from bondage to freedom, from night to day, is the goal of His prophetic work so far as it has a temporal goal."¹⁶⁴ Due to the delay of the second coming, the human community has the time it needs to participate in God's mission. For that to happen, there will be a difference between those who enact a *de facto* participation in reconciliation and those who do not. It is that difference which allows the human community to participate in the mediation of Jesus Christ's reconciliation. God has elected and reconciled all of humanity in Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ has delayed his return so that those who do not undertake a *de facto* participation in Jesus Christ would be able to do so. Barth writes with regard to the non-Christian, "He goes after them. He is their hope. The promise of the Spirit is for them . . . they adopt in relation to Him an attitude of indifference, aversion and obstruction. But this cannot alter the fact that He is for them. As such, His relationship to them and theirs

¹⁶⁴ IV/3.1, 364.

to Him is a fact which cannot be altered or removed . . . as the One He is, He lives in the midst of our time and takes the most direct way to them.”¹⁶⁵ Thus, given that reconciliation and election happens on behalf of all, the promise of the Spirit is for all as well. Since Jesus Christ is “the hope of us all,” the promise of the Spirit is not given virtually to all of humanity, as in traditional Reformed versions of the promise of the Spirit.¹⁶⁶ The proclamation of the Gospel does not mean that all of humanity receives a promise that is only meant for representatives of each tribe and tongue. Since election and reconciliation happen on behalf of every single individual human being, just so the promise of the Spirit is meant for every single human being.

The basic point is that “in willing this . . . Jesus Christ confirms Himself and His whole being and action.”¹⁶⁷ God would not be the God of Jesus Christ if God did not give temporal extension to the resurrection. Barth goes so far as to say that God “would certainly not have been gracious” if he did not give the resurrection an historical form – a beginning, a middle, and an end.¹⁶⁸ Barth defines grace as God’s absolute self-giving in the face of the creaturely difference and rebellion. Thus, what he means is that God would not be giving God’s self entirely without the temporal extension of the resurrection. Why? Barth gives a hint when he writes that “the positive thing . . . about the lives of all of us here and now in our time is that we do actually take part in the parousia, presence and revelation of Jesus Christ as the hope of us all, in the promise of

¹⁶⁵ IV/3.1, 364.

¹⁶⁶ IV/3.1, 362.

¹⁶⁷ IV/3.1, 332.

¹⁶⁸ IV/3.1, 333: “Far from corresponding to the election, reconciliation and covenant fulfilled in Him, He would have contradicted them, showing to the world and men only the kind of lop-sided favour which European nations used to exercise without consulting them to the peoples of their colonies. He would not in any sense have been truly kind or good. No, in the sense of the grace and kindness of God His good will is obviously that which Jesus Christ has actually realised and still realises in the work of His prophecy.”

the Spirit addressed to us all.”¹⁶⁹ First, Jesus Christ, given the resurrection, can be known in hope as the future Redeemer, as the one who articulates the reconciliation diaphanously throughout the creation. If the resurrection did not have a history, then the *de facto* reception, articulation and participation in reconciliation – as effected by Jesus Christ - would not be an object of longing. But, since the resurrection does have a history, the creation can now encounter the Triune God *in expectation* of future redemption.

Well, why is that important? All of God’s acts have a history, because the triune God has a beginning, a middle, and an end. Barth writes, “Not only was God glorious in the past, and not only will he be glorious in the final fulfillment of His promise, He Himself being present and active yesterday, today and tomorrow . . . in the one hope in Jesus Christ our time is given us only for eternity and eternity only for our time.”¹⁷⁰ God would be withholding the supratemporal movements of God’s eternal life within the act of resurrection if the resurrection did not have a middle, a movement of progress toward the goal of completion. The reception and articulation of reconciliation includes progress because the God who enacts the resurrection is an eternal God, a God with a past, present and future. Thus, the resurrection has a history because God does not withhold God’s self from the creation in Jesus Christ. If the depths of the eternal triune God are to be known in redemption, then redemption happens as a history, as with all of God’s acts.

All this is to say that, as John Flett has recently argued, in Barth’s theology, God is a missionary God, a God whose identity is self-shaped in mission.¹⁷¹ As we saw above, God “goes after them” because God *is* “for them.”¹⁷² God has elected to be God on behalf

¹⁶⁹ IV/3.1, 362.

¹⁷⁰ IV/3.1, 359-360. Cf. IV/3.1, 361.

¹⁷¹ John Flett, *The Witness of God*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2010), 3, 33.

¹⁷² IV/3.1, 364.

of all humanity, and given that God is eternal, a time is opened up in which God is for humanity in mission. God's identity is bent on racking up more and more *de facto* participants in reconciliation and election. God's identity is bent on the growth of the Christian community, as God invests God's eternal glory in the creation in the resurrection. God's delay of the return of Jesus Christ allows God to be a God in mission, a God who enacts participation in the mediation of his own reconciliation. The resurrection unites history insofar as God's eternal glory changes the form of history, making it possible for God's mission (and identity!) to unfold. All of history is what it is, because God invests God's eternal glory in the creation as a God of mission, a God who is bent on expanding the community which participates *de facto* in God's election and reconciliation.¹⁷³ History is what it is, from beginning to end, because God's mission is happening. It is not simply that the Christian community is obligated to proclaim a Gospel, so that salvation may occur in history. For Barth, salvation has already occurred in history, and all of history already participates in that salvation. God's mission is now to awaken all of those who populate that history that this history is the history of salvation.

Barth hints at one last layer to God's self-giving. As we saw in chapter four, Barth claims that God has given himself entirely in Jesus Christ to the creation, just as he gives himself entirely in the Father's generation of the Son. The life and death of Jesus Christ just are the events which occur as God's Son is given entirely to the creation. As a result,

¹⁷³ IV/3.1, 332: "the good will of Jesus Christ . . . is that the world, His people and ourselves should not be merely the objects of His action but that we should be with Him and independently active and free subjects when it is a question of this harvest, of the redeeming and consummating declaration of His life as given for us, of the illumination and irradiation of the world by the reconciliation effected and revealed by Him. . . He has not spoken His last and decisive word because in this respect, too, He does not will to be alone or without us . . . because He wills to give us a share in the work in our independence as the creatures of God summoned to freedom."

as we saw above, God's glory is invested entirely within Jesus Christ's life and death. Just so God's glory can be encountered only in Jesus Christ. Yet, the absolute self-giving of God includes his life, death and resurrection. For example, he writes, "He Himself is in Himself rich and strong enough to display and offer Himself to our poverty with perennial fullness. It is not his fault if we see and know so little of God and of ourselves . . . the living Lord Jesus Christ, risen again from the dead, has no serious rival as the one Prophet of God."¹⁷⁴ In other words, God's absolute self-investment happens in the unified history which occurs between Jesus Christ's conception and his resurrection, not just in the history between the conception and death of Jesus Christ. But, if God is absolutely invested in the events that take place between his conception and ascension, then God should be absolutely unveiled even before the arrival of the eschaton. What would account for the difference between God's revelation at the eschaton and God's revelation after the ascension? Barth addresses this by saying that God is involved in a sort of self-completion: "If we are to speak of completion, we must say that, as and because He is the living Lord Jesus Christ, He is engaged as the One Word of God in a continual completion of Himself . . ."¹⁷⁵ Thus, as a result of God's act of self-completion, "our hearing of it (the Word of God) is profoundly incomplete."¹⁷⁶ In other words, for Barth, God's self-giving needs to grow and develop, it has a *telos* in the eschaton that it has not yet achieved. Thus, just as God's self-giving develops, the church's life is carried out within the arc of God's self-transcendence. The church grows towards its own task of becoming an absolutely faithful witness to God's glory because it participates in God's

¹⁷⁴ IV/3.1, 99-100.

¹⁷⁵ IV/3.1, 99.

¹⁷⁶ IV/3.1, 99.

self-completion, in God's own expectation of God's own future. When God reaches God's telos, the church will reach its telos.

Barth writes that "the true and living God is gracious. He transcends himself. He discloses and imparts himself. He does this first in Himself, and then and on this basis to man in His eternal election and its temporal and historical fulfillment."¹⁷⁷ This text seems to indicate that God's triune life conditions and ontologically precedes, somehow, God's election and God's historical fulfillment of that election. Grace, is, first and foremost, the genesis of the Son, and that act is the "basis" for God's grace in the creation. Barth is not equating these self-transcendences, but they are equally important for identifying God. He repeats his oft made point: "in the life of Jesus Christ we are not dealing with God and His presence and action in the abstract, but specifically and concretely with His election and act of grace."¹⁷⁸ In the end, election is indeed a kind of *self-transcendence* for God. Barth does not say that election leaves God unchanged. Instead, he is stating that *just as God self-transcends within the Triune life, God also self-transcends in relationship to the creation*. Barth's agenda is to say that the Triune life grounds the freedom of God's self-transcendence in election, but that is only to say that the Triune God is formed and shaped by election, just as God has a Triune form in which God is self-moved. Just as God's is a seeking and finding in fellowship in eternity, the eternal God seeks and finds fellowship in relationship to creation. God is self-moved and self-formed in both events.

But, how does this whole picture work? If the eschaton, and the church's growth, is contingent upon the further self-giving of God, how can Barth say that God has given God's self in perennial fullness, has given himself without reserve in Jesus Christ's life,

¹⁷⁷ IV/3.1, 81.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

death and resurrection? Or, how does this fit with his claim, noted above, that each form of the resurrection is not an increase in the presence of Jesus Christ?¹⁷⁹ Has God absolutely invested himself in the history between his life and ascension or not? The Son invests the glory of God in a human life. The Spirit has been given to receive and mediate that glory. What's left? It appears that the solution is identical to the solution we noted in the last chapter: an appeal to a change in the form of God's life. Barth writes:

That He is the one Word of God means finally that His prophecy cannot be transcended by any other . . . in one respect alone can there be transcendence . . . It is the self-transcendence of Jesus Christ as the one Word of God in respect of the universality and direct and definitive clarity of the knowledge which Christianity and the world do not yet have . . . in this eschaton of creation and reconciliation there will not be another Word of God. Jesus Christ will be the one Word and we shall then see the final and unequivocal form of His own glory which even now shines forth from his resurrection into time and history, all times and histories.¹⁸⁰

What Barth seems to be saying is that, at the eschaton, God gives God's self entirely, just as God's gives God's self entirely from Jesus Christ's life to his ascension. In other words, for Barth, God in God's own triune form changes at the eschaton. Better said: creation is in waiting for God's own eschatological triune form (a form resulting from God's triune election), which God restrains in order to allow human beings to participate in their own reconciliation and redemption. Thus, Barth can say that God entirely gives God's self in Jesus Christ in his life and death and God gives God's self entirely at the eschaton. The Triune God can have an entirely new form of exhaustive self-giving because the resurrection and eschaton happen as God gives God's own eschatological form. Due to God's absolute self-donation to the creation in Christ, as God's life changes, so does the creation's life change. Since the creation and thus the Christian community's

¹⁷⁹ IV/3.1, 293-294, 358-360.

¹⁸⁰ IV/3.1, 103.

activity is bound up in Jesus Christ and the, it must await that change in God's form, the time in which God is all in all. Given God's exhaustive self-donation in the life and death of Jesus Christ, the creation and the Christian is waiting for a change in the form of the Triune God's life. As God's life changes its triune form, the Christian community and the creation are drawn into their own growth.

Part Two: Glory and the Missional Church

In Part One, we argued that the investment of the Triune glory in the resurrection of Jesus Christ draws the Christian community into itself as the community which undertakes God's mission in the world. In part two, we take a closer look at the being and act of the Christian community itself, as it is drawn into the mission of the Triune God in the creation. Just as in IV/1 and IV/2, Barth is not content to simply to describe the being and act of Jesus Christ as the one who mediates himself in history. In IV/3, especially in paragraph 72, entitled "The Holy Spirit and the Sending of the Christian Community," he shifts focus to the Christian community's being and action as it is related to Jesus Christ's being and act in the power of the Holy Spirit. Or, more particularly, paragraph 72 deals with how the Christian community, *as a Christian community*, "is set and instituted . . . in the service of His prophecy" by the Holy Spirit and obtains its own being and act as it is set in the service of the prophecy of Jesus Christ.¹⁸¹ In this context, the work of the Holy Spirit is to make the prophetic character of reconciliation "concretely active and perceptible."¹⁸² The Christian community is what happens in human history when the Holy Spirit enacts *de facto* communal participation in Jesus Christ's reconciliation and redemption. In IV/3, the communal participation means that the Christian community is

¹⁸¹ IV/3.2, 482.

¹⁸² IV/3.1, 10.

sent into creation and human history, along with Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. Our purpose is to examine the being and act of the missional Christian community as depicted in IV/3, attending to how the mediation of Jesus Christ's prophecy in the Christian community draws the Christian community into its own missional growth. I argue that the being and act of the Christian community draws others into itself because its mediation of the sending of Jesus Christ - especially through gathered worship - corresponds to God's glory and the future glory of the humanity and creation.

The Church within the Mission of the Trinity

The Christian community exists and acts because it participates in Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit. As it stands, such a statement appears tame: the Christian affirmation that the God of Jesus Christ causes and brings forth the Christian community. The church is one of God's actions in the world. While Barth affirms the opening statement, as we have seen, since God's being is ever and always a being-in-act in relationship in relationship to the creation, the church does not have its being and act simply because God has chosen to produce a Christian community. No. For Barth, the Triune God has self-invested God's being-in-act in Jesus Christ and thus in the Christian community on behalf of creation. The Christian community "exists as He exists . . . He alone is who and what He is. But he is not alone as who and what He is. He is it for Himself, yet not only for Himself, but also with His own, and by anticipation with all who will become His own when His own shall be manifested in accordance with their determination as such."¹⁸³ As we saw in chapter two, the Christian community is a "predicate" of Jesus Christ, the earthly-historical form of his existence. Jesus Christ is

¹⁸³ IV/3.2, 754.

who is he is because he has elected to be for the creation, for human history, and for the Christian community. The Christian community is because it *is* Jesus Christ.

Of course, all Barth scholars would mark that last sentence in alarm. There is more to be said. But it is true as it stands. The Christian community is Jesus Christ. Predicates constitute their subjects, especially in the hands of thinkers like Barth who refuse to subordinate being to act or act to being. We may ask if the predicate is temporarily approbated. But, predicates constitute subjects. The difference with Barth is that this predicate – the Christian community – constitutes Jesus Christ only because the subject has first predicated himself. But, that only proves the point. Jesus Christ self-constitutes himself. He has elected to live as the Christian community. As he writes, “its being is a predicate, dimension and form of His existence.”¹⁸⁴ The important qualifier, as we saw in chapter two, is that this is not his only form of existence. He exists in heaven, as one who rules the creation. He also exists as the *Pantocrator*, from within the creation as a whole.¹⁸⁵ All of this means that we cannot reverse our alarming sentence, if we are to be faithful to Barth.¹⁸⁶ The Christian community is Jesus Christ. But Jesus Christ is not, in an exhaustive sense, the Christian community. If that were the case, then Jesus Christ would not be Lord over the Christian community and the Christian community would not live in relationship to the Creator. The Christian community would be God and have itself as Lord. Yet, as Barth says, Jesus Christ lives as Lord over the creation for the sake

¹⁸⁴ IV/3.2, 754, modified.

¹⁸⁵ IV/3.2, 755-756.

¹⁸⁶ Kimlyn Bender points out that “Christ and community are inseparably united, yet irreducibly distinct, and exist in an asymmetrical and irreversible relationship . . . Christ . . . is the inner basis of the community, creating its existence and life” (*Karl Barth’s Christological Ecclesiology*, 199). However, Bender needs better recognition of Barth’s claim that “. . . God’s Word . . . is . . . establishing communication between Him and us and initiating a history of mutual giving and receiving” (IV/3.1, 421). As Pietz says, this is what constitutes history as a drama – the church becomes a player in the drama of reconciliation’s unveiling (*Drama des Bundes*, 90).

of the Christian community and those who will one day be a part of the Christian community. He would not be himself if there were no Christian community.

It is thus not surprising to find Barth arguing that the Christian community lives in mission. He writes, “As the people created by Jesus Christ and obedient to him, it is not subsequently or incidentally but originally, essentially and *per definitionem* summoned and impelled to exist for God and therefore for the world and men.”¹⁸⁷ The Christian community’s existence is as invested in its act as God’s being is invested in God’s act. The Christian community “has the basis of its being and nature in Him,” that is, in Jesus Christ. Since “God is who is He is, not *in abstracto* nor without relationship, but as God for the world” in Jesus Christ, the Christian community is what it is for the world.¹⁸⁸ The Christian community has an eccentric existence because God has an eccentric existence. Since God is for the world in Jesus Christ, and the Christian community is Jesus Christ, the Christian community is what it is in relationship to world in which it lives.

As we noted in earlier chapters, following Adam Neder’s work, the goal of *de jure* reconciliation is *de facto* reconciliation. Jesus Christ fulfills the covenant on behalf of all in order that all might be impelled to live in light of that accomplishment. But, Barth’s claims in paragraph 72 force us to texture that claim: *de facto* reconciliation also has the goal of *de facto* reconciliation.¹⁸⁹ Barth writes, “It is in the community first, and in the life of the men called to it and gathered in it, that salvation, reconciliation . . . can and should be expressed *de facto*, that the peace of God which passes understanding

¹⁸⁷ IV/3.2, 763.

¹⁸⁸ IV/3.2, 762.

¹⁸⁹ Neder gets close to this when he writes that “Barth is not saying that Jesus Christ first makes people alive and then makes him his witnesses, but rather that he makes them alive by making them his witnesses” (*Participation in Christ*, 79). Neder is quite on point here. But because his analysis skates over the deep connections between the doctrine of God, the cosmic scope of resurrection, and *de facto* participation, he is able to make this claim without modulating his earlier delineation of the relationship between *de jure* and *de facto* participation.

should be experienced . . . but this is true only as and to the extent that it is for the world, i.e. only in the sphere and power of the determination in virtue of which, transcending itself, it is what it is.”¹⁹⁰ Barth avoids two basic problems. He vigorously avoids any lack of authentic – that is, self-aware and free – involvement in living for the world. In other words, Christian existence is indeed being and act in conformity and correspondence to God’s freedom. On the other hand, he attempts to combat what he calls “holy egoism.”¹⁹¹ Barth points to Protestant ecclesiology as part and parcel of the mission lacuna experienced by the Protestant church until the 19th century.¹⁹² In other words, the church was its own end in Protestant theology. Just as traditional Protestantism indicated that the meaning of individual Christian existence is that “I should be blessed, that my soul should be saved,” just so that same Protestantism could indicate no meaning of the church beyond its own communal enjoyment of salvation.¹⁹³

Barth combats these two tendencies by arguing that, in concert with his doctrine of election and unique ontology, the Christian community participates in the Father’s sending of the Son, as the Christian community is gathered, upbuilt and sent by the Spirit of Jesus Christ. As John Flett has argued, “God’s movement into the economy belongs to his being from all eternity. It is not alongside who God is; rather it is the very plenitude of God’s own life that is capable of including the human in such a way that this inclusion is God’s own self-realization . . . The church is a missionary community because the God

¹⁹⁰ IV/3.2, 764.

¹⁹¹ IV/3.2, 767.

¹⁹² IV/3.2, 767.

¹⁹³ IV/3.2, 566. Barth paints with much too broad a brush. For example, John Calvin argues against Bishop Sadoletto that “it is not very sound theology to confine a man’s thoughts so much to himself, and not to set before him, as the prime motive of his existence, zeal to illustrate the glory of God. For we are born first of all for God, and not for ourselves” [John Calvin and Jacobo Sadoletto, *A Reformation Debate* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1966), 58].

she worships is missionary.”¹⁹⁴ Flett limits this claim by saying that, for Barth, the Christian community “does not receive an immediate ontological initiation into the Trinitarian sendings that are the life of God.”¹⁹⁵ Particularly telling on both counts is Barth’s claim that “Jesus Christ is sent in order *to precede* His community on the way into the world. She is sent in order *to follow* Him on the same way. That is, and remains, two different aspects. The origin of His and her sending, however, is – and this makes them comparable – *one: the same God*, who as the Father sends Him, and also sends her through Him, His Son.”¹⁹⁶ In other words, Barth is affirming that the Christian community is always what it is in active reception of its participation in the life of God. It is never identical to the life of God, yet she participates in the life of God and so corresponds to that life as a creature who is ever receiving that life. Just as God has invested God’s very self – God’s Son – in the human community and in the creation, just so the Christian community has its being and act invested in the rest of humanity and the rest of creation. Indeed, Barth is careful to note that “no creature as such can exist for others,” meaning that no creature as a creature can mediate the reconciliation and revelation of Jesus Christ to others.¹⁹⁷ The Christian community must be invested with God’s being and act if it is to mediate reconciliation to God in Christ to the rest of creation.

The Church as the Visibility of the Triune God’s eccentricity

As the church is invested with God’s being and act – in particular, with the glory of God - it is enabled to act as a witness to the glory of God in Jesus Christ. In the end,

¹⁹⁴ John Flett, *The Witness of God*, 208.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 221.

¹⁹⁶ IV/3.2, 768/KD, 879. I quote from Flett’s much improved translation of this text on page 221 of *The Witness of God*. Italics are from Flett’s translation.

¹⁹⁷ IV/3.2, 768.

Jesus Christ is his own witness for Barth. But, as Barth argues, the Christian community is what it is because it has been sent by and with Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit. The resurrected Jesus Christ mediates himself in the Christian community; thus, the Christian community is “a community whose task is not that of making effective Jesus’ reality but of attesting its inherent effectiveness.”¹⁹⁸ Given that Jesus’ victory creates a drama through the resurrection, “the Christian community and the individual Christian in Karl Barth’s dramatic conception has the unique role of a chorus, who . . . acclaim, recognize, and confess the central events.”¹⁹⁹ As such, the Christian community is what it is – a witness to the reconciliation of Jesus Christ and the revelation of creation he bears – because of God’s glory. Barth says it directly: the sending of Jesus Himself and the sending of the disciples “means to be invested with *doxa*, to participate in the dignity, authority and power given to the one commissioned to go to a third party for the discharge of his mission.”²⁰⁰ Thus, it is the uniqueness of that ecclesial witness which contributes to the growth of the Christian community. Due to the ongoing investing of God’s glory in the Christian community, the uniqueness of the ecclesial mediation draws others toward the Christian community.

The Christian community’s being tilts toward the world in which it occurs because it makes visible God’s being for the world in Jesus Christ. Barth writes, “as surely as the condescension of God to flesh, to concrete Adamic humanity, does not imply an diminution, but rather, as the work of His grace, the triumph and fulfillment of His eternal, pre-temporal, supra-temporal and post-temporal glory and majesty, so surely . . . God has also elected His community in its very being *ad extra*, in its visibility and

¹⁹⁸ John Webster, “‘Eloquent and Radiant,’” 142.

¹⁹⁹ Pietz, *Drama Des Bundes*, 92. The Christian, then, is a “Mitspieler im Drama” (Ibid.).

²⁰⁰ IV/3.2, 768.

worldliness, in its likeness with other peoples, and so surely it will not be divested of this being, but will be manifested in its visibility and worldliness at the fulfillment of his return.”²⁰¹ God’s glory is invested in time and space, and so the Christian community, as a participant in that glory through the Holy Spirit is invested in time and space. The Christian community “can be faithful to Him only in exact and honest and sober correspondence to His coming in the flesh . . . it can meet the world only on its own level . . . wholly and utterly worldly.”²⁰² The Christian community cannot be a witness of God’s glory, and thus play a role in drawing others into God’s mission, if it is not utterly visible.²⁰³ But, as we saw in chapter two, the Christian community must also be utterly invisible – “invisibility is wrongly contrasted with visibility.”²⁰⁴ It must be sociologically recognizable by all, but not comprehensible by all. What is comprehensible only to some (but, in hope, for all!), is that the Christian community “is elected and called to be a people alongside and with Jesus Christ and with a share in his self-declaration . . . this is its incomparable glory and dignity.”²⁰⁵

What does that mean? Barth gives multiple examples. The Christian community has no particularly Christian language, yet it can use any language to provide a witness to Jesus Christ’s reconciliation. The Christian community has no essential sociological structure, but it nonetheless calls human beings into a community which determines their primary social loyalty. But one example is apropos for our consideration. The investment of God’s unique power of self-declaration makes its growth remarkable. For Barth, the

²⁰¹ IV/3.2, 724.

²⁰² IV/3.2, 725.

²⁰³ Again, see Pietz: it is the “Wesen des Chores, dass das schon immer Zeugen sind und ander hinzukommen” (*Drama Des Bundes*, 92).

²⁰⁴ Flett, *Witness of God*, 271.

²⁰⁵ IV/3.2, 729.

Christian community is “homeless,” “a nomadic people of aliens”, and “the pilgrim people of God.”²⁰⁶ Just as the resurrected Lord is still a pilgrim, “still . . . the suffering Servant of God,” the community is a pilgrim.²⁰⁷ That means that the Christian community has no homeland, and by virtue of its primary social loyalty, always carries citizenship lightly. As such, the Christian community is deeply vulnerable and fragile, if it lives out of its identity as a Christian community. But, even so, this weakness makes the Christian community visible because it has been able to “both inwardly and outwardly, to grow, i.e. to upbuild, reform and renew itself and thus continually to set before the eyes of other peoples the problem and riddle of its existence.”²⁰⁸ In other words, the Christian community becomes visible insofar as it is vexing to the world. It seems unnecessary, unsupported, and unsecured. Yet, it persists. Even more, it grows and flourishes. The investment of God’s glory creates a communal form whose visibility raises questions that the world cannot answer in its confusion about the world as God’s creation.

The Christian community’s growth comes about because its empowerment as witness of God’s glory allows it to be a vagabond community that is also absolutely dedicated to the good of the world in which it travels. While Christians have their primary identity in their Christian community, the Christian community leverages that identity on behalf of the world in which they are vulnerable. The Christian community calls attention to Jesus Christ, bears witness to Jesus Christ, glorifies Jesus Christ as it has been glorified. It does this because its being is tilted toward the world, and because its

²⁰⁶ IV/3.2, 744.

²⁰⁷ IV/3.1, 390-391. This shows that G.C. Berkouwer’s arguments are “overwritten” (Pietz, *Drama des Bundes*, 22). The knowledge of triumph is not “a self-evident matter” because it is a knowledge that occurs as the Christian community corresponds in its actions to the Resurrected Lord’s life after the cross (Berkouwer, *Triumph of Grace*, 353).

²⁰⁸ IV/3.2, 744.

loyalty to the world is modulated first by its loyalty to the triune God in Christ and its own internal community. Barth describes and redescribes this dynamic and the multiple conditions for its possibility. One of the most important lines of analysis is that the Christian community practices radical solidarity for the world, which means that the Christian community undertakes “unreserved participation in its situation, in the promise given it by creation, in its responsibility for the arrogance, sloth and falsehood which reign within it, in its suffering under the result distress, but primarily and supremely in the free grace of God demonstrated and addressed to it in Jesus Christ.”²⁰⁹ In other words, the Christian community recognizes its own worldliness *and* the “universally applicable Word” of “justification and sanctification accomplished in Jesus Christ.”²¹⁰ The Christian community does not hesitate to identify themselves with the world because it recognizes its own being as a graced being, despite its resistance to Jesus Christ, and recognizes the being of others as graced being, despite their resistance to Jesus Christ. The Christian community becomes strange, or invisible, in the creation insofar as it is able to contain and unify human diversity absolutely.²¹¹ The Christian community, when it acts like the Christian community, unifies human beings, without exception for any layer of difference within the human community. It unifies diversity because all human beings and communities are recognized as recipients of God’s grace.

Thus, the Christian community “receives from the Lord, who is the Spirit, a glory which, if it not the same as his own, corresponds and is analogous and similar to it – the glory of his own image.”²¹² God’s glory is the overflow of the Triune God’s self-

²⁰⁹ IV/3.2, 773.

²¹⁰ IV/3.2, 774.

²¹¹ IV/3.2, 775-776.

²¹² IV/3.2, 793.

impartation in eccentric self-acclamation. In other words, the Father, Son, and Spirit can and do enjoy one another because they give themselves to one another. That life of self-giving and joy enters the creation in Jesus Christ and is shared with the Christian community in the Spirit. In the Christian community, human beings give themselves to one another and to the rest of creation in responsibility for that creation, as it enjoys itself and the rest of creation. Just as God overflows in God's elective love for the creation, the Christian community overflows in its concern for the world. Thus, it is an image of the Triune God in Jesus Christ. As such, it is also an image of "divine-human reality" of "the kingdom of God," which is the establishment of God's lordship throughout all of creation.²¹³ The Christian community, as it overflows in service to God and humanity, gives the world an image of itself. For the world is the world precisely because it does not know itself to be blind to God's grace in Jesus Christ.²¹⁴ The Christian community gives the world testifies, in its life, to what it means to be human, or what it will mean for all to be human. Thus, Barth says that "the purpose of its existence is the subsequent and provisional representation of the calling of all humanity and all creatures to the service of God as it has gone forth in Jesus Christ."²¹⁵ In other words, it represents human life, a life lived together with other human beings, creatures and with God.

As the Christian community's mediation of God's glory draws in others because its life overflows into the life of the creation, it is a community which takes joy in the world in which it lives. For instance, Barth mentions that the message of the Christian community "is calculated to awaken joy" and that "merely thinking and speaking to oneself, and doing so without joy, one cannot possibly grasp or pass on the content of the

²¹³ IV/3.2, 792.

²¹⁴ IV/3.2, 769-773.

²¹⁵ IV/3.2, 793.

task of the community.”²¹⁶ The Christian community’s message is one of “a foretaste of the joy of consummation.”²¹⁷ The Christian community bears witness to the reality that “man will be true man. He will no more distort but genuinely realize his humanity before God and his neighbor. He will rejoice in it. He will be able to affirm his existence as God does.”²¹⁸ In other words, the Christian community takes joy in the world, as it takes joy in itself. The Christian community is the community which has been awakened to the absolute affirmation of creaturely life in Jesus Christ, to the comprehensive good-pleasure of God. As God’s joyful Yes to the world, and every individual in the world, is currently transforming the world, the Christian community expectantly bears witness to the future of this world and the individuals in the world.

In other words, the triune God delays the final investment of God’s glory in order to achieve the universal reach of reconciliation not simply *de jure*, but *de facto*. First, God’s mission is that non-Christians would become what Christians are: “recipients, bearers, and possessors of the promise of the eternal kingdom and eternal life, not only the fulfillment, but already here and now. They already exist as such here . . . as men who are activated, capacitated and equipped by the fact it is given them . . . the promise of the Spirit sets them on the way to this end.”²¹⁹ When the Christian community mediates the reconciliation of Jesus Christ to the rest of the human community before Jesus Christ’s return, it is not simply mediating a *de facto* participation in reconciliation. The Christian community is mediating the mediation of reconciliation to the rest of the human community. The Christian community enacts a mission in which the *de facto* recipients of

²¹⁶ IV/3.2, 802.

²¹⁷ IV/3.2, 661.

²¹⁸ IV/3.2, 811.

²¹⁹ IV/3.1, 352.

the mission are to become new bearers of the promise of the Spirit. Indeed, Barth writes of the non-Christian that “it cannot be simply said that he is not the recipient, bearer and possessor. It must be said that he is not yet these things, because he does not yet know Jesus Christ . . . since Jesus Christ has risen for him, His power and that of the Holy Spirit are already on the way to him and on the point of reaching him, of indwelling him, of giving him the promise, of causing him to participate in its lights and powers and gifts, of radically refashioning and continually refashioning his existence..”²²⁰ The difference between Christians and non-Christians is that non-Christians are not yet Christians – the difference between them is a differentiation in the timing of their de facto participation in reconciliation. Again, Barth’s warrant is that the work of the Holy Spirit follows up the work of Son by re-universalizing the world of the Son, accompanied by the Christian community. Those who are reconciled are also marked as recipients of the Holy Spirit.²²¹

It never to be forgotten that Barth’s doctrine of glory is always shaped by the two purposes we found in chapter one, purposes which are repeated in Barth’s three descriptions of the doctrine of the resurrection in volume four. Through his description of God’s glory and the resurrection, he affirms without compromise that Jesus Christ is the free Lord of the creature’s access to Jesus Christ and the divine life Jesus Christ conveys. God’s freedom to love the creature and elicit the creature’s response is not determined by the creature, but determines the creature. However, God’s determination of the creature opens the creature to its own neglected and twisted freedom – the power of God’s determination is attractive and peaceful. He writes, “Nothing of what the Spirit does, effects and accomplishes among and with and in Christians is not ready like a harnessed

²²⁰ IV/3.1, 355.

²²¹ IV/3.1, 355: “he, too, is reconciled to God . . . the Spirit and His ultimate and penultimate pledge with all its indwelling power are promised to him.”

stream to be effective among and with and in non-Christians . . . the stream is too strong and the dam too weak for us to be able reasonably to expect anything but the collapse of the dam and the onrush of the waters. In this sense Jesus Christ is the hope even of these non-Christians.”²²² If Barth does not make claims about the universalizing work of the Spirit with regard to reconciliation and redemption, the purpose he outlines in his doctrine of glory in II/1 will be overturned, since the divine empowerment of action would appear to be overrun by the resistance of the creature. Jesus Christ’s victory does not draw the human community into a conflict as much as the creation draws Jesus Christ into a conflict that Jesus Christ must undertake if his reconciliation is to occur. Statements like this secure the freedom of God’s glory, the lordship of the Triune God over the access creation has to Jesus Christ, and the constancy of God’s election.

A problem emerges here. This dynamic makes it difficult for readers to take seriously Barth’s backpedaling with regard to a definitive declaration of a future universal *de facto* participation in the reconciliation of Jesus Christ. As Matthias Gockel has recently argued in line with others, while Barth claims that he is not a universalist, his doctrine of election will not allow him the refusal of universalism.²²³ Barth cannot uphold his own revision to the doctrine of election while also forswearing a Christologically determined universalism.²²⁴

²²² IV/3.1, 355-356.

²²³ Or, at least, Gockel seems to be arguing this when he writes that “although Barth did not waver in his affirmation of universal election, the question is whether the mere reference to God’s freedom contradicts the centre of his christological revision. It has a rather assertive status and seems to ‘tear open again, though in a modified way, the abyss of the *decretum absolutum et horribile*’” (*Barth and Schleiermacher*, 210).

²²⁴ The issue of audience also distinguishes Barth’s explanation of the prophetic office of Jesus Christ from the Reformed scholastics. Who is the audience of God’s prophecy in Jesus Christ? Reformed scholastics were not clear about this, but when an audience was named, the church community or the elect are mentioned. For instance, the Leiden Synopsis asserted that “Prophecy is the function by which Christ instructs his people in the truth of doctrine legal and evangelical” (Heppel, *Reformed Dogmatics*, 454). For

Perhaps the strongest defense of Barth at this point is one that would require a modification of Barth's approach to the origin of evil. Barth cannot say that final resistances to the reconciliation of Jesus Christ simply ought not to be narrated within Christian doctrine. Barth avers that nothingness and evil are not simply inexplicable aberrations and resistances to the goodness of God and God's good creation, the privation of evil otherwise unrecognizable apart from the assumption of one God who creates and provides for the order and purpose of creation. Against this Augustinian depiction of nothingness and evil, as we saw briefly in chapter three, Barth depicts nothingness as the resistance which arises necessarily from God's reprobation – the negation in God's predestination.²²⁵ Evil occurs as that which is drawn out by God's activity, and thus does not happen without the determination of the Triune God. This becomes even more troubling, because God elects to be the God who is in relationship to a creation effected and infected by the resistance of this nothingness. In effect, in Barth's theology, God would not be God the God that God is without the resistances offered by nothingness. Barth would do well to relinquish his particular approach to the doctrine of evil in order to alleviate these problems. But, beyond that, if he were to return to a more classical Augustinian approach to evil – albeit one without an appeal to any sort of theodicy - he would be able to escape a critique like that of Gockel and others. Both the origin of evil and the possibility of final resistances to Jesus Christ – i.e. the continuation of evil and sin in face of Jesus Christ's return – ought to be left unexplained in Christian doctrine.

Barth, the audience of Jesus Christ's prophecy is the entirety of creation, with special attention to humanity, all of humanity. Given God's election of all of humanity in Jesus Christ and the election of the creation as God's theatre of glory, the whole of creation becomes God's targeted audience, as opposed to simply the Christian community. For Barth, the Christian community is the community which recognizes, throughout its activity, that it is the target of Jesus Christ's prophecy, along with the rest of the elected community.

²²⁵ Berkouwer's claim that Barth's work does indeed function as "an explanation of sin" has some merit even though Barth's work intends just the opposite (*Triumph of Grace*, 221).

Indeed, Barth's doctrine of election makes that final resistance inexplicable, and it is the classical doctrine of election within the Reformed tradition, in either its supralapsarian or infralapsarian forms, which attempt to explain the inexplicable. The mark of a theological commitment to the one God who fights for the perfection of a good creation should be one which makes any resistance to the victory of God baffling. Christian theology reaches its limits at evil, but that's a limit it ought always to reach and create for itself. Barth's doctrine of election does that for Christian theology in ways unrivalled by other doctrines of election.

Worship as Core Form of Visibility

As we noted above, the Christian community is utterly incapable, apart from the self-investment of the Triune God, to mediate Christ's reconciliation in its witness. Everything said so far has been quite abstract, sociologically speaking. After Barth outlines all of the conditions, bases, and dynamics of the Christian community's witness, he then outlines the ways that the Christian community fulfills its task of witness with God's mission. I argue that Christian worship provides the core practice in which the Christian community lives on behalf of the world in mission. Worship, for Barth, is not simply one essential layer of the Christian community's witness in the world. Worship, for Barth, provides a fulcrum for the visibility of the Christian community, as it corresponds to the glory invested in that community by the Holy Spirit.

This argument departs somewhat from John Flett's landmark construction of Barth as a missiologist who provides content for the twentieth century debates about the *missio Dei*. Flett's central contention is that "the problem of the church's relationship to the world is consequent on treating God's own mission into the world as a second step

alongside who he is in himself. With God's movement into his economy ancillary to his being, so the church's own corresponding missionary relationship is ancillary to her being."²²⁶ Flett's proposal, using Barth, is that "God is perfect and complete in himself in such a way that his becoming in the economy belongs to his being from all eternity. It is because it belongs to God's own life that mission describes the nature of Christian fellowship."²²⁷ In this enterprise, one of Flett's hopes is to combat the belief that worship, as an internal function of the church, is prioritized over mission or that one of the church's activities reflects Christian fellowship more than another (such as worship).²²⁸ However, if we look carefully at Barth's account of prayer in paragraph 72, especially in the final subsection of that section, we will find that worship is indeed prioritized for Barth as a core practice which creates a basic shape for all of the acts of the church in mission.

In part four of paragraph 72, Barth outlines what he takes to be the twelve ministries of the Christian community which appear to him to be "what is demanded always, everywhere and in all circumstances."²²⁹ The criteria for those ministries appear to be that they are rendered in service to both God and humanity, and that they can and do bear witness to the potential universality of reconciliation in Christ.²³⁰ The first six emphasize speech: 1) Praise 2) Preaching 3) Education 4) Evangelism 5) Mission 6) Theology. The second six emphasize action: 1) Prayer 2) Care of souls 3) Production of

²²⁶ *The Witness of God*, 3. Compare this to Paul Nimmo's claim that "within this calling to the service of the world, the commission of the community . . . is discharged first and foremost in Christian worship" (*Being in Action*, 159).

²²⁷ *Ibid.*, 33.

²²⁸ *Ibid.*, 75, 279.

²²⁹ IV/3.2, 864.

²³⁰ IV/3.2, 831, 860.

individual examples of the Christian life 4) Diaconate 5) Prophecy 6) Fellowship. I will be focusing on Barth's accounts of praise, prayer, and fellowship.

One of the most striking components of Barth's theology of ministry is that he considers all of the church's ministries to be actions of mission. For instance, he writes, "In every respect, even in what seems to be purely inner activity like prayer and the liturgy and the cure of souls and biblical exegesis and theology, its activity is always *ad extra*. It is always directed *extra muros* to those who are not, or not yet, within, and visibly perhaps never will be."²³¹ This fits with many of Barth's claims, including the claim that the Triune God orients the church toward the world in Jesus Christ as a participant in God's mission. Mission pervades every layer of the church's being and act, including its worship, because mission pervades the life of the Triune God in which the church persists.

John Flett's quite successful argument that Barth's theology re-establishes mission as intrinsic to God's being-in-act and thus the church's being-in-act includes a worry about the prioritizing of worship over mission. For instance, "communion" ecclesiologies which focus on participation in the triune *koinonia* neglect mission because they do not recognize how God shapes God's own triunity toward creation, reconciliation and redemption. Thus, worship becomes oriented toward participation in the triune *koinonia*, and the church's mission becomes an "overflow" from the church's internal worship life.²³² For Flett, Barth's theology indicates that God's primordial perfection includes God's missionary movement into creation, and thus the church's

²³¹ IV/3.2, 780.

²³² Flett, *The Witness of God*, 206.

being-in-act happens in mission as well.²³³ Thus, Flett thinks that Barth's quote in the last paragraph indicates that "this calling to fellowship cannot result in any cleavage of the community's activities, as though one element of her life better reflected this fellowship when compared to another."²³⁴ Mission and worship are equally important to the church's being-in-act and thus pervade one another.

Yet, Barth recognizes that, among the many missional tasks of the church, worship has the priority. Flett's concern that the prioritizing of worship for the church's identity jeopardizes the church's mission simply plays into the false distinction between worship and mission that Barth seeks to undercut. Flett's worry, despite his claims, is tied to some conceptualization of worship as non-missional or mission as non-worshipful. Barth can prioritize worship within the church's life *precisely because* the whole of the church's life bends toward service of God in service to the rest of creation. He writes, "As concerns its definiteness more specifically as the service of God, it is to be noted that it can be discharged as such (in the service of man) only as it continually becomes this, i.e., only as the community does not cease to pray, and so does not cease to be granted, that its ministry, which it can execute only in very human fashion, may continually acquire the character of service of God."²³⁵ Barth's point is that God cannot be served unless God involves God's self in the service offered by the Christian community. The Triune God can only be approached in and through the Triune God. Even more, if the Christian community is to approach the Triune God on behalf of other communities and individuals, the Christian community requires the ongoing encounter with God in Christ

²³³ Ibid., 33, 249, 253, among multiple examples. John Webster puts it this way: "the perfection of Jesus Christ . . . includes his contemporary presence and activity" ("Eloquent and Radiant," 149).

²³⁴ Ibid., 279.

²³⁵ IV/3.2, 832.

by the power of the Spirit. Barth continues, “It cannot be taken for granted that it really has and does merely seem to have this character. It cannot count on this as a given factor . . . that its ministry as true service of man should primarily and supremely become service of God is something which can only happen in ongoing encounters with the source of its knowledge and confession, in its vitally necessary listening to the voice of the Good Shepherd . . . what matters is that there should be heard the sigh which it must never neglect at any stage: *Veni, Creator Spiritus!*”²³⁶ Just as we saw in chapter 3, where Barth treats the prayers of Jesus Christ as dialectical acts in which listening and petition coincide simultaneously, just so Barth claims that the Christian community follows in correspondence. Barth’s point in this context is that the Christian community, if it is to bear witness to Jesus Christ’s reconciliation, must be oriented toward God in all of its activities. These two points are identical. Serving God while serving human beings means enacting service to other human beings within a prayer life marked by both active listening and receptive petition. Without worship, the Christian simply cannot depend on God’s grace for its missional visibility to occur.

Later, when Barth discusses in more depth the activity of prayer, he explains these connections more cleanly. Prayer, he says, “includes in inseparable union both thanksgiving and intercession : the one in relation to the past for the free grace of God already received in it; the other in relation to the future for the same grace which will be needed in it.”²³⁷ Prayer is thus a way for human beings to live in accord with the self-giving of God in Christ, in orientation to the Triune God’s ongoing self-giving. Prayer participates in both the past acts of God and the future acts of God in order to open itself

²³⁶ IV/3.2, 832.

²³⁷ IV/3.2, 883.

to the Triune God's presence, action, and command in Christ. Indeed, when Barth writes about prayer in this context, he also uses the language of glory – the language of good-pleasure – we have noted so many times in our overall argument. He writes, “In praying, it acknowledges that its whole action can only be a ministry of witness which as such is totally referred to its confirmation by the One whom it has to attest, to His good-pleasure to which it has no claim . . .”²³⁸ For Barth, prayer is human responsiveness to the Triune God's pleasure, a joy which creates and validates the worth and shape of the one who prays in response. In other words, the form of human life that results from the overflow of God's joy in the Christian community is the community as it prays in thanksgiving and petition. Prayer is simply the basic form of human existence, as that existence lives and acts before and with the Triune God. Without prayer, the Christian community does not respond to the presence of the resurrected Lord. Thus, God does not use the Christian community to bear witness to God's reconciliation in Christ unless its life refers itself in dependence on the Triune God.

Thus, prayer creates the kind of sociological visibility that only makes sense if God lives. Barth argues that “it creates in the world a fact which has this significance and which speaks for itself, whether it is heard and accepted by the world or not . . . Where else in the world is there the unreserved confession that we can do nothing in our own strength but that all things are possible to Him?”²³⁹ God's pleasure evokes a form which is glorious, a form which participates in God's own self-declaration. In other words, the Christian community's activities need to be both visible and invisible. They are sociologically recognizable and measureable. Prayers by Christian congregations can be

²³⁸ IV/3.2, 883.

²³⁹ IV/3.2, 883.

watched, recorded and studied. But, they are also acts whose origin cannot be directly detected by common sociological or historical methods. Prayer, on its own, will not give observers, even those who are interested, access to its origins and goals. Participation in Christ through the Holy Spirit will be required for that visibility to come into focus. That is why Barth says that prayer, along with praise, “distinguishes the gathering of the community . . . as divine service.”²⁴⁰ Just as prayer distinguishes a gathered worship service as divine service, it distinguishes all human work – given the grace of God – as divine service. This includes the other missional tasks of the church, such as evangelism or the diaconate ministry that Barth discusses.

Through a reflection on prayer, Barth also identified a way to avoid the two ways that the Christian community is tempted to neglect its task as the community oriented toward the world. The first temptation of the Christian community is neglect of the world through a hardening of the traditions of the Christian community, due to the Christian community’s despair at the world’s sloth and resistance to the Gospel.²⁴¹ The second temptation is patronizing the world, such that the Christian community becomes enamored with the world’s own self-knowledge.²⁴² The problem with both of these errors is that “the community does not hang continually and ever anew on the lips of the Lord” and is not “cleaving to Him as it hears His voice.”²⁴³ What Barth is saying is that the community does this when it does not have a prayerful form. As he mentions later when he describes the activity of prayer, “In prayer the community keeps God to His Word, which is the promise of His faithfulness as the Word which calls, gathers, upbuilds and

²⁴⁰ IV/3.2, 884.

²⁴¹ IV/3.2, 813ff.

²⁴² IV/3.2, 813.

²⁴³ IV/3.2, 824, 829.

commissions it.”²⁴⁴ In other words, when Barth argues that the Christian community loses vigilance in its task as a church in mission when it loses constancy in prayer. Without the receptive responsiveness to the triune God that prayer embodies, the Christian community cannot follow the triune God’s concrete call in its particular time and place.

Formed in Worship, Forming the World in Witness

Are there other ways that worship forms the Christian community’s missional witness? Other ways that the Christian community grows its own witness as it participates in the life of the resurrected Lord through the Spirit? There are many, but I conclude this chapter by highlighting one: the church’s law becomes a witness to other human organizations in the triune God’s future, especially the state.

For Barth, the Christian community orders itself “above all in its ordering of public worship” in order to “represent . . . humanity sanctified in Him.”²⁴⁵ As Todd Cioffi puts it, “the Christian lifestyle serves as a witness to the non-Christian to the will of God for human beings in general and not simply the Christian.”²⁴⁶ Just as “Jesus Christ did not sanctify Himself for His own sake, but for the sake of humanity,” just so the Christian community has the task of provisionally representing to the world that sanctification. As such, its “legal order is the form in which it represents itself outwardly to the world; in which it stands out visibly and conspicuously as one human society with others, and first and foremost in contrast to the state.”²⁴⁷ The ordering of the Christian community in and toward its worship is the central event of the community’s witness in the world. As church law is ordered toward worship, the community is formed into a community which

²⁴⁴ IV/3.2, 883.

²⁴⁵ IV/2, 719.

²⁴⁶ Todd Cioffi, “The Politics of Justification and the Case of Torture: The Political Theology of Karl Barth from 1938 to 1946” (Ph.D. Diss., Princeton Theology Seminary, 2007).

²⁴⁷ IV/2, 719-720.

can and does provisionally represent Jesus Christ as Lord and humanity as sanctified in the royal man's direction.²⁴⁸

While church law is indeed "exemplary law," Barth is careful to say that the state, as the state, will never be able to recognize the "lordship of Jesus Christ" (*Herrschaft Jesu Christi*).²⁴⁹ As such, it would then become a part of the Christian community and would lose its identity as the state. Yet, Barth also says, "The world and its law are evil . . . but not wholly evil . . . Jesus Christ is the King over all men and all things, and as such he is not idle even *extra muros ecclesiae*."²⁵⁰ Thus, the Christian community can have confidence that its own order has "corresponding effects outside" in which it contributes to the "improvement of human law, especially as this is founded on the recognition and acknowledgment of the Lord Jesus Christ."²⁵¹ In other words, while the improvement of human law outside of the Christian community does not absolutely depend on the

²⁴⁸ Andreas Pangritz argues that Barth's politics is situated between two fronts: 1) The world-flight of German Lutherans which takes the political question and the form of the state to be adiaphora. 2) Utopians who think that the theological and natural law grounding of resistance are allowed to flow into each other (Andreas Pangritz, "Politischer Gottesdienst," 240). Pangritz is quite right, but he falters when he says that Barth's politics can be boiled down to the fifth thesis of the Barmen declaration, which simply seeks to maintain a clear difference between the church and the state, so that the church does not become an organ of a totalitarian state (Ibid., 247). Pangritz also limits his inquiry into the political meaning of worship to Barth's comments in his Gifford lectures (Ibid., 223ff). In other words, Pangritz's claims work mostly from Barth's materials in the 1930s. But Todd Cioffi has argued that Barth does not fully mature in his thinking about the relationship between the church and the state until he writes CD II/2. Thus, Cioffi writes, "If the doctrine of election is the sum of the Gospel, then perhaps it could be said that the sum of the Christian and indeed moral life consists in reflecting that which most characterizes God's election of humanity for covenant-partnership, namely, divine mercy toward humanity as the determination of God's love and grace for humanity" ("Politics of Justification," 120). He continues, "In this light, the state, as an ordained institution by God, can exercise power in such a way that love and mercy result, and such opportunities for 'politicized' love and mercy is in part the ministry of reconciliation that Christians are to pursue in the world. "For this reason," writes Barth, "the special duty of the Church extends to recognizing this true political authority, and its special mission includes sharing the responsibility for the execution of this authority." (Ibid., 126-127; The quotation is II/2, 721). As such, Barth's comments on the political meaning of worship extend much farther than his work in the Gifford lectures. He is not naming the state's liturgies as proof that civil governments can serve God, and that the church calls the states to serve God through justice and peace (*Knowledge of God and the Service of God*, 217-232). My claim is not that gathered worship by the Christian church is a direct execution of this authority, but that, for Barth, gathered worship is a model for *the kind* of justice and peace that Christians will enact within the state.

²⁴⁹ IV/2, 720.

²⁵⁰ IV/2, 724.

²⁵¹ IV/2, 723.

ordering of the church to its worship (given the universal character of Jesus Christ's lordship), the Christian community can and does indeed develop human law wherever it exists (in the power of the Holy Spirit).

Barth mentions many examples of what the Christian community has to offer. In the end, the church's law has an unqualified advantage only in that it knows the source of human law in Jesus Christ.²⁵² But, he also offers a number of other ways in which the church might have something to teach polities outside the church. I have the space here to mention only one, one which has a direct bearing on my argument. He writes:

Church law may be a model in its character as wholly living law: human as opposed to divine; but as such serious and fluid and open; with an equal responsibility both to the past and to the future. Do those who are responsible for worldly law realise that even the law which they have to find and guard and apply can be true law only as living law? How many of the severities and weaknesses of this law are caused by the fact that this is only too easily ignored or forgotten or disregarded in state and society? By the established fact of its own law the Church can warn and encourage the world that even in the defective and provisional form of the present age true righteousness cannot be a frozen or static pond, but must be a living stream continuously flowing from the worse to the better.²⁵³

What Barth seems to be saying is that when states or other social groupings make law, they sometimes treat law as something which is always mistaken or is simply a matter of power-brokering. But, the church's law, given that it is a "living law" that orders itself according to the Holy Spirit, understands that the law progresses insofar as it is posited, obeyed, and yet left revisable for improvement – that is, left for a "further order."²⁵⁴ The church can venture into law, in its self-ordering, because it is "bold for that which is provisional; for an order of Church life which will obtain until it is replaced by a better"

²⁵² IV/2, 725.

²⁵³ IV/2, 724.

²⁵⁴ IV/2, 714.

under the direction of the Holy Spirit.²⁵⁵ That is how it bolsters the law of other communities to be confidence in the law as living stream – it exhibits a pattern of progression insofar as it makes and obeys law in participatory response to the Holy Spirit. Thus, since the law of other communities is also under the Lordship of Jesus Christ, the witness of the church’s living law, a living stream moving from worse to better, can mediate Jesus Christ’s improvement of those other communities. The church self-develops in order to mediate in the self-development of other communities. In doing so, it reflects the “majesty of its Lord,” which is described most fully as the glory of God.²⁵⁶

Conclusion

In this chapter we attended to how IV/3 displays the Triune God’s own self-glorification through the Christian community to the rest of humanity and even the rest of creation. IV/3 is Barth’s treatment of Jesus Christ as prophet, and we considered how glory is part and parcel of Barth’s superstructure in describing Jesus Christ’s identity as such. The first thesis, argued in part one, was that, for Barth, Jesus Christ glorifies himself through the presence of the Holy Spirit by promising, in the Christian community’s life, the binding of God’s self to creation, the corresponding completion of creation at his return, and God’s own future. This is how God’s life, in Jesus Christ, the draws the Christian community into its telos, which is also the telos of the rest of human history and the rest of creation. The second thesis, argued in part two, concerned primarily the ecclesiology in IV/3. Communal participation in Christ’s prophetic office means that the Christian community is sent into creation and human history, along with Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. Our purpose was to examine the being and act of the

²⁵⁵ IV/2, 715.

²⁵⁶ IV/2, 720. Cf. “. . . the glory of God describes especially His freedom, majesty” (II/1, 641).

missional Christian community as depicted in IV/3.72, as that missional identity develops. I argued that the being and act of the Christian community draws others into itself because its mediation of the sending of Jesus Christ - especially through gathered worship - corresponds to God's glory and the future glory of the humanity and creation. I now turn to the conclusion of the dissertation.

Conclusion

Where have we been?

This study identified the doctrine of glory as a means by which Karl Barth accounts for the attractive power of divine activity, especially in relationship to the Christian community. For Barth, the Christian community is drawn into its own growth - defined as numerical increase and the expansion of the church's worship - because God invests God's *triune* glory in Jesus Christ, in the Christian community, and in entirety of creation. For Barth, the investment of God's glory draws the Christian community into a common life of ever-expanding worship.

In chapter one, I argued that one purpose of Barth's doctrine of glory in II/1 of the *Church Dogmatics* is to explain how human beings are drawn non-violently into a *de facto* participation in Jesus Christ's being and activity. In part one I did this by outlining how glory is set within Barth's overall ontology in II/1 and delineating the main lines of Barth's exposition of the doctrine of glory. Second, I argued that, for Barth, human communities are drawn into a *de facto* (as opposed to a *de jure*) participation in Jesus Christ's being-in-act by communally bearing – living in common responsibility to - the glory of God's triune election in and through worship. To participate *de facto* in Christ's election is to become both *responsive to* God's election and God's glory and *participants in* God's election and glory for the sake of the rest of creation. Third, I argued in part two of chapter one that Barth's trinitarian doctrine of glory illuminates what drew Barth into a revision of the doctrine of election. I suggested that Barth used his configuration of the divine good-pleasure in II/1 to counteract, in II/2, what Barth considered to be problematic accounts of God's election in the Reformed Christian tradition.

In chapter two I began to analyze the substructural role of glory within the doctrine of reconciliation, paying attention to Barth's ecclesiology in volume four. I showed that the two core concepts of God's glory emerge here: joy/God's good-pleasure and form. Insofar as the Spirit is shared with the Christian community, the community has a *form* which increases in coherence and is accompanied by *joy*. The central act which manifests the glory of God in the Christian community is worship, meaning both the obedience of the Christian community in its ordinary life and its liturgical enactments. The Christian community pleases God – or, even better, enters the preceding pleasure of God - in that it has the form and joy expressed in gathered worship. As that worship forms the ordinary life of the community, the Christian community intensifies its own provisional representation of Jesus Christ's return and the future shape of glorified human life.

Chapter three addressed Barth's Christology in IV/1, especially the doctrine of the resurrection. I argued that the substructure of glory appears as Barth frames the resurrection as an intratrinitarian activity between the Father and Son, such that the Father issues his joy in the Son's self-offering – including the Son's prayer and worship - upon the Son in the resurrection and thus the Son can and does begin his own resurrected appearances to the Christian community. I also argued that we see glory emerge when Barth suggests that the resurrection is also a sharing of the Triune God's own good-pleasure with the Christian community: the history of creation and the Christian community has a new beginning in God's own beginning – God's joy in God's own life, which enacts God's election to be God for the creation.

Chapter four considered Barth's Christology in IV/2, with a focus on the resurrection. I found that Barth used the concept of form to track changes in the divine life which do not alter the divinity of the divine life. Another finding was that glorification is a way for Barth to name the depth of the divine self-giving, such that all of the divine life is offered for human participation. The central argument was that, in IV/2, Barth describes the sharing of the Holy Spirit as the history in partnership, the distance-crossing, and the glorifying form of the triune life as that which sustains the movement of the Christian community towards its goal. God gives God's own triune transition in the resurrection, such that the Christian community can move towards its own telos by participation. In conclusion, I also argued, against various critiques of Barth's doctrine of the Holy Spirit, that this establishes the Holy Spirit as a distinctive agent within the economy of reconciliation.

In chapter five, I considered the final installment of Barth's Christology in IV/3. In IV/3, the substructural elements in chapters three and four, which addressed Barth's first two descriptions of the resurrection in the doctrine of reconciliation, become structural. Hence, Barth confirms in IV/3 that the resurrection is the "primal form" of God's glory, a fact at which he hints in IV/1 and IV/2. In IV/3, however, Barth extends his treatment of the resurrection. I argued that, for Barth, Jesus Christ glorifies himself through the presence of the Holy Spirit by promising, in the Christian community's life, the binding of God's self to creation, the corresponding completion of creation at his return, and God's own future. This is how God's life, in Jesus Christ, the draws the Christian community into its telos, which is also the telos of the rest of human history and the rest of creation. The second thesis concerned the ecclesiology in IV/3. Communal

participation in Christ's prophetic office means that the Christian community is sent into creation and human history, along with Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. I argued that the being and act of the Christian community draws others into itself because its mediation of the sending of Jesus Christ - especially through gathered worship - corresponds to God's glory and the future glory of the humanity and creation.

Results of the Argument

First, as we have noted, there are those who continue to interpret Barth as undercutting the authentic activity of the Christian church. Interpreters recognize that the Christian community is active, but only "in the cognitive order alone," as Von Balthasar puts it.¹ The issue has to do with the convergence of Barth's doctrine of election and Barth's affirmation that Jesus Christ accomplishes reconciliation on behalf of all humanity. For instance, Michael Horton puts it directly, "If every person has already been united to Christ, then not only ecclesial agency but also the work of the Spirit is reduced to the noetic sphere."² This study shows that these types of interpretations are possible because they neglect Barth's doctrine of divine glory, especially as that doctrine pervades Barth's ecclesiology in volume four of the *Church Dogmatics*. If, for Barth, God's own triune life unites ontology and revelation (i.e. God is glorious), and the triune God shares God's own triunity in the resurrection, then these interpretations require reconsideration. In other words, God makes possible *de facto* participation, and *de facto* mediation of that participation (participation upon participation!), by sharing God's own glorious life, which is self-expressive at its core. Even more, glory, as I have mentioned more than once throughout this study, thus unites the categories of ontology and epistemology, such

¹ *Theology of Karl Barth*, 371.

² *People and Place*, 174. Horton mentions Von Balthasar and G.C. Berkouwer as precursors of his view (Ibid., 174-175).

that this critique is a non-starter. This case can no longer be made without pinpointing and interpreting this substructure in the doctrine of reconciliation.

The second version of the ontology-revelation bifurcation charge has to do with a weakness in Barth's doctrine of the Trinity. This charge strikes much deeper into Barth's own thought, because Barth uses the doctrine of the Trinity to explain and warrant his claims throughout the *Church Dogmatics*.³ Barth refers to Father, Son and Holy Spirit as modes of being and that one God is "the one God in threefold repetition."⁴ Alan Torrance argues that while this way of referring to God may work if one's theology prioritizes the possibility of revelation (Revealer - Father, Revelation - Son, Revealedness – Spirit), it will not make it easy to "imply that the category of communion is appropriate to conceiving of the relationship between these eternal 'repetitions,' indeed, rather the opposite."⁵ According to Torrance, since Barth casts God as a single subject (albeit trinitarianly modulated), he makes communion within the triune life hard to conceptualize, as well as the upward movement by which humanity undergoes and undertakes "worship . . . as the gift of participating in the human priesthood of the Son through the presence of the Spirit."⁶ This study shows that such an interpretation fails to come to grips with Barth's doctrine of glory within his doctrine of God. The metaphor Barth utilizes in the doctrine of God is not simply that of a single subject, but also something along the lines of a dramatic space in which God issues and receives God's own expressions. God is God's own audience in that in the triune life "is divine space and

³ A point made recently in Peter Oh, *Karl Barth's Trinitarian Theology: A Study of Karl Barth's Analogical Use of the Trinitarian Relation* (T & T Clark, 2007).

⁴ I/1, 350.

⁵ Torrance, *Persons in Communion*, 115.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 323.

divine time, and with them extension, and in this extension, succession and order.”⁷ As such, in the “change and interchange of position” which is the incarnation, the triune God “exercises and confirms His unity with Himself” because “He is One, and yet not imprisoned or bound to be merely one. He is identical with Himself, and yet free to be another as well.”⁸ Barth constantly secures the gratuitous existence of creation, as it depends on the freedom of God’s life, by showing how the history of Jesus Christ can be properly ascribed to God because God is triune. In other words, God just is an interchange of position. This is due to God’s immanent life, as that life is shaped by God’s decision to be the triune God as a participant in human history and the rest of creation.

Indeed, Torrance’s critiques do not fit particularly well with the full scope of Rowan Williams’ seminal essay, “Barth on the Triune God” (which Torrance follows closely). Williams’ essay recognized and analyzed a difference between the doctrine of the Trinity in volume one and the doctrine of the Trinity in volume four, and thus stood on firmer ground.⁹ For instance, Rowan Williams notes that Barth’s actualism will not allow him to make the history of incarnation inconclusive for God’s immanent life: “God’s being is his act; if he acts in and through a man’s death, that death is involved in what he is.”¹⁰ He thus concludes that Barth’s doctrine of reconciliation “implies some substantial modification of the over-all argument of I/1.”¹¹ This does concur with recent research on Barth’s doctrine of the Trinity, or at least one side of that research, as we

⁷ II/1, 660.

⁸ II/1, 663.

⁹ This has been pointed out recently by Benjamin Myers (“Election, Trinity and the History of Jesus,” in *Trinitarian Theology After Barth*, 124-128).

¹⁰ “Barth on the Triune God,” 179.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 163.

have noted. But, Williams still holds that Barth is consumed with the divine freedom even in volume four, such that “God’s relation to the fallen world is . . . all but annihilating negation.”¹² Williams over-reads Barth on this score. For some reason, he seems to think that God’s irresistibility means that God is doing violence to the creature by creating a response. Thus, he wants Barth to be able to say that God performs “self-abnegation in the face of created freedom” and “deference to the will, even the evil will, of his creatures.”¹³ So, he says Barth is incapable of depicting Jesus as “‘God bearing the wrath of man,’” along with Bonhoeffer.¹⁴ One problem with this reading is that it does not grapple with Barth’s theology of the Judged Judge in IV/1, in which the cross is God’s performance of judgment in and through humanity’s judgment of God in Jesus Christ.¹⁵ Closer to our concerns, Barth’s doctrine of glory involves him in a discourse that

¹² Ibid., 189.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid. The quote is from Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Letters and Papers from Prison* (London, 1971), 361.

¹⁵ The judgment of God on human beings in Christ is the effect of God’s capacity *to be judged*. God judges himself and is judged by human beings. Barth is saying that Jesus Christ’s very reception of those coinciding judgments due to his obedience shows human judgment to be impotent to judge itself. And so, Barth writes, “Jesus must and will allow Himself to be the one great sinner among all other men . . . to be declared to be such by the mouth of every man, and treated as such at the hand of every man, yet not apart from the will of God, not in abrogation of it, but according to its eternal and wise and righteous direction, in fulfilment of the divine judgment on all men. Jesus must and will allow Himself to take the place which is presumably not His but theirs for the sake of righteousness in the supreme sense . . . It took place when Jesus was sought out and arrested as a malefactor, when He was accused as a blasphemer before the Sanhedrin and as an agitator against Cæsar before Pilate, in both cases being prosecuted and found guilty. It took place when He refrained from saving Himself, from proving His innocence, from defending and justifying Himself, from making even the slightest move to evade this prosecution and verdict. It took place when by means of His great silence He confessed eloquently enough that this had to happen, that He must and will allow it to do so” (IV/1, 239-240). For God must demonstrate, must show, must make visible that human beings deal in their own death by taking enacting their own judgments upon themselves. Note how this passage is structured. All of the antagonists – that is, all of the characters in the Gospels who are not Jesus Christ – inadvertently make their own impotent judgement visible through their speech and activity. Jesus Christ allows them to condemn themselves in an ironic drama. Thus, Barth can say “by means of His great silence He confessed eloquently.” In other words, God is not satisfied simply to condemn human beings in Jesus Christ. He makes that condemnation visible and thus effective by receiving judgment from human beings. All of the events of the crucifixion themselves demonstrate that sinners cannot judge effectively – they have condemned to death the one who represents the source of all proper judgment. Reconciliation is, at its core, a matter of visibility, of revelation, of recognition. As Barth says, “That the deceiver of men is their destroyer, that his power is that of death, is something that had to be proved true for those who were deceived, that their enmity against God might be taken away from them...” (IV/1, 272).

is meant to both narrate both God's irresistibility and God's non-violent relationship to the creation, such that God's irresistible life is fully and exhaustively gracious. It may be that God's irresistibility and God's graciousness are at odds.¹⁶ But, that involves another kind of conversation, a conversation that must be concerned about God's triune glory, and the graciousness of that glory.

Third, as we saw above, Alan Torrance's critique included the claim that Barth decentralized Christ's priestly identity, given that such a decentralization fits with Barth's concerns about revelation and his way of describing God's triunity. However, Torrance's reading entirely ignores Barth's treatment of Christ's priestly office within IV/1, and the range of assertions Barth makes in his analysis of the resurrection in the doctrine of reconciliation. Also, in a way, this reading is in tension with Matthew Boulton's way of affirming Karl Barth as a "fundamentally liturgical theologian."¹⁷ As a general affirmation about Barth's identity as a liturgical theologian, my argument concurs. But, my argument does not concur with the thrust of Boulton's appropriation of Barth.¹⁸ Using Barth, Boulton thinks that Barth's critique of religion means that, for Barth, "God is . . . preeminently against worship" and that "in Barth's view, humanity's fall is finally a fall to our knees, a fall into prayer."¹⁹ Both Torrance's critique and Boulton's characterization

It is the visibility of the cross which makes it accessible or creates effects in human beings other than Jesus Christ. It is the glorious nature of the cross, and the events which culminate in the cross, which makes the reconciliation of God with humanity accessible to other human beings. The power of death must be dramatically overcome and laid bare in triumph. Thus, it is an act of violence on the part of human beings (in ratification of death, Satan, and nothingness) which God "determined to His own glory and the salvation of all" (IV/1, 272).

¹⁶ Williams says that Barth's trinitarianism before volume four is "Calvin's irresistible grace rendered into epistemological terms" (Ibid., 158).

¹⁷ *God Against Religion*, 7.

¹⁸ I use the word appropriation here because Boulton presents a constructive argument, but he does not differentiate himself from Barth in any way. It is clearly an appropriation, but it also appears to be a straightforward analysis of Barth's themes and a projection of the implications of Barth's theology of worship.

¹⁹ *God Against Religion*, 5, 167.

of Barth fail to wrestle with the fact that, for Barth, God's glory evokes worship – including the worship of the Son – since worship is an act of correspondence to the divine glory. Also, Boulton uniquely claims that “through worship human beings set themselves over against God as a second thing.”²⁰ The triune God takes worship into the triune life in order to restore human life. For example, “the Spirit calling on God the Father” transforms “the original human gesture of separation itself – the invocational gesture of thanksgiving, praise and prayer – into an event of intimate solidarity, companionship, and life together.”²¹ As they stand, in themselves, these claims are hard to reconcile. If prayer is essentially sin, how can the Spirit's act of prayer be a remedy for it? Even more, the argument of this dissertation shows that such a reading is hard to square with Barth's description of God's glory. With Barth's concern for God's gracious self-giving by inclusion, Barth portrays prayer as a way for God to include human beings in God's own self-recognition and acclaim, God's own power to be moved by another, God's own immanent joy. Boulton's reading of Barth needs to consider whether the fall is instead the corruption of *de facto* participation in God's own triune self-recognition and acclaim – the kind of recognition and acclaim that Barth claims raised Jesus Christ from the dead. Boulton's reading of Barth also needs to consider how Barth, on the basis of his doctrine of election and the doctrine of the resurrection, thinks of the relationship between the Father and Son as a life of grace and gratitude. According to Barth, as we saw in chapters three and four, God's triune glory makes for gratuity and obedience within the triune life. If that is so, then it is not advisable to “read Barth as pointing through Jeremiah to a kind of ultimate, eschatological redefinition – even abolition – of divine command, law and

²⁰ *God Against Religion*, 125.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 125-126.

covenant as we commonly understand them. In the eschaton, we might say, human beings will not speak of divine commands, laws and covenants . . . we will speak and sing only of intimacy and friendship with God and one another.”²² At some point, Boulton’s reading has to come to grips with whether it can deal with the multiple layers of Barth’s trinitarian theology, especially as it frames worship. For Barth, worship is a fundamental layer of human being and act, because human beings are who they are in relationship to God’s triune glory. As the triune God overflows in joy, the creation, in Jesus Christ and the Christian community, overflows through worship. As glory characterizes God’s life, just so worship characterizes human life, including the human life of Jesus Christ on behalf of all humanity.

Fourth, this project bears on Barth’s doctrine of the Holy Spirit and confirms some inconsistencies in Barth’s presentation of it. As we saw many times, Barth often identifies God’s glory as a way to frame the gracious of God’s activity in creation. On the one hand, Barth is capable of writing that “God in Himself is really distinguished from himself: God, and God again and differently, and the same a third time. . . Here there is always one divine being in all three modes of being, as that which is common to them all . . . Here one is both by the others and in the others, in a perichoresis which nothing can restrict or arrest, so that one mode is neither active nor knowable externally without the others.”²³ Each of the persons is fully God in a way identical with the others; but they are not fully God in being identical as persons to one another. The fact of their common divinity is the identity. The non-identity is the distinctive *Weise* that each of them is. The unity of that identity and non-identity – its beauty – is the perichoresis that they share. In

²² *God Against Religion*, 192.

²³ II/1, 660.

other words, God's beauty is simply the form of God's fellowship that God has in being triune.

But, in another pattern, Barth describes the unity of the triune God simply in terms of the Holy Spirit. For example, he writes, "...in its form, what is repeated and revealed in the whole divine being as such, and in each divine perfection in particular, is the relationship and form of being of the Father and the Son in the unity of the Spirit."²⁴ Barth also exhibits this model when he claims that the Son "forms the centre of the Trinity" and that Son as the "perfect image of the Father" displays the beauty of God in "a special way."²⁵ The unity of identity and non-identity to which this model refers is the unity of the *Father* and the *Son* in their shared divinity and distinctive mode of being. Thus, while Barth does not say it, the Spirit would be identified as the beauty which the Father reveals through Son. This corresponds to Barth's earlier claim in the volume one of the *Dogmatics* that the three modes of being are specifiable as the Revealer, the Revelation, and the Revealed. The relationship between the Father and the Son is revealed by the Father in the Son.

This issue emerges again in IV/2, where Barth seems vague with regard to the Spirit's full status as a person in her own right alongside the Father and Son. Here, in "The Direction of the Son," the Holy Spirit, as the rise and renewal of the history between the Father and the Son, establishes for the Christian community that God is God in simultaneously humiliating God's self and exalting humanity on the cross. In other words, for Barth, the gift of the Spirit provides a "witness" to the Christian community

²⁴ II/1, 660.

²⁵ II/1, 661.

that God can be God in offering God's Son to death.²⁶ However, first and foremost, it is Jesus Christ who "attests that height and depth are both united, not merely in the love in which God wills to take man to Himself, and does take Him, but first in the eternal love in which the Father loves the Son and the Son the Father."²⁷ The Spirit becomes Jesus Christ's power of self-witness, since the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son as their love. Since that love is given to the Christian community, the Christian community can be confident that the Triune life is a life lived historically and freely, such that the Triune God can achieve its telos in the death of Jesus Christ. The Christian community can thus trust the Holy Spirit, who empowers them to recognize that Jesus Christ accomplishes this on their behalf.

Our study showed that Barth's convergence toward binitarianism is limited to his description of the immanent Trinity, but that a close reading of "The Direction of the Son" indicated that the Spirit's economic agency is not as neglected as some have claimed.²⁸ Indeed, the Spirit is the one who forms a responsive witness in the Christian

²⁶ IV/2, 359.

²⁷ IV/2, 352.

²⁸ Jenson, "You Wonder Where the Spirit Went," 296 and elsewhere. Eugene Rogers, *After the Spirit*, 1-10, 19-23. Against claims like this, George Hunsinger has recently argued that Barth's doctrine of redemption would have reversed this trend. He writes, "Whereas from the standpoint of reconciliation the work of the Spirit served the work of Christ, from the standpoint of redemption the work of Christ served the work of the Spirit" ("Mediator of Communion," in *Cambridge Companion to Karl Barth*, ed. John Webster, 149-150). Hunsinger also sets out a challenge to all of those who would discuss the Holy Spirit: "Not until such large-scale structural moves as these are more carefully pondered in Barth's dogmatics will the discussion of his views on the Holy Spirit begin to be more satisfying and worthwhile" (*Ibid.*, 150). For Hunsinger, Jesus Christ would appear as the witness of the work of the Spirit in Barth's doctrine of redemption. We noted above that Barth discusses the Spirit as the Spirit of Christ because, if the Christian community is to share in the identity of Jesus Christ, it must share in what makes Jesus Christ who he is. Commenting on these pages, Hunsinger claims the following: "The Spirit is regarded as significant for two reasons: first, because he equips Jesus Christ to accomplish the world's salvation through his incarnation, death, and resurrection; and second, because through proclamation and sacrament he unites believers with Christ, and brings them into communion, so that they may dwell in him and he in them eternally. Jesus Christ thus forms the substance of the Spirit's role in imparting salvation, even as the Spirit's role in that always centers on Jesus Christ as a unique person (God incarnate) who has accomplished a unique work (reconciliation)" ["Mediator of Communion," 160]. Hunsinger is on to something, as my analysis in chapter four confirms. Yet, Barth's sort of *vinculum amoris* creates an inconsistency between the economic

community and in Christian individuals to the reconciliation achieved in Jesus Christ. Yet, this sort of initiative is inconsistent with Barth's dominant ways of treating the immanent Trinity – the second pattern we mention above. As Barth makes clear earlier in the *Dogmatics*, Barth's trinitarian theology affirms not only the *filioque*, but also the tradition of the *vinculum amoris*, which has as its beginnings the early books of Augustine's *De Trinitate*.²⁹ While “the Father lives with the Son, and the Son with the Father,” the Spirit does not live with the Father and Son – the Father and the Son live “in the Holy Spirit who is Himself God.”³⁰ Indeed, it is due to the *vinculum amoris*, affirmed here, that Barth was able to say in I/1 that “even if the Father and the Son might be called ‘person’ (in the modern sense of the term), the Holy Spirit could not possibly be regarded as the third ‘person’ . . . He is not a third spiritual subject, a third I, a third Lord side by side with two others. He is a third mode of being of the one divine Subject or Lord.”³¹ In these lines, Barth reveals much. While Barth was willing to say of the Father, the Son or the Holy Spirit that they are persons, he seems completely unable to deem the Spirit a person.

This creates some problems. For instance, as we noted above, the material issue of “The Direction of the Son” is whether the gift of the Spirit actually imparts the truth and actuality of the Christian community's unity with Jesus Christ. Barth's thesis is that the

initiative of the Spirit and the immanent relations of the Trinity. Hunsinger claims that the Spirit has initiative immanently, but he gives no quotations or analysis to support this (Ibid., 153).

²⁹ See Augustine's claim in Book XV of *De Trinitate*, “...if the charity by which the Father loves the Son and the Son loves the Father inexpressibly shows forth the communion of them both, what more suitable than he who is the common Spirit of them both should be distinctively called charity” (15.37). Note also his claim from book V: “the Holy Spirit is a kind of inexpressible communion or fellowship of Father and Son” (5.12). In Book XV, Augustine overturns his own experiment in Book V. Many, including Robert Jenson, are not aware of this. See Robert Jenson, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 1 (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1997), 146-149.

³⁰ IV/2, 342.

³¹ I/1, 469.

Spirit is trustworthy, or reliably attests objective participation in Christ, because the Spirit is the Spirit of Jesus Christ and the Spirit of God. This move is quite convincing, except that Barth's theology of the immanent Spirit will not quite accomplish what Barth desires. Barth would need to describe the Spirit as one who witnesses to the love of the Father and the Son, i.e. as one who is not reducible to that love. In other words, in eternal life of God, as Barth puts it, the Spirit should be described as one who has a unified externality to the life of the Father and Son. The *filioque* should be described in a way that allows for the Spirit to effect the love of the Father and Son, as opposed to being that love or being produced from it. If the Spirit can be described as an external (but not underived) witness to the relations of the Father and Son, then the Spirit can indeed testify within the Christian community to the truth of their relationship. Barth is quite right to say that the acts of command and obedience between the Father and the Son raise questions about the unity and authenticity of the divinity of Jesus Christ's life and death. He is also quite right to say that this simply a product of our inability to recognize God as a Trinitarian God. However, it is precisely these acts of command and obedience which require an undoing of the *vinculum amoris*, however actualistically Barth conceives it. If the relations of the Father and the Son are to be authenticated as relations that are not characterized by the whims of power, of subjugation or manipulation, then the authentication must come from elsewhere. If the Spirit does not provide an externality to that love, then it is difficult to see how the Spirit's witness could not simply be a continuance of the lack of relationity, of a relationity in which one agent's determination simply makes the other agent's surrender a matter of redundancy. To modify an analogical example offered by Eugene Rogers, if a couple is making marital vows to one

another, we will need a witness that one partner is not simply extorting the other into that marriage.³² External witnesses are needed for the couple itself. If the couple is to trust its own marital vows and its own relationship, then the couple requires witnesses to the truth of that relationship, especially at its very beginnings. For instance, it is no good for a couple in which one partner has extorted the other's acquiescence to testify to its authenticity. A witness who knows both parties and seeks the good of both parties – in other words, has a benevolent advocacy with regard to both parties – establishes the truth of the relationship for that couple itself and for others as well.

Just so, in Barth's initial definitions of glory, he does not clearly specify the receiver of this shine in terms of the divine ways of being, because he cannot do so. The Holy Spirit is the relationship between the Father and Son: the Holy Spirit is their unity, the Holy Spirit does not exhibit an agency within the Triune life. But, if God is to be God's own audience, then the Holy Spirit's agency will need to be described with as much verve as Barth describes the agency of the Father and the Son. If he had been able to maintain more consistently the Holy Spirit's immanent agency, his theology would have enunciated a God who loves in freedom more successfully. Barth is able to say that the Son, as the perfect image of the Trinity, particularly reveals the divine beauty. Yet, he does not say anywhere in his description of the divine delight that any particular divine way of being specially displays the divine joy, even though that is another way he specifies God's glory. The Gospel of John refers to the Holy Spirit as an advocate and as the living water which springs from Jesus Christ. Perhaps the joy of the triune God occurs

³² Eugene Rogers, Jr. *After the Spirit: A Constructive Pneumatology from Resources Outside the Modern West* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005), 9-10, 135-148, 188-191. See also Eugene Rogers, Jr., *Sexuality and the Christian Body* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999), 195ff.

because the Spirit advocates for the unity of the Father and Son. This may be a source for a corrective to Barth's work.

Future Courses of Action

Barth Scholarship

This dissertation also amounts to a starting point for many new endeavors. First, while I consider briefly Barth's relationship to the rest of the Reformed tradition on the theme of glory, this line of analysis requires much more development. The first agenda will be full scale attempts at comparing Barth's doctrine of glory with John Calvin's work on glory. Recent work in Calvin's theology makes this way of encountering Calvin more manageable than in the past.³³ But another point of intersection will be Barth's relationship to the Protestant Orthodox treatments of divine glory. Christopher Holmes has begun work on this front, but the next step is to analyze the Protestant Orthodox on their own ground in order to relate Barth's work to these predecessors.³⁴ Again, recent work in Protestant Orthodoxy creates multiple starting points.³⁵ Perhaps the chief place to start within the Protestant Orthodox is to compare Barth and Peter Van Mastricht's approaches to glory, since Barth takes his general cues from Van Mastricht's doctrine of glory.³⁶ Also, although Barth shows no awareness of him, Jonathan Edwards' impressive efforts in a theology of beauty would be profitably brought into conversation with

³³ Randall Zachman, *Image and Word*; Idem., *John Calvin as Teacher, Pastor, and Theologian*; William Dyrness, *Reformed Theology and Visual Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

³⁴ Holmes, "The Theological Function of the Doctrine of the Divine Attributes and the Divine Glory." Holmes' article actually considers Barth's reading of the Protestant Orthodox, not the Protestant Orthodox themselves.

³⁵ Muller, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics*, vol. 3.

³⁶ See Adriaan Neele, *Petrus Van Mastricht (1630-1706): Reformed Orthodoxy: Method and Piety* (Leiden: Brill, 2009) and Aza Goudriaan, *Reformed Orthodoxy And Philosophy: Gisbertus Voetius, Petrus Van Mastricht, And Anthonius Driessen* (Leiden: Brill, 2006).

Barth.³⁷ Lastly, Barth's relationship to Schleiermacher's doctrine of God's good-pleasure and his doctrine of beauty also need new consideration.

Barth also needs to be brought into relationship to a wider range of figures, but two figures are the most important. The most obvious is Hans Urs Von Balthasar, the writer of a seven volume meditation on glory in relationship to patristic, medieval, Reformation, and modern writers. Indeed, Von Balthasar credits Barth with steering modern theology back into the waters of glory and beauty.³⁸ Analytical comparisons of Barth and Von Balthasar on glory are now needed. As we have seen, one of Von Balthasar's chief critiques of Barth was Barth's inability to come to terms with the church's mediation of Christ's identity and work. That mediation, for Barth, centers on God's actualization of glory in and through the resurrection. Thus, this dissertation opens up possibilities to reconsider how Barth and Von Balthasar's approaches to glory affect their respective ecclesiologies.

The second figure that needs to be related to Barth on glory is Augustine. Barth acknowledges Augustine as a predecessor of his views on beauty, and Von Balthasar considers Augustine to be a chief source of his own work. Scholarship on Barth and Augustine is not plentiful, and what is available focuses on their respective Trinitarian theologies.³⁹ The focus of such research should center not only on Augustine's theology

³⁷ See Robert Jenson, *America's Theologian: A Recommendation of Jonathan Edwards* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992) and Sang Huan Lee, "Edwards and Beauty" in *Understanding Jonathan Edwards: An Introduction*, Ed. Gerald McDermott (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 113-126.

³⁸ Von Balthasar, *Seeing the Form*, vol. 1, *Glory of the Lord*, 52-53.

³⁹ See footnote 29 above in reference to Robert Jenson. See also Jae-Bum Hwang, "The Trinitarian Logics of St. Augustine and Karl Barth: With Special Reference to Their Respective Pneumatologies and Filioque-Positions" (Ph.D. diss., Union Theological Seminary, 1998).

of beauty, but his theology of joy.⁴⁰ It should also consider work on memory in both Barth and Augustine, since memory is often a way to explain the church's growth. Presumably, there is not much work on Augustine in relation to Barth because Barth rejected Augustine as a fundamental source for his overall theological program in the 1920s as a result of writing *The Holy Spirit and the Christian Life*.⁴¹ Yet, Barth also rejected Schleiermacher as a false start in modern theology, and yet studies are appearing which open up surprising similarities.⁴² The same would no doubt be true with regard to the doctrine of glory, but also with regard to their ecclesiologies. The issue is not so much that Augustine and Barth have similar ecclesiological conclusions, but that the structure of their respective ecclesiologies skate around similar questions.

Finally, it is worth considering why this project does not directly analyze Barth's work in the baptismal fragment of IV/4 and the posthumously published volume on the Christian life.⁴³ Barth's volume on the Christian life is closer to my questions in this project, since Barth concerns himself in the baptism volume more with the baptized individual than with the baptizing community.⁴⁴ We could have also considered how glory plays a role in Barth's account of individual action, for example in his accounts of faith, love and hope in the doctrine of reconciliation. But the task in the dissertation was

⁴⁰ The place to start with Augustine on beauty is Carol Harrison, *Beauty and Revelation in the Thought of St. Augustine* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992). The place to start with Augustine on joy is John Burnaby, *Amor Dei: A Study of the Religion of St. Augustine* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2007).

⁴¹ Karl Barth, *The Holy Spirit and the Christian Life* (Westminster John Knox Press, 1993). See Keith Johnson's analysis of this text in *Karl Barth and the Analogia Entis*, 109-110. There is also the problem of Augustine's massive primary and secondary corpus!

⁴² For instance, Gockel, *Barth and Schleiermacher on the Doctrine of Election*.

⁴³ See Karl Barth, *The Christian Life: Church Dogmatics IV/4, Lecture Fragments*, trans. Geoffrey Bromiley (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1981).

⁴⁴ As Barth writes, "Even as the concrete form of the repentance or conversion of faith, baptism is always a work of the individual who is summoned to knowledge and confession of Jesus Christ. It is not a collective act but a personal one . . . baptism is not an initiation into the mysteries and redemptive techniques of a new religious society. It is a public declaration on the part of the baptized that they stand in a personal relation to the Lord of the Christian community as the source and cause of all salvation" (IV/4, 83).

not to give a comprehensive look at Barth's theology of action in general or of communal action in Barth's *Dogmatics*, but to illustrate that the doctrine of glory plays a substructural role throughout the *Dogmatics*. Connecting the doctrine of glory to the growth of communal action illustrates that substructure. If this project was a more comprehensive look at Barth's approach to ecclesial action in its own right, these two volumes should be engaged. More detailed analysis of those volumes at this point would only clutter the project. But, a thorough future analysis of these two volumes with these themes in mind would be useful, especially in its potential for illuminating the relationship between individual and communal growth in Barth's work.

Lastly, this work does not address the development of Barth's thought on glory, ecclesial growth, and their connection in relation to Barth's work before II/1 of the *Church Dogmatics*. The problem with including that sort of genetic analysis in this project is that it would require locating and then coordinating various trains of thought that are most clearly connected only in the *Church Dogmatics*. For example, the *Gottingen Dogmatics* has only one paragraph dedicated to glory, and does not show much, if any, of the depth of insight about glory which one finds in the *Church Dogmatics*. Yet, Barth's theology of joy begins to come clearly into view with his book on Anselm. On the other hand, the second edition of Barth's Romans commentary contains an intriguing sense of the growth of human history which parallels the motifs one finds in the doctrine of reconciliation. Future studies will need to isolate the strands of glory, including the two basic categories of form and joy, the strand of growth in history and in Christian communities, and the strand of ecclesial action in these representative works and then interrelate them. Likewise, Barth's ecclesiology in *Church*

Dogmatics I/2 should also be considered, in order to test out how Barth's ecclesiology changes after the doctrine of election comes into full focus. This study demonstrates the need to accomplish these complex tasks, but including that much analysis in this study would be far too burdensome.

Contemporary Theology

Much could be said here, but I consider only two implications. First, there is the growing question about aesthetics in contemporary theology. John Betz has argued that Barth's refusal of the *analogia entis* entails Barth's refusal of a natural desire for the supernatural.⁴⁵ Against this, Kenneth Oakes recently countered by exhibiting that Barth was able to affirm human capacities for grace, as long as those capacities are derived from the history of Jesus Christ.⁴⁶ Among other things, Oakes points to Barth's admission in 1962 at Princeton Seminary that if the *analogia entis* is a form of an *analogia relationis* or *analogia fidei*, then Barth had no objection to its use. However, interestingly, Oakes does not take up the question of beauty and the sublime—the heart of the issue for Betz. According to Betz, Barth's difficulty with the *analogia entis* comes from “an aesthetic prejudice for the sublime against the beautiful.”⁴⁷ David Bentley Hart, who is a close collaborator of Betz, makes similar claims in *The Beauty of the Infinite*.⁴⁸ If aesthetics has to do strictly with the escapability of the known from the knower, then

⁴⁵ John R. Betz, “Beyond the Sublime: The Aesthetics of the Analogy of Being (Part Two),” *Modern Theology* 22, no. 1 (January 2006), 7.

⁴⁶ Kenneth Oakes, “The Question of Nature and Grace in Karl Barth: Humanity as Creature and as Covenant Partner,” *Modern Theology* 23, no. 4 (October 2007), 601.

⁴⁷ John R. Betz, “Beyond the Sublime: The Aesthetics of the Analogy of Being (Part One),” *Modern Theology* 21, no. 3 (July 2005), 370.

⁴⁸ David Bentley Hart, *The Beauty of the Infinite* (Eerdmans: Grand Rapids, 2003), 229-230. Betz and Hart probably derive this thesis from Hans Urs Von Balthasar, although they do not directly mention this. See Stephen Wigley, *Karl Barth and Hans Urs von Balthasar: A Critical Engagement*, (T & T Clark, 2007).

the *analogia entis* will be difficult to maintain. Is Barth's theology capable of sustaining a theology of beauty?

For Barth, beauty is a "subordinate and auxiliary idea which enables us to achieve a specific clarification and emphasis."⁴⁹ It is an "essential" term which clarifies how it is that God is glorious, but the wider term is glory.⁵⁰ However, even though Barth considered beauty to be an essential term, it is rarely used in the rest of the *Church Dogmatics*. For instance, when he uses the term glory in other parts of the *Dogmatics*—say, for instance, in IV/3.1—the term beauty never appears. In the end, are Betz and Hart correct? Is Barth's version of the *analogia entis* incapable of sustaining a theology of beauty? Probably, Barth lets beauty drop out of his discourse so that he can rid himself of the danger of treating beauty as "the ultimate cause which produces and moves all things," which is how it often appears in various kinds of Neoplatonism.⁵¹ Beauty could quite easily be "the ideal for all human striving," a cause that human beings construct in order to order their world in its likeness—it could be what Feuerbach thought all theology projected for itself. Yet, something in the linguistic domain of beauty is always readily at hand for Barth. Thus, joy, form, splendor and shine appear consistently, but rarely beauty. Those other terms are readily at hand for Barth because they express God's glory. Glory is not an optional term because of its biblical resonance, but beauty becomes an optional term because it is reducible to other terms. Indeed, the question is, given the way that Barth uses trinitarian theology to unpack God's life as form and delight, whether beauty is more optional than he claims. The term beauty has its advantages, since it

⁴⁹ Ibid., 653.

⁵⁰ Ibid. Hart's brief explanations of this point seem to indicate a similar way of organizing his terms (Hart, *Beauty*, 17-18, 251-252).

⁵¹ Barth, CD II/1, 651.

allows for conversation with philosophical aesthetics, but theology simply does not need the term. Barth's own use of the terms of glory bears this out. Or, at least, this is conversation that still needs to take place in contemporary theology.

Second, one of the goals of this dissertation is to begin to recommend Barth as a liturgical theologian and ethicist, but of a unique kind. Liturgical theology and ethics often means theology that works up theological commitments from liturgical practices as practiced in the history of Israel and the Christian community.⁵² Barth fits this description, but in a qualified way. First, his commitment to Scripture as the primordial witness to God in Christ's creation, reconciliation and redemption of the world will relativize liturgical practices outside of the New Testament. But, that does not separate him from other Protestant liturgical theologians.⁵³ Second, Barth will not appeal to an anthropology shaped without direct reference to the scriptural portrait of the humanity of Jesus Christ. Some liturgical theology uses and adapts various kinds of philosophical anthropologies to explain the meaning and formative function of Christian liturgy.⁵⁴ This sort of theological work will, in Barth's judgment, eventually create a control for the contours of one's Christology, and one's doctrine of God, and one's doctrine of revelation. Firmer approaches develop an Old Testament anthropology which is related to Jesus Christ's identity, especially his priestly identity.⁵⁵ But, even for these approaches,

⁵² Examples of this include Alexander Schmemmann, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology*, Third Edition, Trans. Asheleigh Moorhouse (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Press, 1986); Aidan Kavanagh, *On Liturgical Theology* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1984); James K.A. Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*; Stanley Hauerwas and Samuel Wells, eds., *Blackwell Companion to Christian Ethics*, Second Edition (Wiley-Blackwell, 2011).

⁵³ See, for example, Hughes Oliphant Old, *Worship: Reformed According to Scripture* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002).

⁵⁴ See Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*; Louis Chavet, *Symbol and Sacrament* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1995).

⁵⁵ See Geoffrey Wainwright, *Doxology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984).

Barth's work challenges because it uses the history of Jesus Christ to uncover the content of Old Testament anthropologies.

This dissertation shows that Barth's theology can intersect with these ways of approaching the dynamics of liturgy. But, Barth differs from these other kinds of liturgical theology because his Christology is, first and foremost, a window into the doctrine of God, and especially a doctrine of the immanent Trinity. Liturgical theology, for Barth, obediently articulates God's being and act, as that being-in-act provokes human beings who are who they are in worship. While liturgical theology has indeed been a discipline that unites biblical studies, theology (dogmatic, systematic, philosophical), and history, its contemporary forms have not made a Christologically modulated doctrine of God (i.e. trinitarianism) a way to unite these various kinds of sources and methods.⁵⁶ The chief turning point in this discussion, if we are to take seriously Barth's theology, is the doctrine of glory. Barth's unique biography and theological development make the doctrine of God, as the doctrine of God is made possible in Jesus Christ, the only way for liturgical theology to get off the ground. Without such an approach, liturgical theology will be absolutely vulnerable to Feuerbachian critiques of religion, idealist approaches which take the liturgy to be symbols of universal experience, or neo-Marxist claims that the Christian liturgy is a conscious or unconscious mode of supporting specific cultural forms and project (economic or otherwise). In other words, liturgy would be described as mere "religion," as Barth understands it. Liturgical theology, if it is to be an authentic theology of worship

⁵⁶ One exception to this trend is John Witvliet, "The Doctrine of the Trinity and the Theology and Practice of Christian Worship in the Reformed Tradition" (Ph.D. Diss., University of Notre Dame, 1997). Witvliet's work is ground-breaking, but it does not root worship in the life of the immanent Trinity, seeking to defer conversations about the relationship between the immanent and economic trinity to systematic theology.

– as opposed to religion – can do nothing else but appeal to the doctrine of the immanent Trinity. Or, at least, that is the kind of argument that needs to be sustained in contemporary liturgical theology.

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