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Hans Küng in an early work have suggested that Roman Catholics and Protestants can now agree on that issue, but the continuing though not emphasized practice of indulgences makes that seem doubtful.

The Report has the authority only of the Commission itself. The authoritative organs of the two communions have yet to evaluate it. The Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith in *Observations on the Final Report of the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission* (Catholic Truth Society and Catholic Information Services) has raised some considerable questions, described by defenders of this Report as being on the wrong wavelength. The Anglicans cannot speak decisively till the Lambeth Conference of 1988. Nevertheless the Pope and the Archbishop after the historic service at Canterbury on May 29, 1982 issued a Common Declaration which envisages the setting up of a new international Commission to continue the work, to examine the outstanding doctrinal differences and to recommend practical steps towards the restoration of full communion. It also says 'Our aim is not limited to the union of our two communities alone, to the exclusion of other Christians, but rather extends to the fulfilment of God's will for the visible unity of all his people'.

It thus behoves us all to study the Report carefully and sympathetically. My own judgement is that certain sections, notably that on Jurisdiction, will not do as they stand. Nevertheless the method of probing beneath the surface of apparent disagreements, though not as novel as enthusiasts seem to think, is undoubtedly right and may yet prove even more fruitful.

Theology and Personality

A. SKEVINGTON WOOD

The theme of theology and personality is examined from the standpoint of classical biblical orthodoxy. The impact of divine personality on the human consciousness is seen to be the determinative factor in the fulfilment of human potential. This is considered in terms of the continuing person to person ministry of the risen Christ and the life-giving and life-sustaining Spirit. The relevance of a personalized theology is underlined by an appeal to the Luther-Wesley as well as to the Calvin-Barth axis.

ALTHOUGH the interplay between theology and personality may be a legitimate and indeed fascinating topic for discussion, as this series has thus far demonstrated, the fact that the two are inseparably related to each other is hardly open to question. From a Christian point of view, theology and personality are bound up together both in the nature of God himself and in his dealings with man. An impersonal theology is inconceivable. God himself

is personal and has created persons to reflect his own personality and to enter into a personal relationship with him. Such a presupposition is axiomatic in the outlook of classical orthodoxy as it seeks to interpret the biblical evidence.

Theology has to do with what is given. Only God can create something out of nothing. The observable phenomena with which the theologian is concerned in the pursuit of his research are provided by God's disclosure of himself. In this sense, there is nothing that we have not received for, if the doctrine of creation is to be taken at all seriously, then both the subject matter of theology and the ability to examine it are alike derived from God. It is for this reason that theology begins with him and not with us. Its movement upwards (if a spatial symbol is allowable) from man to God is only made possible because God has already initiated a downward movement in reaching man in order to make himself known. Christian theology, then, is a theology of revelation. As such it is also a theology of incarnation, since God has expressed himself finally in Christ.

Wolfhart Pannenberg has discussed the nature of divine personhood in more than one of his writings. He comes to the conclusion that personality in God testifies to essential non-manipulability, as distinct from that which is merely situationally conditioned. 'Whatever permits of being manipulated — if not at the moment, then still in principle — becomes a thing. Only that is a person which has a hidden, inner side and is not completely transparent to thought, so that it confronts one as an independent being'.¹ Clearly this understanding of personality in God is relevant also to the achievement of true personality in man, to which we shall be referring shortly. So far as its insight into the personality of God is concerned, it is important in its insistence that the God of biblical revelation is one who acts and not one who is acted upon. He is in control of man and events and, despite what might sometimes seem to be the case, is not himself controlled by them. He is the one who is always doing what is new and unexpected. This free, even unpredictable, agent is the person with whom theology and the theologians are concerned. An awareness of his beneficent sovereignty, his unfettered creativity and his profound fatherly compassion ensures that a theology focussed on such a personality can never degenerate into an arid and theoretical academic exercise.

Christian theology cannot be other than relevant in that it is preoccupied, not only with God, but with God in relation to man. God is not looked at in isolation from man, since it is to man that God reveals himself. Even when man aspires to contemplate God as he is in himself rather than God as he is for us, that is only possible at all because God has first established a contact. Communion with God is two-way traffic now — man with God as well as God with man — only because originally it was one-way traffic, as God the Creator in gracious condescension stooped to communicate with those he had created. Hence William Burt Pope could affirm in his *Compendium* that 'the first two postulates of all theology are the personality of the infinite being and the personality of man, his creature'. He added: 'To renounce either is to annihilate theological knowledge properly so called.'²

If theology is by definition thought about God, then obviously it represents what man thinks about God. It is the way in which one person views another. As we have seen, man could have no view of God at all apart from God's

readiness to make himself known. Once the primacy of revelation has been recognized, however, theology resolves itself into a response to what God has chosen to disclose. As such it is inevitably a person to person affair. The theologian can never be detached, in the sense that he stands aside as a third party observing God and man in their dealings with each other. He himself is involved, for as a man he is one with whom God seeks to communicate.

This interpersonal relationship between God and man is the theme of Scripture and the clue to all theology. As Karl Barth insisted, God exists neither next to man, nor merely above him, but rather with him, beside him and, most important of all, for him. In other words, he is man's God. Theology is thus *theoanthropology* — the study of God and his relationship to man — which Barth was careful to distinguish from *anthropotheology* — the study of man and his quest for God. *Theoanthropology* speaks of a God who cares for man. He is *Immanuel* — God with us. 'Having this God for its object,' Barth claimed, in a sparkling passage, 'it can be nothing else but the most thankful and *happy science!*'³ An injection of theological optimism is surely overdue today. When every doubt has been frankly faced and every hesitation expressed, our basic convictions remain unshaken and indeed unshakeable. A fully personalized theology will recapture the forfeited note of assurance.

Commenting on Calvin's Geneva Catechism (1545), Barth underlined the reformer's emphasis on an experimental knowledge of God's love as the source of certitude. It is in Christ that God reveals his mercy toward man and bears witness to his love. Thus the foundation and beginning of faith in God is to know him in Christ. 'Note well: it is not a question of a general and abstract and philosophical knowledge, not a question of a treatise on the love of God in nature or of love in general; all this, all these abstract ideas are a piece of paper, a great noise, only ideas. The gospel, on the contrary, tells us about realities. The task of theological reflection and of preaching does not begin at all with abstract ideas, but with the reality of God's action. The love of God is not an abstract quality of God's; it is an act: God takes to heart our misery. In Jesus Christ he declares his mercy unto us and puts this mercy to work, and there is no mercy towards us outside Jesus Christ.'⁴

It is not that there is, as it were, an 'essence' of God's love which could be known as such in a quite impersonal way, and then a 'manifestation' of it supereminently represented in Christ. Nor did Christ merely introduce and exemplify an idea of God's love, which others might have arrived at of their own accord. For Calvin, as Barth brings out, no distinction is drawn between the principle and the person. The messenger is himself the message. Jesus Christ is God's living letter to mankind. He is God's mercy; he is God's love; he is the open heart of God. Faith, then, means that we take God at his word, and his word is Christ. Faith is the confidence one person has in another: in this case it is the confidence the believer has in Christ as being God for him.

If faith and love are expressions of a person to person relationship, so also is grace. Luther's discovery of a gracious God lay at the heart of the Protestant Reformation. Not only had he formerly misinterpreted the righteousness of God in terms of punitive justice after the manner of some scholastics; he had also tended to regard the grace of God as akin to a remedial or restorative medicament prescribed for man, such as an ointment or a potion. He came to realize that grace is not a substance. It is intensely

personal. It is God's love and mercy in action. As T. F. Torrance explains, 'it involves encounter with God who draws personally near to us through his Word and Spirit, and personally acts upon us, creating on our part personal response to him in faith and love.'⁵ Grace is grounded in the loving relations of persons within the trinity and its operation never breaks that connection. It is one in which Father, Son and Holy Spirit work together as divine persons for the benefit of human persons. The grace of God is thus not on any account to be treated as an impersonal entity or causality. It never ceases to be what it is in the trinity. It is not to be regarded simply as instrumental. God's grace is himself, immediately and personally present, in Christ and through the Holy Spirit.

The Reformation was primarily concerned with the personalization of faith, which is not to be confused with any man-centred individualization. Its orientation is towards God, but God and man are seen together in a relationship that spells reconciliation. Authentic theology, according to Luther, moves between the twin poles of man's guilt and God's grace. 'Whatever is asked or discussed in theology outside this subject,' Luther declared uncompromisingly, 'is error and poison.'⁶ A lawyer addresses man as a citizen, a doctor treats man as a patient, but a theologian discusses man *coram deo* (in God's eyes) as a sinner; yet not as a sinner alone and without help, always as a sinner for whom there is a Saviour who died that he might live. Hence Luther could insist that Christ is the proper subject matter of theology and 'true theology is practical, and its foundation is Christ, whose death is appropriated to us by faith.'⁷ 'There is only one article and one rule of theology,' he told his table companions, 'and this is true of faith and trust in Christ. Whoever does not hold this article and this rule is no theologian. All other articles flow into and out of this one; without it the others are meaningless.'⁸

For Luther, true theology was never speculative and abstract. It was always applied theology related to the life-situation of real persons. What he produced was not a text-book system but a people's theology, designed to match the problems and longings of the ordinary man in the street. In order to address himself in this fashion to the common man, the theologian himself must have a penetrating experience of the hardships and vicissitudes which belong to the human lot, as well as of the enabling grace of God in Christ. This is what Luther meant by saying that experience makes a theologian, and that even the struggles and temptations he has to face are part of his training for this task. 'I did not learn my theology all at once,' Luther confessed. 'I had to ponder over it ever more deeply, and my spiritual trials were of help to me in this, for one does not learn anything without practice.'⁹ It was out of such agonizing that Luther's 'theology of the cross' was born — not simply a theology about the cross, but an approach to all theology in the light of the cross.

We are rightly on our guard against an experience-centred theology if we are thinking of it in purely subjective terms. Sound doctrine is unlikely to result from the psychological analysis of our own emotional reactions to the stimulus of the Spirit. By Christian experience, however, we mean much more than that. The term describes the total impact of the personality of God on the personality of man. Its origin is in the outgoing of God himself. To be sure it meets man at the point of his own deepest needs and desires, but these

have themselves been awakened by the grace that goes before. Christian experience, then, is not simply what a man fancies he feels about God. It is the reality of God himself touching a human life, indeed entering into it and transforming it into what he designs it to be. It is, as Paul put it, a new creation, restoring man to what he was before the fall and freeing him to be a genuine person — no longer manipulated by circumstances or the pressure of other personalities — but enjoying the glorious liberty which is the inheritance of God's children.

Theology in the Wesleyan tradition places particular emphasis on the experiential factor as described above. In an incisive letter to Dr Conyers Middleton, a Cambridge intellectual who had questioned the validity of miracles, John Wesley himself indicated how highly he rated it. 'What Christianity (considered as a doctrine) promised is accomplished in my soul! And Christianity, considered as an inward principle, is the completion of all those promises. It is holiness and happiness, the image of God impressed on a created spirit, a fountain of peace and love springing up into everlasting life. And this I conceive to be the strongest evidence of the truth of Christianity. I do not undervalue traditional evidence. Let it have its place and its due honour. It is highly serviceable in its kind and in its degree. And yet I cannot set it on a level with this.'¹⁰ Wesley's theology, as W. R. Cannon rightly asserts, was the intellectual expression of a popular revival of religion. It represented a reaction against the refrigerating effect of rationalistic deism which had reduced the reality of God to a philosophical formula. For Wesley, faith was not 'barely a speculative, rational thing, a cold, lifeless assent, a train of ideas in the head; but also a disposition of the heart.'¹¹

The personalization of theology in the crucible of experience is reflected in the language Wesley employed to describe what happened to him in the Aldersgate Street encounter: 'I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for my salvation; and an assurance was given me that he had taken away *my* sins, even *mine*, and saved *me* from the law of sin and death.'¹² The italicized underlinings are Wesley's own and testify to 'the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ' described by Luther in the passage from his preface to Romans which was read aloud in that memorable society meeting.¹³ In his sermon on 'Salvation by Faith', preached at St Mary's, Oxford, before the University three weeks later, as the opening salvo of his campaign to reform the nation, Wesley transposed the personal pronouns from the first person singular as he defined Christian faith as 'not only an assent to the whole gospel of Christ, but also a full reliance on the blood of Christ; a trust in the merits of his life, death, and resurrection; a recumbency on him as our atonement and our life, *as given for us, and living in us*. It is a sure confidence which a man hath in God, that through the merits of Christ, *his* sins are forgiven, and *he* reconciled to the favour of God; and, in consequence hereof, a closing with him, and cleaving to him, as our "wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption," or, in one word, *our* salvation.'¹⁴ Those extracts from Wesley's *Journal* and his *Standard Sermons* echo the unmistakable personalism of the biblical writers.

So far we have considered theology and personality in terms of what Martin Buber classified as an I-Thou relationship between man and God. In the Christian understanding, however, divine personality is extended in a

manner which Buber as a Jew could hardly recognize. We have seen how God the Father has approached man definitively in Christ the Son so as to rescue him from the imprisonment of sin and set him free to be himself, as his Creator intended him to be. We have only hinted at the personal ministry of the Holy Spirit, but this, of course, must be taken fully into account if the conspectus is to be complete. In these days of charismatic renewal, there is a welcome renaissance of theological interest in the third person of the trinity and the way in which he applies the benefits of Christ's redemption to the believer.

He is, as the Nicene Creed confesses, 'the Lord and Giver of life'. It is he who kindles and sustains the vital spiritual spark within the human personality. The process begins with the quickening that leads to the new birth. Hendrikus Berkhof regards regeneration as 'the dominating concept' in the work of the Holy Spirit.¹⁵ The Spirit transmits life. That is the nub of his work in redemption as well as in creation. It is through him that man, once dead in sin, is made alive with Christ. By the miracle of regeneration a new, God-orientated self is brought into being to replace the former 'I' which Luther saw as *incurvatum in se* — not only bent down to the earth, as Augustine understood the expression, but turned in on itself and preoccupied only with its own concerns. The Spirit makes possible the emergence of a recreated personality in men, so that the old 'I am' is cancelled out or rather, as Helmut Thielicke explains, supplemented by 'I no longer live, but Christ lives in me' (Galatians 2:20) or 'I live in Christ'. It is a false 'I am' if now uttered in any boastful fashion. The apostle Paul recognized it as folly in such a form (2 Corinthians 11:17,21; 12:6; cf. Romans 1:22; 1 Corinthians 3:18).

'What this boasting means,' Thielicke continues, 'and how it falsifies the "I am", may be seen clearly when we ask what happens if the Spirit is viewed only in his effects or gifts, i.e. as the one who imparts a material quality. This degeneration of the statement "I am" is opposed by the assertion of the personal nature of the Spirit in the doctrine of the trinity. Since the Spirit stands over against me, I cannot simply say: "I have the Spirit". I must be content to say: "Come, Creator Spirit". "I am" now denotes the relation which constitutes my new being. By the Spirit I am in Christ. By the Spirit Christ is in me. I say this in praise and thanksgiving.'¹⁶

The transformation of human personality which begins with the new birth leads to a lifelong process of sanctification, or growing conformity to the likeness of Christ. It is the Spirit's distinctive function to reproduce the characteristic features of our Lord's personality in ours. That is surely what Paul had in mind when he told the Christians in Corinth that those who, unlike Moses, now contemplate (or reflect) the Shekinah glory of God 'are being transformed into his likeness with ever increasing glory which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit' (2 Corinthians 3:18). Later in the same letter Paul claims that God has made his light shine in the hearts of believers to give them 'the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ' (2 Corinthians 4:6). Elsewhere the apostle analyses the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22,23) which, on examination, turns out to be simply a transcript of the qualities of Christ. And yet at the same time this constitutes the *differentia* of Christian personality, without confusion of basic identity. It may well be argued that human personality realizes its potential only as it is activated by the Spirit of God and thus attains to what the apostle Paul

described as 'the whole measure of the fullness of Christ' (Ephesians 4:13). It is to the achievement of this end, to the glory of God and the good of man in society, that doing theology must be directed if it is to be worthy of its name.

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The Judaizing Controversy in the New Testament

ROY YATES

In this article the thesis of the Tübingen school that there was a conflict between Jewish and Gentile interest in earliest Christianity is taken as a working hypothesis, and illustrated by five texts from Acts and Paul.

DURING the earliest years of the Church's life there are signs of a major difference of opinion between the Jewish and Gentile elements of Christianity. Such was the view expounded by F. C. Baur¹ of the Tübingen school, who suggested that Paul was the main protagonist of the Gentile side, and Peter and James on the Jewish side. The Acts of the Apostles was regarded as a 'cover-up' document, intended to give the impression that such a violent difference of opinion had never existed. Baur's views never achieved widespread acceptance in their extreme form, but the modified view that there was a conflict between Jewish and Gentile interests in the early Church seems to be the key to the situation behind many of our New Testament documents.

The first Christians were Jews, who, on becoming Christians, did not