

Robert Barron, The Priority of Christ: Toward a Postliberal Catholicism

Foreward

- *Faith + reason = two wings the human spirit uses to reach truth* (John Paul II)
 - Faith using reason to understand more faith's truths
 - Reason using faith to understand better reason's nature + its findings
- Characterized in Patristic literature as Jerusalem + Athens
 - Believers reject rational critique of faith
 - Rationalists imagine possibility of purely secular reason
 - Faith without critique -> violence
 - Reason divorced from faith -> utopian experiments that kill millions
- Barron's work is theological
 - *Situates dialogue between faith and reason between those who begin theologizing with the data of revelation, shaping human experience by its demands, and those who begin theologizing from a philosophical or anthropological base, fitting revelation into the contours of reason and human experience* (5)
- Puts ancient + contemporary dialogue to new music
 - "Postliberal"
 - Neither return to Scholasticism nor to Fathers
 - Reaches back for sources and forward for its concerns
 - ***Must disempower modernity's critique of faith and modify the exaggerated claims advanced by historicity***
 - Who Christ is can't be heard without muting tired songs from Cartesian subjectivism
 - *The original sin of liberal Christianity is to reduce divine self-revelation to personal religious experience* (6)
- Spiritual director in seminary
 - Take + make your own one book on the life of Christ
 - Constantly living with the Lord creates curiosity that cannot be satisfied by purely intellectual investigations
 - **In encountering him and surrendering to him, faith is born and reason challenged creatively**

- *Jesus as an icon beyond concept but not rationality*
 - We have nothing to fear because God is not in competition with us
 - God's self-revelation not as competitor but natural complement to human reason
- (complicated paragraph page 6)

Preface

- Came to age in wake of Second Vatican
 - Implementation rounded in assumptions of liberalism
 - *An approach that commences with experience and reads doctrine in light of experience* (8)
 - Positions revelation by something extrinsic to itself (Karl Barth)
 - Christian theology easier for contemporary mind to grasp but was bland and defanged
- “Beige Catholicism”
 - Jesus as wise + holy teachers
 - Liturgy as shared communal meal
 - Missionary impulse faded
 - Eschatology collapsed into social justice below
 - New Marcionism
 - *Significance of Jesus parsed in abstraction fro the Old Testament and the history of Israel*
 - Church sank into boredom
- Need to move beyond liberalism
 - “Move beyond” not “repudiate”
 - Achievements of liberalism especially in apologetics
 - Their methods as *preambula fidei* for our time
 - **Should start not with experience but with Christ**
 - *Not a systematics but a way forward*
 - *What a thoroughly Christocentric theology would look like*
- Published 2007
 - 2008 series *Catholicism*
 - Also to present material to more general audience
 - “Amazed and Afraid”

- *Catholicism* used widely in the church
 - Academic manner but evangelical purpose
 - ***Meant to bring people to Jesus Christ***

Introduction

- The grandmother, the misfit, and the one who throws everything off
- “A Good Man is Hard to Find” by Flannery O’Connor
 - *Why don’t you pray?*
- Grandmother + Misfit in same spiritual space
 - Convince of their self-sufficiency
 - *Jesus thrown everything off balance*
- Jesus compels a choice
 - Kierkegaardian either-or
- O’Connor’s stories center on “offer of grace usually refused”
- Stark choice between giving one’s life utterly to Jesus or pleasure through acts of violence
- ***Story an apt metaphor for relationship between modernity and late-medieval form of Christianity that gave rise to it***
 - Modern liberalism and late-medieval Christianity are close relatives
 - Both need salvation from person to who they both refer - Jesus Christ
- *Propose to develop a postmodern or postliberal Catholicism*
 - Flows from surprising event of Jesus Christ and pushes beyond convictions of modernity and conventionally construed Christianity
- **A decadent Christianity and one of its own children**
 - Account of etiology of modernity
 - Jürgen Habermas, Hans Urs von Balthasar, John Milbank, Colin Gunton, Louis Dupré
 - ***Liberal modernity as energetic reaction to a particular and problematic version of nominalist Christianity***
 - Reacting to corruption of true Christianity
 - Became similarly distorted + exaggerated
 - Trouble began with Duns Scotus option for univocal conception of being in contradistinction to Thomas Aquinas analogical understanding

- *God is inescapably mysterious to human intellect since our frame of reference remains creaturely mode of existence which bears only analogical resemblance to divine mode of being* (Aquinas) (13)
- To make God more immediately intelligible
 - Univocal conception of existence (Scotus)
 - God and creatures belong to same metaphysical category
 - genus of **being**
 - God + creatures do belong to a logical category that transcends and includes them (Scotus)
 - **Almost entirely negative shift**
 - *If analogical conception of being is rejected creatures no longer seen as participating in the divine to-be*
 - Creatures lose essential connectedness to one another
 - ***Isolated and self-contained individuals are now what is most basically real***
- Scotus intuition confirmed later by Franciscan successor William of Occam (14)
 - Nominalism -> denied ontological density to unifying features of being
 - Nothing real outside disconnected individual things
 - God + creatures = “beings”
 - God + finite things are rivals since their individualities are contrastive and exclusive
 - ***Whereas in Aquinas’s participation metaphysics the created universe is constituted by its rapport with God***
 - Occam
 - Must realize itself through disassociation from a competitive supreme being
 - **Voluntarism**
 - Any connection has to be through will
 - (Rw - !)
 - God’s relation with rational creatures therefore legalistic + arbitrary

- Finite freedom = action prompted by nothing exterior or interior
- (Rw - **very important paragraph page 14**)
- *God imposed himself arbitrarily on a necessarily reluctant + resentful humanity*
- Martin Luther + John Calvin formed by late-medieval nominalism
 - ***Was the Reformation to some degree a radical ratification of the breakdown of analogical conception of being?***
- From time of Étienne Gilson
 - Scholars note relationship between early modernity + medieval culture
 - Modern as sharp reaction to elements in late-medieval Christianity
 - Revolt of individuals against imposition of divine demands
 - Made concrete in church + traditional culture
 - Martha Nussbaum
 - Liberalism = valorization of prerogatives of individual subject
 - Affirmation of subject's right to choose
 - What is the enemy of this freedom?
 - *Traditional institutions that bind the will + quash individual initiative and imagination*
- Descarte's affirmation of epistemological primordality and meaning-creating capacity of the *cogito*
 - Subjectivism is not a distinctive quality of the modern
 - Rather the subject is the ground + measure of meaning and value
 - Descarte insists everything be brought before the bar of subjectivity
 - Also in Immanuel Kant's claim
 - Moral life grounded neither in objectivity of nature nor in heteronomous law
 - Rather self-legislation of categorical imperative

- Jean-Jacques Rousseau
 - Legitimate government = democracy so pure that obedience to law coincides with obedience to self
- Clearest expression in Nietzsche's elevation of the will
 - Need to put competitive God to death
- *Casey v Planned Parenthood*
 - Existence (concrete freedom) precedes essence (meaning and value) (16)
- Reaction of individuals against tyranny of institutions and threatening Other
 - ~ unproductive warfare between grandmother and Misfit
 - Modernity + Christianity are enemies in one sense
 - In another they are deeply connected + mirror one another
 - ***Advocates of prerogatives of voluntarist God facing down advocates of voluntarist self***
 - **"A plague on both your houses"**
- **Authentic Christianity and the Claims of Modernity**
 - Grandmother + Misfit are enemies because they are deathly afraid of each other
 - Modernity + nominalist Christianity need salvation
 - How? Through God-human Jesus Christ
 - ***Classical Christianity = in Jesus of Nazareth God and humanity met in a noncompetitive and nonviolent way***
 - Council of Chalcedon
 - Without mixing mingling or confusion
 - Hypostatic union
 - One perfect in divinity and in humanity
 - ***Presence of true God not invasive or interruptive but noncompetitive***
 - A rapport of coinherence between divinity + humanity
 - The glory of God is a human being fully alive (St Irenaeus)
 - Jesus "throws everything off"
 - ***Upsets worldview predicated upon the primordially of competition and ontological violence, replacing it with a***

***vision predicated upon the primordially of relationship
and mutual indwelling***

- Something similar in surprise of the Paschal Mystery
 - Risen Christ confronted humans with nonviolence of compassion and forgiveness
 - Moral disorder of crucifixion restored
 - Through restorative divine forgiveness by insinuating invitation to love
 - ***Christians concluded nonviolent and relational character of God's own being***
 - God is more a play of love + relationality
 - *God is love*
 - Formalized in doctrine of Trinity
 - Relationality is for Christian metaphysics elemental and irreducible
- From this noncompetitiveness classical Christian theology concluded noninvasiveness of creation
 - Ancient myths of creation
 - Perpetuated in more rational form in philosophical cosmologies
 - Plato + Aristotle
 - ***Worldly order through intelligent shaping of some primal stuff existing alongside divine intelligence***
 - **Cosmos emerges through violence**
 - Exercise of external force
 - Doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo*
 - ***Order and existence of world not through any sort of invasion manipulation or external interference***
 - ***But through generous nonviolent act of selfless love***
 - World sustained by God as a song sustained by a singer (Herbert McCabe)
 - **What follows from nonviolence of *creatio ex nihilo* is worldview hinted at earlier**
 - ***Analogical conception of being and the participative connection of all creatures in a coinherent nexus***

- **This book will explore and elaborate on this distinctively Christian metaphysics**
 - Not antimodern but postmodern
 - Takes seriously modern valorization of individual and her freedom
 - Both are preserved not over and against a competitive god but in relation to the God of coherent love
 - States radical ontology flowing from revelation in Jesus Christ brought to expression in the doctors of the church especially Aquinas (18)
- **The structure of the book**
 - Argument of book begins with Jesus Christ *in all his specificity*
 - Most liberal theologies begin with experienced deemed universal
 - **Postliberal theology begins with *concretissimus* stubbornly particular Christ (Hans Urs von Balthasar)**
 - Will not search for religious expression Jesus gives nor “historical” Jesus underneath Gospel portraits
 - ***An “iconic” Christology***
 - Dense particularity and spiritual complexity of Jesus in New Testament narratives
 - Goethian spirit
 - Contemplative love
 - Allow the object to control gaze of the mind
 - ***Nine “icons” or scenes from the Gospels***
 - ***Grouped under Jesus as Gatherer, Warrior, Lord***
 - ***Then develop a christocentric epistemology***
 - Christians know and seek knowledge in a distinct way
 - ***Because they take narratives concerning Jesus Christ as epistemically basic***
 - Set against modern epistemological foundationalism
 - John Locke’s empiricism
 - René Descarte’s subjectivism
 - Fourth major section

- God's trinitarian nature and the unique mode of divine existence vis-à-vis what is other than God
- Primary and secondary causality in relation to nature and the will
- *Arguing for noninterruptive coinherence of God and the world*
- Final section
 - Ethical implications of christocentric metaphysics
 - Paint icons of four saints who participated in the new life made available in Christ
- Battle between liberal modernity and nominalist Christianity as frustrating and hopeful
 - Both sides come to appreciate common need for a savior

I. Jesus as symbol

A. Significant trend in Christology of modern era

1. Jesus as symbol for universal religious sensibility
2. Many separated figure of Jesus from sacred reality he bore
3. *In line with modern distinction between "rational" religion and specificities of various positive revelations*
4. Deepest strain in modern consciousness = Descartes's privileging of interior and abstract over exterior and specific

B. Emptied Christology of content and robbed its evangelical bite

1. Muted strange countercultural and surprising novelty of what God accomplished in Jesus

C. *Favoring abstract over particular*

1. Hegel, Spinoza, Leibniz
2. Most of all Kant
3. We must examine his Christology in detail
4. *Critique of Pure Reason*
 - a) God's existence must be posited - along with freedom and immortality - as condition for possibility of authentic moral life
5. Categorical imperative
 - a) Demarcation between duty and inclination

- b) Highest happiness involves coincidence of those two
 - 6. *We must postulate existence of being powerful enough to reconcile demand of duty with pull of inclination*
- D. Requires anything outside itself for justification
 - 1. (although it does not)
 - 2. Moral life “leads to religion, through which to idea of Lawgiver outside mankind”
 - 3. *Religious belief is the generalized phenomenon proceeding from the demand of the categorical imperative found at the ground of every human will*
 - 4. ***Philosophy appreciates this universal and rational dimension of religion***
 - 5. Religion is about **morality**
 - a) *Disciplined response to demand of categorical imperative*
- E. Moral imperative countered by anomalous attraction toward evil
 - 1. “Rational origin of this perversion of our will remains inscrutable to us”
 - 2. *Drama of the moral life is struggle between duty and inclination, between rational and irrational conditioning of desire (25)*
- F. Narratives of Bible ~ pictorial representation of this inner tension (so Kant)
 - 1. Jewish religious establishment was upright
 - 2. But fostered fussy ceremonial practices and wallowed in wealth and power
 - 3. Undermined itself
- G. Biblical story takes decisive turn *just as Jews felt weight of their corrupt religious system*
 - 1. A person whose wisdom was so pure and pristine it could be described as descending from heaven
 - 2. Turned down overture from the devil
 - 3. This good man never swayed from his mission
 - 4. Rendered impotent the evil principle
 - 5. “Another dominion is now offered as an asylum” (26)

6. Evil persists but no longer holds sway
- H. Story's greatest power = corresponds to ideal Kant maintains is present at the ground of the will
1. Jesus as imaginative representation of the categorical imperative
 2. This image is "exterior" and given to consciousness
 3. *Efficient and final cause of ethical attainment*
- I. What are its contours?**
1. Who is perfectly pleasing to God?
 2. Archetype who need not be any real historical figure
 3. *What do we make of the remarkable correspondence between this supposedly a priori archetype and the life of Jesus in the narratives?*
 4. ***Powerful and accurate exemplification of the moral ideal***
 5. ***Spur to moral excellence***
- J. This radical Kantian disjunction between historical Jesus and archetype of the person pleasing to God
1. Result of modern tendency to separate inner and outer
 2. **Flows from problem Gotthold Lessing raised**
 3. "On the Proof of the Spirit and Power" (1777)
 - a) Distinction between accidental truths of history and necessary truths of reason
 - b) ***Conditional historical knowledge can never ground unconditional certitude***
 - c) Problem when applied to historical religion of Christianity
 - (1) Demands certitude
 - (2) Grounded in first century figure mediated to us by witnesses
 - d) ***Lesson could not get from shaky evidence of history to firm conviction of faith***
- K. Kant felt the problem in his bones
1. *Hence dealing with Lessing's "gulf" became defining moves of much modern Christology*
 2. Kant solved the Lesson problem by reversing the movement

- a) Not particular to universal
- b) Allowed truth of archetype to condition telling of the story (28)

L. Friedrich Schleiermacher published *On Religion: Speeches to Its Cultural Despisers* (1799)

1. Root religious truth in universal experience of “sensing and tasting the infinite”
2. *Glaubenslehre*
 - a) Feeling of absolute dependency
 - b) Intuition as ground of dogma and practice
 - c) Spiritual person feels dependency of his being on power of Being who is God

M. Whence this intuition?

1. Feeling of absolute dependence breaks into awareness through the “perfect God-consciousness” of Jesus of Nazareth
2. *Christmas Eve*
 - a) Feeling of joy people experience at Christmas made possible by the breakthrough of divinity in perfect God-consciousness of Jesus

N. Schleiermacher negotiates Lessing’s gulf through *intuition*

1. Feeling of absolute dependency grounded in a real historical person/event
2. Jesus is a concrete historical person
3. *And condition for possibility of present Christian experience*
4. Focus of Schleiermacher’s attention on a general sensibility
5. *We remain in a clearly modern framework*
6. The feeling of dependency can exist apart from Jesus
7. ***Schleiermacher compels us to look away from Jesus in accord with the emphasis on primacy of experience***

O. Something similar in Paul Tillich

1. Adopts Schleiermacher’s feeling of dependency in a Heideggerian mode
2. *Identifies round of religion in sense of being unconditionally concerned*
 - a) *Was uns unbedingt angeht*

3. A concern that preoccupies us in unceasing + absolute manner
 4. *Unbedingte*
 - a) Justice or good or true
 - b) *Sein Selbst* = Being itself
 5. All religious feeling thought + action are rooted in sense of being seized by the revealing power of this reality both radically immanent and radically transcendent
- P. Tillich away how this ultimate concern becomes twisted + misconstrued
1. Tendency to substitute the less than unconditioned for the unconditioned
 - a) To fashion idols
 2. Religious traditions as key culprits in this alienation (very Lutheran)
- Q. *Where does Jesus fit into this schema?***
1. To even ask the question this way shows we are dealing with a modern Christology
 2. Situates Jesus within general frame of reference
 3. Jesus remains utterly “transparent”
 4. Mediator of perfect revelation through the cross
- R. *Does historical Jesus matter for Tillich?*
1. Yes in a fundamentally Schleiermachian way
 2. This Jesus matters “thinly”
 3. Symbol or cipher for general existential condition
- S. This strain of modern Christology also in a Catholic framework
1. **Karl Rahner**
 - a) Kant/Schleiermachian tradition
 - b) Starting point = *Religionsphilosophie*
 - c) *In every concrete act of knowing the human being is oriented to the horizon of all that can be known toward the fullness of being (31)*
 - d) *Das heilige Geheimnis* (the Holy Mystery)
 - (1) Transcendentally religious structure of the human spirit

***e) This standing in the presence of absolute mystery =
subjective existential ground for religion***

T. Opening of *The Foundations of Christian Faith*

1. Detailed development of the anthropology
2. Approach similar to Kant, Schleiermacher, Tillich
3. ***Marks Rahner as a modern***
4. Jesus = fullest exemplification + realization of transcendental anthropology
5. Human who responded most to God's offer of grace
6. *Systematic Theology*
 - a) Well developed doctrine of God
 - b) Sketchy doctrine of Jesus

U. *How do we assess this modern christological style that places emphasis on Jesus as symbol or cipher?*

1. Grows out of classical concern to show continuities between Logos and religiosity as natural dimension of human spirit
 - a) Justin Martyr, Origen, Tertullian
 - b) *Anima naturaliter Christiana*

V. Problem => the hermeneutical assumptions governing this juxtaposition

1. Modern thinkers
 - a) Interpretive primacy to generic over specific
 - b) Jesus is positioned by something beyond him
2. ***Does this mode of interpretation account for sense of novelty and evangelical excitement found throughout the New Testament and that animated first proclaimers even at risk of their lives?***
3. If Jesus = symbol or cipher
 - a) Why would his life + death matter
 - b) Why would people witness to him
 - c) Why would we have to dwell on his story in all its peculiarity once we established absolute dependency or ultimate concern?
 - d) Why not kick the ladder away
 - e) Why not Jesus = a bearer of divinity among many

- W. This strain of modern Christology tends to overlook the summons to action
1. Gospels organize around two poles
 - a) Call to conversion
 - b) Call to mission
 2. Christianity not essentially contemplative form of life
 3. **It is rather a mission and a way**
 4. *Grammar of Ascent* by John Henry Newman
 - a) When one wants to move others to action
 - b) One appeals not to notional but the real
 - c) Particulars impel a person to act
- X. Jesus through interpretive lens of abstract religion -> conversion and mission are compromised
- Y. Balthasar compared Jesus to a mountain flood that overwhelms the turbines pathetically poised to master it
1. This *capax Dei* is overwhelmed by novelty + fullness of Jesus
 2. ***Christian theology becomes compelling precisely where Rahner's theological anthropology ends (33)***
 3. Jesus shows in a surprising way the true nature of that (absolute) mystery
 4. Hence Balthasar focused his attention on the concrete form that is Jesus (*Schau der Gestalt*)
- Z. Elemental difficulty = compromises proclaiming Jesus's divinity
1. (Rw - well yeah)
 2. Jesus cannot be construed as "God-bearing man" (Council of Ephesus 431)
 - a) Refutation of Nestorianism
 - b) This reading failed to honor the radicality of the New Testament witness that in dealing with Jesus one is dealing with God
 - c) Hence opted for an ontological presentation
 3. Christologies of Kant, Schleiermacher, Tillich, Rahner susceptible to charge of neo-Nestorianism
 4. Can they distinguish between Jesus and great saints
- AA. Balthasar's critique of Rahner

1. Rahner *cannot distinguish between radical openness to God found in his Jesus and that found in Mary*
2. Council of Ephesus
 - a) Mary = *Theotokos*
 - b) But not Jesus
 - c) Jesus not simply greater than Mary

II. Jesus of history

- A. Examination of Jesus through use of historical-critical methods
 1. Historical style derived from Descartes's interest in clear + distinct starting points and accompanying distrust of distorting traditions (35)
 2. Jesus of history (recouped through scientific examination) became the ground and measure of what is adequate in the christological tradition
 3. Descartes not principal source for this method
 4. Also Luther (!)
 5. Until 1950s almost all practitioners of historical-critical method were Protestants
- B. Hans Küng and Edward Schillebeeckx
 1. Mid 1970s
 2. Made historically recovered Jesus basic to their christological projects
 3. Hans Küng under influence of Karl Barth
 - a) Joined circle of Hans Urs von Balthasar
 - b) *On Being a Christian*
 - (1) Uncompromising Christocentrism of Barth
 - (2) Christianity is not an ideology philosophy point of view or set of convictions
 - (3) Rather a movement centering on "*dangerous memory*" of particular figure Jesus of Nazareth (36)
 - c) *Which Christ? Which Jesus?*
 - d) Cannot be Christ of dogma
 - (1) Language of doctrinal formulations of first councils

- e) Not Christ of “enthusiasts”
- f) Not of novelists and poets
- g) *There is no guarantee he will reveal the authentic Jesus even if he paints a deeply moving and theologically rich portrait*

C. It must be the “real” Christ which turns out to be Jesus described by practitioners of various types of modern biblical analysis (historical-critical method)

1. Source criticism
2. Literary criticism
3. Form and redaction criticism
4. Straightforward “historical” criticism
5. These methods provide theology with instrument to ask question about true real historical Christ in a way not possible before
6. *Modern people have a tool enabling them to dig through rubble of tradition and New Testament to find starting point for authentic Christology*

D. Schillebeeckx did earliest theological work in more classically Catholic vein

1. Starting 1960s began listening to criticisms of standard dogmatics coming from camp of biblical exegetes
2. Charge = much systematic theology done in dialogue with philosophy often with no connection to Scriptures
3. Puzzling in light of strides made in biblical analysis through modern critical methods
4. *Jesus: An Experiment in Christology*
5. *Christ: The Experience of Jesus as Lord*
 - a) Responded *with a vengeance*
6. Developed a Christology relying on contemporary biblical exegetes

E. *Jesus: An Experiment in Christology*

1. Makes case for use of historical-critical exegesis
2. Plurality of images symbols + theologies in New Testament to describe Jesus

3. A central idea that serves as “constant unitive factor”?
 - a) Not Gospels
 - b) Not canon within canon
 - (1) Hopelessly subjective
 - (2) Luther versus Augustine
 - c) Not most primitive picture of Jesus
 - (1) Pluralism in earliest stages
 - d) Not self-consciousness of the Lord
 - (1) Contra Gospels as psychological biographies
 - e) Questions centrality of doctrinal claims and *kerygma*
4. ***What remains is not so much “historical Jesus” as the Christian movement***
 - a) *A form of life finding unity in act of pointing to and speaking of one Jesus of Nazareth*
 - b) *Jesus as experienced and witnessed to by first Christian communities*
5. Embraces historical-critical method
 - a) Rejects coherence, discontinuity, rejection of Jesus’ message (???) (38)

F. What picture of Jesus emerges?

1. Küng
 - a) Jesus = preacher of inbreaking kingdom of God
 - b) God’s cause = humanity’s
 - c) God fosters human flourishing
 - d) Jesus’ ministry challenges to religious and cultural status quo
 - e) Surrender totally to will + purposes of God
 - f) Embody that in acts of love and forgiveness
 - g) Radicality of Jesus led to his rejection
 - h) Resurrection more than subjective experience or literary expression
 - (1) God’s affirmation of life + teaching of Jesus
 - (2) Its power explains emergence of Christian church
 - i) Birth and infancy narratives?
 - (1) Almost totally legendary

- j) Jesus' death as sacrificial?
 - (1) Not central and out of step with contemporary notions
- k) Identity of Jesus?
 - (1) Modern interpretation of "truly God and truly man"
 - (2) Meaning of his divinity
 - (a) Note relational rather than ontological language
 - (b) Jesus as deputy or representative
 - (c) Jesus as God's human delegate *seems* close to Council of Ephesus (39)
- l) Classical dogmatic language of person + nature was unintelligible to modern people***

2. Schillebeeckx?

- a) Stresses Jesus' proclamation of reign of God
 - (1) Kingdom as God's advocacy of *humanum*
 - (2) God's order especially embodied in love and inclusion
 - (a) Open + gracious table fellowship
- b) Acts communicate truths about "Jesus' freedom to do good" and nature of the Kingdom
- c) Downplays their objectivity + historicity more than Küng
- d) Jesus hunted down and put to death by tenders of status quo
- e) *Something remarkable happened*
 - (1) Announced the crucified one was alive
 - (2) *Event of conversion experienced by disciples*
 - (3) "Appearances" cannot be source of resurrection faith
 - (a) Initiative came from disciples
 - (b) Disciples recognized + acknowledged the risen Lord
 - (c) Felt commissioned and sent to proclaim

(4) (reconstruction of what happened behind the resurrection + appearance stories) (40)

f) His reading of encounter between Mary Magdalene + risen Christ

(1) She had a role in regathering disciples + propagating resurrection faith as basic as Peter's (41)

g) *Endeavors to answer the christological question concerning identity of Jesus*

(1) Reinterprets dogmatic language of conciliar tradition

(a) The *Abba* experience of Jesus

(b) Everything flowed from sense he was son of *Abba* God

(c) Ministry = drawing others into power of that relationship

h) *What was this rapport Jesus had with heavenly Father?*

(1) *Particularly intense and clearly felt intuition of creatureliness*

(2) One's existence is rooted in and comes from the "other" who is God

(3) We don't belong to ourselves

(4) Every human person is *enhypostatic*

(a) Embedded in personhood of God

(b) Every creature = "hypostatic union"

(5) Jesus' *Abba* experience is intense + deep mode of general creaturely and human sense of rootedness in being of God

(6) Uniqueness of Jesus = unsurpassable intensity of his God-consciousness

(7) Differentiation between Jesus + other humans is *quantitative and not qualitative*

(8) Clear portion for relational language not ontological

G. How do we assess these Christologies that take as point of departure Jesus as recovered through historical-critical analysis?

1. Like “Jesus as symbol” approach
 - a) “Historical Jesus” Christology rooted in elements and intuitions of classical tradition
 2. (Barron affirms Küng and Schillebeeckx on maintaining clear connection to particular first-century Jew - Jesus of Nazareth)
 - a) High dogmatic claims of Christology should be informed by biblical sensibility
 - b) Historical critics compelled Christology to abandon speculation and remain truer to proper origins and ground
- H. Serious problems with historical-critical method and placing it at heart of christological enterprise
1. *Divino Afflante Spiritu* (1943) Pius XII
 - a) Opened floodgates
 2. Also *Dei Verbum*
 - a) Early writings of Fitzmeyer, Brown, Murphy, Kselman, others
 - b) Historical-critical method not a threat to faith or integrity of Scripture as revealed text
- I. But this enthusiasm allowed for emergence of uncritical spirit regarding the new criticism
1. Historical-critical method deeply Protestant
 - a) Trying to uncover “real” and authentic Jesus beneath theological and ecclesial distortions
 - b) Jesus recovered => canon within the canon by which rest of Scripture + tradition could be judged
 - c) ***This sort of one-sided privileging of the origins and beginnings and is out of step with a Catholic sense of organic development***
 - d) Fully grown plant reveals nature of organism more than its seed (John Henry Newman) (430)
 - e) ***The literarily spiritually and theologically involved portraits of Jesus is more instructive than its historical core***

f) **Catholic instinct = not so much assess development by the origin as to appreciate the development as the full flowering of the origin**

J. John Meier

1. Faithful + careful practitioner of historical-critical method
2. Famous thought experiment
3. A Jew a Catholic a Protestant and an agnostic
 - a) His books meant to reflect that hypothetical consensus
4. Problems
 - a) Assumes later developments convictions and elaborations distort foundational historical truth
 - (1) That all players must set those aside
 - (2) *Perhaps those elements are indispensable illuminations of the Jesus of history who really existed*
 - b) Such a picture of Jesus will lack what makes Jesus so compelling to Catholics and Protestants and problematic to Jews and agnostics
 - (1) *This blandly agreeable portrait corresponds precisely to the modern fantasy of a rational and therefore presumably universal and nonviolent religion*
 - (2) Is this Jesus worth honoring or arguing about?
Resembles the feisty prickly figure in the Gospels?

K. When such a Jesus becomes center of christological undertaking and criterion for judging biblical and theological traditions

1. ***We face problem of reductionistic distortion***
2. Instead of vibrant and interdependent *circumincession* of theology image doctrine practice
3. We get a univocal and unidirectional reduction of the many to the one
4. Artificially constructed Jesus of history as norm + measure of everything else

L. Philosophical modernity (along with Protestantism) as principal inspirations for historical-criticism

1. David Dungan
 - a) Roots of critical method stretch back to 17th century
 - b) Baruch Spinoza
 - (1) Find a universal form of religion
 - (2) Two moves
 - (a) Develop a purely rational geometric understanding of God, world, human flourishing (*Ethics*)
 - (b) Debunk traditional readings of Bible
 - (i) Reconstruct along lines of rationalist philosophy (*Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*)
 - (ii) Identify God with nature
 - (iii) *God ~ universe considered as a whole*
 - (iv) Adapted and radicalized Cartesian definition of substance
 - (v) *World is but showing forth of primal substance, collectivity of "modifications" of God's being (44)*
 - (c) Ethical life = loving surrender to unchangeable unavoidable "purposes" of God
 - (i) Blend of ancient Stoicism and modern mechanistic science

M. Does Bible speak these metaphysical and ethical truths?

1. Yes but in problematic and confusing way
2. The philosopher translates language of Scripture into rational discourse (Spinoza calls to mind Averröes)
3. Spinozan method of deconstruction/reconstruction (Dungan)
 - a) Negation of traditional interpretation of major biblical precepts
 - b) Redefinition of these concepts so Bible in accord with worldview of mechanistic science

- c) Prescription of new method of historical biblical interpretation that would block people from traditional concept of God
 - d) Repetition of simple moral principles for people to cling to as “teaching o the Bible”
- 4. First and second hermeneutical prescriptions
 - a) Immantism and antismaturalism
- 5. Third and fourth
 - a) Reader must district from wolly metaphysics implied in the narratives
- 6. Spinoz throws up jumble of questions concerning text of Bible and not its theological meaning
 - a) This is a smokescreen or changing subject (Dungan)
 - b) Reader now focused on “opaque surface of the text”
 - c) One is no longer tempted to seek Bible’s meaning on its own terms
- 7. Fourth
 - a) Undermines metaphysical integrity of biblical witness
 - b) So we focus on simple ethical message
 - (1)Love God and love neighbor
- 8. Note link between Spinoza’s rationalistic ethical interpretation and Kan’ts reducing Jesus to archetype of moral imperative
- N. To what extent historical-critical method marked by antidogmatism, antismaturalism, immanentism, moralism
 - 1. Küng and Schillebeeckx
 - a) Reinterpret claims of church in light of rationalist reconstruction
 - b) Express essence of Christianity in moral terms
 - (1)More postmodern political ethic
 - 2. We see Spinozan assumptions + prejudices in “third quest” for historical Jesus
 - a) Borg, Mach, especially Crossan
 - 3. (Rw - well this goes far in explaining approach advocated by the Radioactive Leopard)

- O. Those who practical historical criticism not all burdened with weight of Spinozan program
1. But we should be wary
 2. Placing this program at heart of theological program is problematic if not disastrous
 3. *If attitude toward the world opened up by scriptural narratives is one of skeptical rationalism then uniqueness and power of biblical worldview are fatally compromised*
 4. ***Some versions of historical criticism can be employed in the theological project provided it is placed in a critical circumincesso with dogmatic and liturgical perceptions***
- P. Third consideration
1. Balthasar complained about aggressive rationalism of historical criticism
 - a) Tendency to dissect biblical forms and analyze them in parts not as wholes
 - b) Assumes stories and so on are no longer living spiritual realities
 - c) Critic assembles data but misses organic life
 2. ***What is proper approach (Balthasar)?***
 - a) **Reads the biblical texts “in the Spirit”**
 - b) *Historical critic distorts what he seeks because text was not composed in accordance with rationalist presuppositions*
 - c) ***The great form (Gestalt) of Jesus at the heart of the New Testament***
 - d) This form is fully accessible only to those approaching it in the Spirit
 - e) Only when one enters a cathedral and sees light streaming through the windows
 3. *The Bible surveyed from inside the life of the church (doctrine, practice, prayer) the Bible takes on depth color and spiritual power*
 4. Not to encourage naiveté or credulousness in interpretation

5. Reader must respect distinctively spiritual and ecclesial nature of the documents

Q. Final concern

1. “Jesus as symbol” approach => attenuated expression of divinity of Christ
2. Jesus at best = paradigmatic human being pointing beyond himself
3. Similar problem with historical Jesus Christology
4. Historically reconstructed Jesus
 - a) *Again we face problem of explaining excitement that percolates throughout the New Testament*
5. Why would the first-century Jews court death that others might know him?
6. Would Paul “count all as loss”
7. Why did first proclaimers show almost no interest in his life and teaching but spoke of his resurrection from the dead?
8. *A reductively historical-critical assessment of Jesus does not make sense of the difference of the one whom New Testament authors call the Christ*

III. Doctrine and narrativity

- A. Both approaches presented look away from the same thing
 1. Kant-Schleiermacher school away from specificity of the narratives
 2. Küng-Schillebeeckx school away from same narratives to find historical core they contain and mask
 3. *Practitioners of the liberal approach look to something bigger than the narratives*
 4. *Of historical-critical approach to something smaller*
 5. ***Both miss the narratives themselves***
 6. Liberals concentrate on “Christ” Jesus bears
 7. Historians set Christ aside to get at Jesus
- B. First Gospel begins *beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ the Son of God*
 1. First telling of *evangelion* = presentation in narrative form of Jesus as the Christ

2. We learn how Jesus and Christ fit together
3. How each is illumined by the other
4. *Jesus and Christ* mutually interpret
5. Separating the two undermines the gospel
6. ***This story is news so we do not look under around or over it to get to the point***
7. The narrative in its peculiarity is the point

C. Wittgenstein student of Bertrand Russell

1. Trying to find a universal logical form
2. Later turned away from this
3. *There is no basic or unifying form but rather each language has its own integrity style set of rules and peculiar genius*
4. **Languages are like games - only way to learn is playing them**

D. Gospels are not primarily religious texts

1. ***More like a language we learn by speaking or a game we must enter***
2. Language not learned through translation
3. Gospels cannot be known through transposition into more familiar “religious” or “historical” frameworks
4. ***They constitute a densely textured world that cannot be facily compared to any other world but must be explored on its own terms (Barthian metaphor) (49)***
5. So we draw others into the biblical frame of reference and thereby instruct them in a new way of thinking moving and deciding (50)

E. *Who are you looking for* in beginning of John’s gospel

1. *Where are you staying (menein)*
 - a) Where someone roots himself and derives spiritual power
2. “Where are you staying” is a question about Jesus himself
 - a) *Come and see*
 - b) Watch him and participate in his world
3. ***So the one who seeks to understand Jesus cannot be content with religious abstraction or historical archaeology***
4. **She must enter into his distinctive way of being**

F. Obvious difficulty = doesn't this lead to *sola scriptura* principle

1. ***How does high and abstract doctrine relate to very particular "world" described so far?***

2. Ideas exist not on printed page but in play of lively minds
(Newman)

3. Same true for narrative worlds

a) Unfold and develop as they are read discussed lived in
and fought over by those who *participate* in them

4. **Process of theological appropriation**

a) Starts with biblical world itself

b) Continues throughout the tradition

c) ***Indeed that process is the tradition itself***

d) **Therefore we couldn't bracket doctrinal development if we wanted to**

e) ***We enter the densely textured world of the Bible with help of interpretive guides***

G. **What precisely doctrines do**

1. We need a guide in an unfamiliar world

2. Journeyer through biblical world requires a mystagogic initiation

3. ***Doctrines perform this function***

a) Heuristic function

(1) What to look for and how to find

(2) Doctrines indicate key elements and features

(3) Doctrine of Chalcedon

b) Resolve puzzlements that threaten to block investigation

(1) When difficulties remain unaddressed they lock up
the mind and block investigation

c) Doctrines serve negative or delimiting purpose

(1) Modes of interpretation counterproductive to
proper understanding

(2) anti-Arian doctrine of Nicaea

(a) How not to read story of Jesus

(3) anti-Nestorian doctrine of Ephesus

(a) Against Jesus as human spiritual hero

- d) Pithy and evocative encapsulation of meaning of story
 - (1) Jesus is Lord
 - (2) *Christos Iesous*
 - (3) ***Ecstatic summaries of core meaning of the career preaching miracles death resurrection of Jesus***
 - (4) The *Eureka* moment
 - (5) More developed forms
 - (6) Became more refined and gave rise to abstract doctrines and sustained analyses
 - (a) *Organic developments of the original kerygmatic exclamations*
 - (b) *Ganze im Fragment* quality of each pericope in the Gospels (Balthasar)
 - (i) ***Each scene interpreted as the totality of the story in miniature (The Glory of the Lord, 1, 512-513)***

4. In all their modalities doctrines circle around and return to the originating narratives (52)

- a) ***As tradition has evolved certain moments of insight and perception occurred that are so powerful they cannot be ignored in subsequent readings***
- b) Narratives and doctrines exist in an inseparable *circuminessio*
 - (1) *Dei Verbum*
 - (2) Scripture and tradition not separate sources of revelation
 - (a) Tradition refers and points to Scripture
 - (b) Unavoidable *Ineinander* of the two

5. *Can we make a methodological decision regarding starting points in theological investigation?* (53)

- a) This is a modern preoccupation
- b) Feature of foundationalism from Descartes and his successors
- c) Counterproductive to look for unambiguous *point de départ* for christological project

d) Like or not we are born in the stream

e) Possible to commence with biblical narratives and with doctrinal guides

6. Will look at narratives of New Testament through lens of central christological doctrines and speculative frameworks

a) Two basic reasons

(1) Classical doctrinal statements concerning Jesus get short shrift

(2) Wish to affirm unapologetically ecclesial nature of this project

(a) Scholars should not attempt to situate themselves outside guiding + defining hermeneutical principles of great Christian tradition

(b) Our hermeneutic of suspicion has been overworked

(c) Time to supplement it with grateful acknowledgement that Holy Spirit had something to do with unfolding of the tradition

H. Four doctrinal guides

1. First

a) “Two-natures” doctrine of Council of Chalcedon = most important dogmatic claim made by the church

(1) Implicitly sets out Christian view of God and Jesus and shows modalities of divine-non-divine relationship

(2) After oscillations between over-emphasis on divinity of Jesus, on humanity, odd compromises between them

(3) Chalcedon settled on paradoxical both/and statement of full divinity and full humanity of Christ

(4) Council fathers preserved strangeness and uniqueness of Christian faith itself (54)

b) In line with letter of Pope Leo the Great

(1) Lines 14-45

(a) Six variations of the word *autos*

(b) We are dealing with one reality = Jesus the Son of God

(c) Even in their unity (two natures)

“unconfused, unchanged, undivided, inseparable”

(2) *What does this coming together of two radically distinct natures into a real ontological unity entail?*

(3) The natures are essentially noncompetitive (55)

(4) Human nature competitive with worldly natures

(5) *There is a mutual exclusivity in regard to finite natures so any one is properly named in contrast to others*

c) If divine and human nature come together

noncompetitively in ontological unity there must be something different about the divine nature

(1) *Divine way of being not a worldly nature*

(2) Must be somehow else

(3) The difference between divinity and creatureliness must be a noncontrastive difference

(4) God is indeed other but is otherly other

(5) God both *totaliter aliter* and *Non-Aliud* (Nicholaus of Cusa)

(6) *If God were a being in or alongside of the world he could become something else only through aggression or compromise*

(7) God becomes creature without ceasing to be God and without overwhelming the creature he becomes

d) *Proximity of God not a threat to a creature but that which allows the creature to be most fully itself*

(1) God and the worldly are therefore capable of an ontological coinherence

(a) Each can let the other be even as they enter into closest contact

(2) *It is the letting be characteristic of nonviolence and love*

(3) Iraenus's *Gloria Dei homo vivens* finds metaphysical ground in two-natures doctrine

e) Chalcedonian fathers affirm duality of natures within fundamental unity of being

(1) Later section gives more precise account

(2) *Two natures in their integrity united in one person (prosopon) or subsistence (hypostasin) as "one and the same only-begotten Son, God, Word, Lord Jesus Christ"*

(a) Greek metaphysics states a nature (abstraction) becomes real in the measure it is borne or instantiated in a principle of subsistence

(b) If nature = rational then "person"

(c) *Here the person instantiates two natures*

(d) Bearer = second person of Trinity

(e) They explicitly state what is implied in two-natures claim

(i) *Coming together of divinity and humanity only possible through power of God*

(ii) No worldly subsistence could bear or tolerate this

f) This union can only be described adequately from the Godward side

(1) This coming together *not possible through human string or creaturely aspiration*

g) Essential asymmetry of divine-nondivine rapport

- (1) Equally maintained in their integrity + independence
 - (a) Greater weight to the divine
- h) Conference on religion and postmodernity
 - (1) Jacques Derrida asked John Milbank to comment on play between immanence and transcendence through the incarnation
 - (a) *It is predicated upon and made possible by transcendence* (57)
 - (b) This is crucial for understanding the Chalcedonian statement
 - (c) **The two natures can be juxtaposed and concurrently instantiated only because of the metaphysical primacy and power of God**
 - (d) The instinct to emphasize the humanity of Jesus is good
 - (e) *But inasmuch as older Christologies reverences the legitimate asymmetry the intuition is problematic and deeply misleading*
 - i) *What is this subtle metaphysical statement telling us about New Testament narratives concerning Jesus of Nazareth?*
 - (1) We will see paradigmatic display of divinity and humanity
 - (2) *A human nature shown in tightest connection with and subordination to a noncompetitive divine nature*
 - (3) This juxtaposition indicates the hyper-generosity and other-orientation of the true God
 - (4) Authentic humanity is disclosed not in autonomy but in a kind of theonomy - surrender to the will and purposes of God

(5) We should look for meeting of two ecstasies divine and human

j) *This properly ecstatic quality comes to fully expression in second of our theological schemas - Thomas Aquinas' account of incarnation at beginning of third part of Summa theologiae*

(1) Amounts to densely textured commentary on laconic Chalcedon formula

(2) *Utrum fuit conveniens Deum incarnari* whether it was fitting for God to become incarnate

(a) Aesthetic question (58)

(b) All these objections reflect creaturely distaste for invasive and overbearing presence of God in the world

(c) Would it be better for Creator and created to stay in their proper places?

k) Thomas' *Respondeo*

(1) Departs from reliance on divine name of Being

(2) Considers God under the "good"

(3) A quality is fitting if suited to its nature

(4) Very nature of God is goodness *bonitas*

(5) Turns to *Divine Names* of Dionysus the Areopagite

(a) The good is *diffisivum suum*

(b) Tends by nature to communicate itself to others

(c) It pertains to the nature of the supreme good to communicate itself in the supreme mode to a creature. And this is accomplished to the highest degree through the joining of a created nature to itself so that from three - the Word, a soul, and flesh - one person is made. ... Hence it is evident that it was fitting that God become incarnate

(d) The whole radicality of the Christian faith is contained in these words

(e) His nature is fully revealed in the act by which he raises a creaturely nature to participate in the divine life

l) Aesthetics of incarnation further explored in second article of question 1

(1) Whether it was necessary for the reparation of the human race

(2) Wrestles with theological heritage of Anselm

(a) Incarnation as strict logical necessity from facts of sin and justice of God

(3) Thomas opts for nuanced reading for divine condescension

(a) Distinguishes between absolute necessity and necessity of “convenience”

(i) Food versus horse

(b) God’s incarnation was not necessary in first sense

(c) But second more flexible sense

(i) Incarnation was necessary for redemption

(ii) No more fitting, “convenient”, perfect, aesthetically satisfying way for God to save the world

m) Thomas demonstrates human ecstasy awakened by God’s ecstatic gift of self

(1) Evokes a responsive and surprising self-transcendence in humans who see it and take it in

(a) Faith (ecstasy of the mind) stirred because in Christ God himself speaks through human mind and voice

(b) Hope (of the spirit) because we appreciate through the incarnation how God has identified himself with us

(c) Love (of the will) is “maximally excited” by act of total and unexpectedly generous love on God’s part

(2) *Through the incarnation our capacity to participate in the divine life is made fully possible*

(3) Aquinas quoting Augustine says, God became human that humans might become God *factus est Deus homo, ut homo fieret Deus*

(4) Incarnation necessary for human salvation in sense through it alone human beings were given capacity to enter by their own responsive ecstasy the ecstasy that God is

(5) God’s gift of self awakens a human gift of self

(6) Two together constitute coinherence of divinity and humanity

(7) This is why incarnation is so *conveniens*

n) Using this Thomistic lens to read Gospel narratives ***what comes into focus?***

(1) We see goodness of God on display

(a) Se communicare aliis

(2) God giving himself away

(3) Concomitant human response of self-gift and self-transcendence in Jesus and in those he confronts

(4) We see manifestation of ecstatic divine and human coinherence, the human-being of God that conduces toward coming to-be-divine of humans

o) **Third theological framework by phenomenologist Jean-Luc Marion**

(1) Especially *God without Being*

(2) Contrast between idol and icon

- (a) On which depends his understanding of Jesus as “icon of the invisible God”
- (3) What is the difference?
- (4) Not a question of what they are
- (5) “The icon and the idol determine two manners of being for beings, not two classes of beings” (p 8)
- p) Idol = something visible
 - (1) Idol takes in gaze of observer such that it is effectively exhausted in act of being seen
 - (2) *The decision of the viewer to fix his gaze upon it and find a sort of final visual satisfaction from it***
 - (a) The idol stops the gaze (61)
 - (3) Idol functions more as mirror than portrait**
 - (4) So biblical prophets criticized as idolatrous a conception of God that amounts to a projection of one’s idealized self-understanding (Ludwig Feuerbach)
- q) ***So what of the icon?***
 - (1) Icon by its very visibility lures regard of the looker into and through itself to the finally invisible which suffuses and transcends it
 - (2) The transcendent retains its invisibility
 - (3) Look of the looker is uneasy and restless in the presence of the icon
 - (a) Rests in the presence of the idol
 - (4) The gaze of the icon determines the viewer
 - (5) Looker is drawn into the world of the figure depicted
 - (a) Invisible person changes the looker (!)
 - (6) Marion influenced by Emanuel Levinas
 - (a) Visage of the suffering other is an icon of properly infinite and invisible demand of moral life
- r) This way of speaking seems problematic for someone like Marion

- (1) How can a phenomenologist not fall into idolatry when attempting to speak of the divine?
- (2) Response = Edmund Husserl's account of intending an absence
 - (a) *That an absence can "appear" as the focus of one's conscious attention*
 - (b) Important discovery of phenomenology
- (3) But Marion speaks of "saturated phenomenon"
 - (62)
 - (a) Appearance so filled with givenness and meaning it overwhelmed the one who would attempt to take it in
 - (b) The icon is super-saturated with the invisibility of God
- s) Transfiguration of Jesus displays dynamics of super-saturated phenomenon
 - (1) Brightness as surplus of invisibility
 - (2) In the presence of the icon one feels in the presence of that which is extraordinarily good
 - (3) Marion sees the good as that which gives itself (in line with Dionysian perspective in Aquinas)
 - (4) Peter properly remarks at goodness of what is happening to him
- t) Odd comments about booths
 - (1) Peter is babbling
 - (2) "Terror" (Mark) = incapacity to control or take in what is happening
- u) Final detail concerning cloud and voice
 - (1) Cloud => overshadowing perceptive powers associated with hyperluminosity of transfiguration
 - (2) Voice evokes divine nonvisibility
 - (3) Transfigured Christ so filled with givenness of divine presence can only be heard and not seen
 - (4) "Listen to him"

(a) Icon never controlled or measured by gaze of the looker

(b) They are not seeing + measuring God so much as being seen and measured by God
(63)

v) Opening verses of 1 John

(1) Content of this vision is “the word of life” (1:1)

(2) Properly iconic seeing ends in a nonseeing and in hearing a word of command

(3) Then eloquent reversal = “God is light” (1:5)

(4) Luminosity + visibility that flood receptive powers and make ordinary seeing impossible

(5) Can be received only as word

(6) Same rhythm in opening of Johannine Gospel

(7) Word becomes flesh

(a) Juxtaposition constituting the light that illumines the world

w) *What if we look at narratives concerning Jesus through lens of Marion’s phenomenology?*

(1) Christ as icon and super-saturated phenomenon par excellence

(2) Our seeing will not stop at his visibility or be absorbed

(a) Otherwise Jesus would be an idol

(3) *Our gaze will be drawn into the humanity of the Lord toward the divinity that hyper-radiates through it*

(4) Nothing to do with docetism

(5) Rather an **incarnational perspective**

(6) *Glory of God shines in face of Jesus Christ* (2 Corinthians 4:6)

(7) **Marion’s hermeneutic encourages us to see to clearly and critically what appears on the surface of the Gospel narratives but will compel us to attend to the ever-greater and ever more**

compelling invisibility that saturates this surface

- (a) Force a reorientation of our subjectivity
- (b) As we read + look we are read and looked through by the one appearing in them
- (c) *Will help us see the goodness of God in these accounts***
- (d) Any phenomenon is an instance of "givenness"*
- (e) What appears is the gift of an other that offers itself to subjectivity
- (f) In the narratives concerning Jesus we should look ever more deeply and fully for the evidence of the one who gives**

x) One last interpretive framework

- (1) From Christology of contemporary Protestant thinker James William McClendon
- (2) (Rw - we used his texts in Introduction to Christian Theology)
- (3) Discusses inadequacy of two-natures doctrine of Chalcedon
- (4) Did not sufficiently emphasize real humanity of the Lord
- (5) Led to skewing account of his divinity
- (6) Formally affirmed Jesus' humanity but abstracted his humanity from the narratives
- (7) Allowed it to be absorbed by a conventional sense of divinity

y) McClendon is on to something important

- (1) Danger of hyperabstraction regarding the natures
- (2) *Nature* = abstract term
- (3) Very nonspecificity of ab abstraction allows one to use with with logical fluency

- (4) *Same quality renders an abstraction incapable of representing the peculiar and atypical features of a given individual* (Newman)
- (5) The “nature” of Jesus cannot be caught by universal philosophical category
- (6) Must be displayed ***in dense texture of narratives that describe him in action***
- (7) Whatever the church means by ascribing divinity to Christ becomes intelligible only in specificity of the stories (65)
- z) McClendon might offer similar critique of Marion’s phenomenology of the icon
 - (1) No static form can represent complex and multidimensional quality of a life story
 - (2) *If we want to get at what New Testament is telling us about divinity of divinity and humanity of Jesus we must ground the nature and set the icon in motion***
- aa) McClendon proposes “two-narratives” Christology to supplement the two-natures doctrine
 - (1) Throughout sweep of biblical narrative we are dealing with intertwining of two stories
 - (a) Of God and of his people Israel
 - (b) These interconnected tales are unambiguously two
 - (c) Result also of “fragmentation that was a part of the creature’s story”
 - (d) Narratives of God and of Israel never run smoothly together
 - (e) God’s story is “in” theirs but we cannot say this in an unqualified way
- 2. Story of faithful Israelite Jesus from Nazareth
 - a) Narrative concerning this Jew and story of God became one
 - b) God is “in” this story without qualification

- (1) In light of the resurrection
- c) Twoness of story converges completely
 - d) A human story god acknowledges as his own
 - e) *in Jesus the stories of Israel and Israel's God coincide to point of identification*
 - f) Can be separated but not divided
 - g) **One story to be told, the good news of Jesus Christ the son of God**
3. This manner of speaking -> displays range and meaning of life more adequately
- a) Language carries overtones of adoptionism
 - b) McClendon's position more orthodox if we radicalize *acknowledge*
 - c) McClendon's theology grounds the two narratives in one divine story-teller
 - d) Who precisely is the "I"
 - e) *A personhood exists in the measure that a narrative coherency emerges from a welter of otherwise random events and happenings*
4. In case of Jesus two stories but one storyteller God
- a) Acknowledges both stories as his own
 - b) Tells himself in both
 - c) God's claiming as his own a *human narrative as instrument of telling his own story*
 - d) Fully + richly human story of Jesus is enhypostatically grounded in the intentionality of the divine storyteller
 - e) We could claim two-narratives Christology as more dynamic and faithful rendering of Chalcedonian doctrine
5. If we examine narratives concerning Jesus through McClendon's proposal *what will we see?*
- a) A fully human story in all its peculiarity
 - b) Neither superman nor demigod
 - c) Human life concretely lived
 - d) Yet human life will be grammar syntax vocabulary God uses to tell his own story

e) We will see in the narrative of Jesus' life the perfect and undistorted icon of God displays in motion and across time (67)

6. *The human story of Jesus should be interpreted as unsurpassably clear iconic representation of the noncompetitive and infinitely generous love of God for the human race and for the world*

a) We see the invisibility of the One Who Gives

b) Coinherence of divinity and humanity

(1) God living a human life and a human being living the divine life in such a way neither is compromised

Part two = The narratives

I. Can only sketch this narrative and iconic Christology

1. *I shall endeavor to identify three titles/themes that emerge in the Jesus stories*

a) *Gatherer, Warrior, King*

2. Then consider representative narratives under each of those headings

a) Similar to *The Strangest Way: Walking the Christian Path*

b) Three major paths of Christian spiritual life

(1) Find the center

(2) Know you are a sinner

(3) Your life is not about you

c) Corresponds to

(1) Gatherer

(2) Warrior

(3) King

J. Will not follow liberal paths

1. Not seek out undergirding religious sensibility awakened by stories of New Testament

2. Nor dig out "real" Jesus

3. ***Study and analyze the narratives on their own terms***

a) *Church Dogmatics* by Barth

IV. The Gatherer

- A. English *sin* < German *Sünde*
1. Sundering or dividing
 2. Greek *diabolos* = scatterer
 3. Genesis
 - a) Original sin as sundering human relationship to God
 - b) Radical division and scapegoating among creatures
 - c) Signs of the scattering power of sin let loose
- B. Twelve tribes of Israel periodically separated divided carried into exile because of their infidelity to the covenant
1. Hope for united Israel expressed in Prophets and Psalms
 2. Mystique of King David
 - a) United disparate people of Israel
 - b) Governed from central capital Jerusalem
 3. Solomon
 - a) Built temple
 - b) Reputation drew potentates from around the world
- C. When Jewish prophet of 1st century announced reign of God at hand he was taken to mean something specific (N T Wright) (72)
1. Scattering of tribes was over
 2. Yhwh coming to reign in Jerusalem
 3. Inaugurating illumination and salvation of world
 4. ***The dream of Israel was coming true***
 5. *The kingdom of God has come near* (Mark 1:15)
 - a) Gathering
 - b) Forgiveness of sins
 6. Tantamount to announcing the Gatherer of Israel had arrived and commenced his work
 7. **Jesus embodied and acted this out - taking the role of Gatherer**
 8. Jesus as *autobasilea* (Origen)
- D. **The wedding at Cana**
1. Wedding feast at Cana
 - a) Wedding motif symbolized marriage of God + his people
 - b) Good cheer when human beings come together in love
 - c) *Apt expression of overcoming sundering of sin*

- d) First sign
 - (1) Jesus ~ marriage of divinity + humanity
- 2. Begins with elegant Johannine code *on the third day there was a wedding* John 2:1
 - a) *Te hemera te trie* = day of Jesus' resurrection
 - b) Galilee = country of resurrection where Jesus would meet his friends
 - c) ***Story must be read through lens of resurrection - act by which God gathered humanity to himself and inaugurated process of universal gathering***
- 3. Disciples invited along with Lord and his mother
 - a) *Mathetai* + mother are **key**
 - b) Jesus inaugurated calling of his people
 - c) Their presence = novelty + future purpose of his ministry
 - d) Mary = rich + multivalent symbolic figure
 - (1) Luke -> spokesperson for ancient Israel
 - (a) Sarah + mother of Samson
 - (2) Matthew -> recapitulates Egypt + journey
 - e) John -> **mother**
 - (1) Mother of all who would come to new life in Jesus
 - (2) Again Israel
 - (3) Mary awakened messianic consciousness of Jesus through recounting story of Israel to him (Balthasar)
 - (4) **Cana** -> speaks pain + hope of chosen people scattered and longing for return
- 4. *Wine gave out* John 2:3
 - a) Not minor
 - b) Spirit of conviviality would dissipate
 - c) Embarrassment
- 5. Symbolic reading
 - a) Wine evokes Spirit of God the divine life
 - b) When we are linked -> joy and deep sense of communal celebration
 - c) Condition for possibility of gathering

- d) Sin = sundered from that source -> depression of spirit
 - e) Mary = ancient Israel speaking to God
 - (1) *How long O Lord?*
6. Most puzzling part of the story - Jesus distancing himself?
- a) *Woman* ~ Eve = woman par excellence
 - (1) Mary as new Eve
 - (2) New representative of human race
 - b) If she is Woman with whom God seeks union why off-putting words?
 - c) Highlights importance of Jesus' hour
 - d) Relation between act at Cana + what will transpire in that hour
 - e) *Hour* = code for Paschal Mystery
 - (1) God effects perfect marriage between himself + human race
7. *Do whatever he tells you* John 2:5
- a) Israel speaking
 - b) Proper attitude in presence of saving God = obedience and acquiescence + imitating responding doing
8. *Now standing there six stone water jars* John 2:6
- a) Jars ~ priest + Levite in parable of Samaritan
 - b) In relation to God human religiosity is passive receptacle
9. Jesus does **two things - visible and invisible**
- a) Divine giver responds to request of Israel
 - b) Opportunity for them to contribute
 - c) Symbolic of all human agency can bring to human flourishing
 - d) Provisional + inadequate
 - e) They are out of wine not water
10. *Draw some out and take it* John 2:8
- a) Superabundance of wine
 - b) Jesus received what they gave + elevated it to new pitch of intensity
 - c) Accelerates + concentrates a natural process (Augustine)
 - d) Divine contribution = “perfecting” of water

- e) Congruent with Christology of Chalcedon
 - (1) Noncompetitive coming together of divine and human natures
- f) Elevation + expansion of human culture under influence of divine life
- g) *Iconic representation of divine-human coinherence***
- 11. Purpose = increase + prolong wedding celebration
 - a) Wine = divine Spirit which alone grounds human coinherence
 - b) Human solidarity based upon something other than God's love will inevitably shake apart and dissolve**
(76)
 - c) Aristotle on friendship
 - (1) Friends given themselves to good transcending them individually
 - (2) *Without a transcendent ground or point of reference the other orientation of the partners would quickly devolve into self-preoccupation***
 - (3) (Rw - contra Marxian faith)

E. Parable of the prodigal son

- 1. Father + two sons
 - a) Icon of the Father told by one who himself is Icon of the Father
 - b) Jesus indirectly crafts a subtle self-portrait
 - c) Gathering mirrors that of heavenly Father
 - d) Brings to himself Israel that had wandered into exile
- 2. *Give me the share of the property* Luke 15:11
 - a) Stinging remark
 - b) Clear break in communion and coinherence between father and son
 - c) A gift cannot be demanded
 - d) Younger son precludes gifted relationship between himself + father
 - e) Cuts off flow of grace (77)
- 3. *Asking for property*

- a) Confirms gracelessness of the exchange
 - b) Property is what is “proper” to a person
 - c) Greek term *ousia* (Jean-Luc Marion)
 - (1) Only time this term is used
 - (2) Overtone of philosophical usage (Aristotle)
 - (3) Ordinary meaning = money property, disposable, ready to use
 - (4) Link to metaphysical “substance”
 - (a) What a thing possesses as its own
 - (5) Son asking emphatically for something to have + hold as his own
 - (6) Expects the gift apart from giving
4. Portrait of God in relation to sin
- a) Adam + Eve wanting to eat of the tree of knowledge
 - b) Wanted to take life that can only be received as gift
 - c) Original sin = rupture of this friendship through desire to possess *ousia*
 - d) **True God can be “had” only when one disposes oneself to receive the divine life as a grace and to give that life away as a gift**
 - e) *Grace is “possessed” only in measure it is received + offered and never held on to (78)*
5. **Implication = God himself is not an *ousia*** not a substance
- a) Not supreme being in possession of an infinite range of perfections
 - b) God is a supreme letting-be a being-for-another
 - c) Perfections fluid and generously given
 - d) ***In the measure that a human endeavors to be a supreme being she falls out of right relation with this God***
6. What happens to “substance” so possessed
- a) *Gathered all he had and traveled* Luke 15:13
 - b) Thoroughness of relational rupture
 - c) Young an sets out to *choran makran* great open space

(1) *Chora* = space between forms and physical objects
(Plato)

d) Ontological emptiness

e) *There he squandered* 15:13

7. What happens when a gift becomes a possession

a) ***As long as one is receiving being as a grace and resolve to pass it on as a grace or paradoxically kept it***

b) If one attempts to seize what is received it withers + dissipates

c) *A severe famine* 15:14

d) Natural condition of *chora makra*

e) Starvation of the soul

8. *Went and hired himself* 15:15

a) Spiritual dynamics of the *far country*

b) Only relationship = hiring and paying of salaries

c) Paying and possessing *ousia*

d) Feeding pigs = dehumanization

e) *But no one gave him anything* 15:16

f) Mark of the far country - where there is no giving

9. Evocative of human race who lost contact with flow of divine life

a) In the land of hiring taking paying and possessing they starve spiritually

b) *Divine life flows because it is a process of giving and receiving - sin is substantive and fixed "hard" currency*

c) Only solution = return to graced mode of being

10. This is what prodigal realizes 15:17

a) Even those hired by his father have more than enough

b) *Even the least in the country of grace have more than enough*

11. *Filled with compassion he kissed him* 15:20

a) *Esplagnisthe* guts are moved

b) Applied elsewhere to feelings of Jesus

c) Matthew 9:36

12. *Father I have sinned* 15:21

- a) Embrace of the father = powerful biblical symbol of the Gathering
 - b) Painting by Rembrandt
 - (1) Penitent son embraced by his father and participates in a light that does not come from without as radiates from within the father
13. The saint is someone who knows he is a sinner (Chesterton)
- a) Isaiah
 - b) Jeremiah
 - c) Peter
 - d) When reconnected to graciousness of God he knows his sorry spiritual state
 - e) In the embrace of the father he truly senses his perverted relationship
14. Worthiness to be called son nothing to do with moral achievement or lack thereof
- a) *Quickly bring out a robe 15:22-23*
 - b) ***Our participation in the flow of the divine life is a gift not so much because God arbitrarily chooses but because it is itself nothing but giving and receiving of gifts***
 - c) Cannot be earned or merited
 - d) **Only accepted**
 - e) We can only be embraced by it
15. *For this son of mine was dead and alive again 15:24*
- a) Theologically accurate
 - b) Prodigal son as one of the living dead
 - c) *Authentic spiritual life is had when one enters into the flow of grace when one can accept robe ring and calf*
16. Turns to elder brother
- a) Practically identical to prodigal son as spiritual level
 - b) Focus on the father's strategy
 - c) "In the field" ~ *chora makra*
 - d) Father comes out to the second exile
17. *Yet you have never given me 15:29*

- a) Has allowed relationship with father to harden into possessiveness
 - b) Harshly economic vocabulary
 - c) Claims father's love as a possession
 - d) Young brother demands
 - e) Older brother "slaves"
18. Divine love cannot be received in this manner
- a) ***The economic exchange model cannot work***
 - b) (Rw - reminiscent of regular theme in B Keith Putt's preaching)
 - c) Rebellion and resentful obedience are equally hopeless
 - d) Both try to transform grace into *ousia*
19. *Son all that is mine is yours* 15:31
- a) Son is with him such that life of the father flows to the son
 - b) **Creator God relates to creation in such an ontologically intimate fashion**
 - c) Giving being to what exists in realm of finitude
 - d) ***The Redeemer God wants to give his own inner life away to the human race***
 - e) Sinner persists in misperceiving along competitive lines and fails to return the gift
20. Prophetic motif of return of exile applies to those in a kind of internal exile (N T Wright) (82)
- a) Older son retreats into an interior *chora makra*
 - b) Older brother outside circle of light (Rembrandt)
 - c) Darkness of spiritual exile
21. Father reaches out to both and brings them into the celebration
- a) Parable = icon of Icon of God
 - b) Jesus = living icon of the Father
 - c) Gather alienated creation back to himself
22. Chalcedonian hermeneutic helps us appreciate spiritual dynamics of the parable
- a) Fundamental problem = relationship to father is competitive and promethean

- (1) They must wrest “their own” from him
- (2) So when one stands in relation to a god who is other and not **otherly other**

b) Spiritual strategy of the father

(1) Convince sons they are not in competition with him

(2) Their being + life will increase as they accept the gift of his life

(3) That is the “spirituality” of the two-natures doctrine

(4) What obtains between creaturely and Creator is polar opposite of zero-sum game

F. Woman at the well

1. Splendid Johannine icon (83)
 - a) Literary and theological masterpiece
 - b) Presentation of process by which Jesus gathers to himself a bride
2. Samaria ~ in-between country
 - a) Jesus draws the marginal to the center
3. Jacob’s well
 - a) Numerous encounters at wells
 - b) Genesis 24:43-44
 - c) Exodus 2:15-21
 - d) Jacob
 - e) *An engagement and wedding are in the offing*
4. *Tired by his journey* John 4:6
 - a) Fatigue as function of total identification with condition of sin (Augustine)
 - b) *In forma Dei* and sometimes *in forma servi*
 - c) Entry into life-denying and energy-draining state of sin
 - d) *Life to the full* John 10:10
 - e) Brings life through solidarity with lifelessness of those who have wandered from grace
 - f) ~ with those seeking John’s baptism
 - g) *About noon* 4:6

- h) Moment of greatest illumination
- 5. *Samaritan woman came to draw 4:7*
 - a) Triple outsider
 - b) Suspect as person of questionable morals
- 6. Jesus reaches out to establish contact with outsider
 - a) *Give me a drink 4:7*
 - b) Assumes stance of one needing sustenance
 - c) Not divine “neediness”
 - d) ***Everything to do with establishing a loop or pattern of grace as in prodigal son***
 - e) Asks for a gift so he can give greater gift
 - f) Wants to draw her out of isolation + exile
 - g) Tempts her into generosity
- 7. *How can you ask of me 4:9*
 - a) Powerful enemy asks for very thing she seeks
 - b) Sounds like typical game in realm of *ousia*
 - c) John 4:9 signals lack of grace
- 8. Jesus commences disclosing his identity
 - a) *If you knew the gift of God 4:10*
 - b) Jesus the Icon of God as giver of gifts
 - c) Purpose is gathering those who forgot how to receive and give
 - d) *Wants to draw her into peculiar rhythm of grace through which alone authentic being can be maintained*
 - e) **The loop of grace = engagement ring the new Jacob and Moses proffers to his bride**
- 9. Woman takes Jesus’ words literally
 - a) John’s usual way of advancing a spiritual argument
 - b) *Where do you get 4:11*
 - c) Earthly realities hint symbolically at spiritual truth of the law of the gift
- 10. Jesus drives at *divine life that is never exhausted even as it is given*
 - a) Its essence is nothing other than giving
 - b) *The water that I will give 4:11*

c) *When the divine gift is received becomes that which can be given away infinitely and indefinitely and what even as it is given away never gives out*

(1) "Bubbles up"

11. Well water represents various objects of concupiscent desire
(Augustine)

a) *The deepest thirst in us is for divine life*

b) When we slake that thirst with something less we become thirsty again

c) We turn finite goods *meant to be used as instruments in the flow of grace* into "substances"

d) **The fiercest thirst in us is not for possession but for the capacity to give and this to the ultimate degree**

(1) To have this = experience the spring of eternal life within

12. Jesus' sitting at the well takes on new resonance

a) Tiredness as participation in weariness that follows sinner's journeys to the well

b) Incessant attempt to satisfy desire that cannot be satisfied with possession

13. *Sir give me this water* 4:15

a) She's familiar with fatigue from concupiscent desire

14. Unexpected turn = *go call your husband* 4:16

a) Why???

b) Entire episode is a wedding story

c) How she finds her proper spouse

d) Here quest for husband = search for governance and direction

e) Now Jesus introduces theme of husband or "headship"

f) *Show me what governs your life*

g) ***I have no husband = moral drift and openness to new orientation***

h) Sometimes our dysfunction allows for advent of grace

15. Like a good spiritual director Jesus spies rest of the truth hidden by her response

- a) *You have had five* 4:17-18
 - b) Jesus discerns her life is unfocused
 - c) Formerly under thrall of give powers
16. Who or what are these?
- a) Five senses or five books of Torah (Augustine)
 - b) Hedonist option
 - c) Then refined form of idolatry
 - (1) Rigors of moralizing religion
 - d) *Hedonist becomes puritan***
 - e) Fussy oralist often the sensualist in flimsy disguise
 - f) Jesus tells her her hard truth
 - g) *Anyone but the Word made flesh is inadequate food for the soul*
17. *Sir I see that you are a prophet* 4:20
- a) Then changes the subject
 - b) Less threatening plane of abstract religious controversy
 - c) Can she avoid issue of life's direction
18. Bridegroom not so easily put off (87)
- a) Jesus dissolves the question that helped divide Jews from Samaritans
 - (1) *The hour is coming* 4:21-24
 - (2) *Principal task of Messiah = gather tribes of Israel and through them gather the nations of the world***
 - (3) Messiah opposes **division**
19. What Father of Jesus desire is not geographically correct worship
- a) But worship "in spirit and truth" (*en pneumati kai aletheia*)
 - b) Both central Johannine symbols speak of force of unity**
 - c) *Pneuma* of God breathed into living beings
 - d) Awakens in them breathing in of *psyche*
 - e) Worship *en pneumati* = praise born of living relationship with Spirit of God

- f) Breathing out in prayer what was breathed in from the divine source
20. The truth which is God = universal power transcending time space + artificial cultural boundaries
- a) ***To worship in truth = not sectarian or cultish but praying in the power that unites the tribes of the world***
 - b) Gerizi and Zion opposed
 - (1) Well of Jacob serves as point of contact
 - (2) Circular well bespeaks the wedding ring
21. *When he comes will proclaim all things 4:25*
- a) ***One of most extraordinary descriptions of Messiah in Scripture (88)***
 - b) In the Christ - icon of the living God - fullness of truth will be announced and made clear
 - (1) ***The lens through which whole of reality is properly viewed***
 - (2) Highest truth about God + ourselves will be made plain in his way of being
22. Yhwh walked with Adam in the cool evening as a friend
- a) Interrupted when Adam sought to seize the knowledge belonging to God and can be received only as a gift
 - b) The Messiah is correctly described as one “who will tell us everything”
 - c) This interpretation must be given and received as grace
23. Knowing his interlocutor is ready for marriage *I am he speaking to you 4:26*
- a) *Ego eimi* ~ I AM WHO I AM Exodus 3:14
 - b) Woman as archetype of sinful + searching huma race is rescued from slavery of concupiscent desire through taking Messiah as her bridegroom
 - c) Sin = breakdown in easy conversation between divine and humanity
 - d) We witness God putting himself and humanity back on speaking terms

24. Dramatic effects of grace = *left her jar and went back to the city*
4:28

- a) Jar as symbol of concupiscence
- b) ***Fixed to worldly objects human desire can never adequately enter into the ecstasy associated with the loop of grace and hence remains tied down***
 - (1) *Purgatorio* prideful carry huge boulders
 - (2) When Dante is freed from sin is weightless
 - (3) Putting aside jar = lightness of being from correct orientation of desire
 - (4) Gifts are not heavy because when received are given away only to be received and given again

25. Isolation probably indicated social ostracization

- a) After setting down her burden runs into town
- b) Filled with enthusiasm to speak
 - (1) *Come and see* 4:29
- c) The beautiful calls to the one who perceives it and sends him on a mission to spread the word (Balthasar)
- d) Having seen Beatrice Dante compelled to write a poem
- e) James Joyce having spied his future wife
- f) The woman having been freed becomes a missionary ***the first evangelist in Gospel of John***
- g) The beauty of the coinherence seized her and she must tell of it
- h) The heart of her message = divine hermeneutics has appeared
 - (1) *Told me everything*
 - (2) ***This saving insight (knowledge of good and evil lost through grasping) now available to everyone through grace***

26. Effectiveness of her evangelism

- a) *Many believed in him* 4:39
- b) **Prime consequence of divine gathering = desire of gathered to gather others in turn**

- c) Circle of grace grows as it moves drawing others into its power

V. The warrior

A. Major motif of Gospels = ever increasing *agon* characterizing Jesus' life (John Courtney 1950)

1. From very beginning he is opposed
2. Public ministry awakens opposition
3. From cosmic powers and religious establishment
4. Warfare becomes more intense
5. Culminates in execution by crucifixion
6. *But you rejected the Holy and Righteous One* Acts 3:14-15
7. Opposition to Jesus = divine judgment on dysfunction of the world
8. Human beings did not just ignore God's life and truth in the flesh but **killed him**
9. ***Something structurally wrong in their way of seeing and being***

B. Jesus = icon of God the gatherer

1. Also icon of God the warrior who struggles against the powers of dissolution antagonism and violence
2. Gives concrete expression to righteous anger of God apparent throughout Old Testament
3. *Divine anger has nothing to do with trivial and superficial emotionality*
4. ***Rather symbolic representation of God's passion to set things right***
5. As ground of coinherence + gifted being-for-the-other opposed to hatred + division

C. **The Christmas narrative**

1. Jesus entered world anonymously + clandestinely because he was a warrior slipping quietly behind enemy lines (C S Lewis)
 - a) God entered world like artist entering studio (de Chardin) with confidence + familiarity
 - b) Universe not alien to God but was not friendly toward Creator

- c) “Enemy occupied territory”
 - d) Christmas stories are harsh + terrible (Raymond Brown)
2. Luke 2 invokes Emperor Augustus and Quirinius governor of Syria
- a) Caesar Augustus = *kyrios* of civilized world
 - b) Quirinius = satrap
 - c) Luke draws attention to domination system of Roman authority
 - d) Taking census as act of one wielding political power
 - (1) Compare David’s census
3. Luke’s beginning in line with best traditions of his day (92)
- a) Ordinary people for comic relief
 - b) *Luke effects a great reversal***
 - c) This is about two ordinary people going from shabby village to another
 - d) Augustus + aide function as foil
 - e) *Descended from house + family of David 2:4*
 - f) Decree of Augustus moves them to place so Messiah could be born in that place
4. *While they were there no place in the inn 2:6-7*
- a) We associate luxury + power
 - b) Power animating cosmos has more to do with emptying of self
 - c) Real power comes from exposing the ego to danger for sake of love
 - d) *Kyrios* Jesus begins battle with *kyrios* Augustus
5. *She gave birth and wrapped him 2:7*
- a) August could do what he wanted
 - b) The son is wrapped and confined
 - c) Real freedom enjoyed by the child totally bound by his Father’s will and tied to the good of the world he has come to serve
 - d) God cannot remain indifferent to world he created
 - e) Bound by a fiercely parental love

f) *The Christ child wrapped in swaddling clothes is icon of this God of bound freedom who faces down the ersatz divinity on the Palatine hill (93)*

6. *Laid in a manger 2:7*

- a) Augustus was best-provided-for person
- b) Baby king placed where animals eat
- c) Offered as food for the world
- d) Anticipates dynamism of his public life
- e) Law of the gift on iconic display

f) *Being increases in the measure it is given away*

g) *Life is enhanced in measure one participates in the loop of grace*

7. *In that region were shepherds 2:8*

- a) Shady ne'er-do-wells
- b) Most removed from corridors of power + respectability
- c) To them messenger of heavenly court appears
- d) Jesus started public life with sinners seeking baptism of repentance
- e) *Announcers of the incarnation find their way to the ordinary lowly unsavory*

f) *Divine life expresses itself in act by which it goes in love into what is opposed to it*

g) Christ meets his enemy with engagement and invitation

8. *Do not be afraid for I bring you good news 2:10-11*

- a) Worldly powers are about inculcating fear
- b) Divine lordship predicated on inclusivity born of love
- c) Augustus' empire held together by violence and threat thereof (Augustine, *City of God*)

(1) Its order a pseudojustice

d) Angels proposes another *kyrios* whose rule constitutes true justice because it is conditioned by love and forgiveness

e) Oriented toward "joy for all the people"

f) Not dream or abstraction

(1) Jesus' kingdom pitted against established order

9. Political dimension emerges clearly -> *suddenly there was a multitude* 2:13-14
- a) Now a host of terrifying beings
 - b) *Stratias* has military overtone
 - c) Angels arrayed for battle (95)
10. Contrast between Augustus and Jesus clear and telling
- a) These soldiers sing the praises of God
 - b) *What gives them harmonic cohesiveness is common devotion to divine power that transcends them*
 - c) Loss of common praise of God led to violent divisions on earth
 - d) ***When God is no longer acknowledged as primary and not glorified ego emerges as center of soul's preoccupations***
 - (1) Leads to war of all against all
 - e) Liturgical song of angels correlated to peace on earth
 - (1) When our voices blend with those of celestial choir order follows here below
 - f) Conflict on display
 - (1) Emperor's *ordo* through fear and violence versus Christ's *order* maintained through praise of God
11. One section of Matthew's infancy narrative
- a) Jesus' struggle with second king (local representative of Caesar)
 - b) *Where is the child* Matthew 2:1-2
 - c) A child not of his family produces deep anxiety 2:3
12. Israelites symbolize positive powers of soul while Egyptians stand for tyranny of sin (Origen's commentary on Exodus)
- a) Holy qualities within us became slaves of egotism + fear
 - b) Now pressed into service for unspiritual purposes
 - c) Jerusalem has become corrupt (96)
 - d) Herod + enslaved city tremble in fear
 - e) Foreshadows rejection of Jesus
 - f) Sign ironically declares him their true king
13. Intensity of opposition to child king becomes clear

- a) Matthew 2
 - b) Infanticide links Herod to Pharaoh
 - c) *Joseph and family went to Egypt* Matthew 2:14-15
 - d) ~ Joseph the dreamer
 - e) Yhwh's icon goes into Egypt
 - f) Close combat with enslavers
 - g) *This was to fulfill out of Egypt* Matthew 2:15
14. The family return and avoid Judea and settle in Nazareth
- a) Christ child relentlessly sought + hunted down
 - b) *Agon* was present from beginning to end of warrior's life
(John Courtney Murray)

D. Temptation in the wilderness

1. Jesus' persistent struggle with demons as most puzzling (97)
 - a) Thomas Jefferson cut out anything supernatural
 - b) Unrelated to simple + beautiful ethical teaching of Jesus
2. Two basic problems with rationalist demythologizing of the demonic
 - a) We would be left with drastically altered texts
 - (1) Miracles + exorcisms are not peripheral
 - (2) Woven throughout
 - b) Struggle with "the Satan" as structuring motif
 - (1) Not sheer number but **thematically central role** they play
 - (2) *Agon* with Rome + political representatives is key to his ministry (N T Wright) more basic + essential is his *agon* with spiritual power of evil one that transcends Roman power + expresses itself through it
3. Jesus enters public stage in Mark
 - a) *Reign of God has arrived + expels a demon* Mark 1:23-28
 - b) The new *ordo* of God has broken into human affairs
 - c) Proves legitimacy of what he says
 - d) Demonstrates it
 - e) Expels representative of old *order*

4. Not concerned with metaphysical status of New Testament demons
 - a) *Forces that stand behind more immediately apparent manifestation of evil in the world*
 - b) Personal or impersonal is less important than understanding their influence
 - c) “Powers and principalities” (Paul)
 - d) **The ultimately victorious struggle is at the heart of the Gospel narratives**
5. What gave Jesus confidence to wage war and declare Satan in principle defeated Luke 10:28?
 - a) Before inauguration of public ministry Jesus successfully battled prince of power of darkness (98)
 - b) In wake of victory commenced work of preaching healing exorcism
 - c) Some struggle took place between Jesus and power he took as elemental in determination of sinful *ordo*
 - d) Could wage war against remaining minions of primordial evil
6. We must look carefully at story of temptation in the wilderness
 - a) Watch for dynamics of battle between Christ and *ho poneros* who uses Augustus and colleagues as pawns
7. Matthew places after story of baptism by John in the Jordan
 - a) Juxtaposition is deliberate
 - b) Having discovered he is beloved Son of God Jesus must explore practical and spiritual ramifications thereof
 - c) Amounts to warfare
 - d) The Holy One and *ho diabobolus* the scatterer
 - e) ***How they engage each other becomes hermeneutical key to reading whole Gospel***
8. *Fasted forty days and forty nights* 4:2
 - a) Recalls sojourn of Israel in the wilderness
 - b) Mature Christ walks through liminality of wasteland
 - c) Recapitulates political liberation of his people to signal more reaching liberation from Satan he will effect

9. Confronts enemy at limits of his endurance
 - a) *Command these stones* 4:3
 - b) At stake is nature of his messiahship
 - c) Messiah's office imagined various ways
 - d) In measure he realizes true Christhood will outmaneuver his opponents
 - e) If scatterer can lure Jesus into false conception of his mission (99)
10. First temptation is low level
 - a) Crude appeal to animal instincts
 - b) ~ desire for sexual pleasure and sensual delight
 - c) Such desires like noisy and petulant children - indulging them only intensifies their mastery over the soul (Thomas Merton)
 - d) Attempt to draw Jesus from gathering task
 - e) Hedonism is egocentric
 - (1) Use world for self-gratification
11. Jesus quotes Scripture *it is written* 4:4
 - a) Answers temptation relating to mouth with appeal to higher Mouth
 - b) Word of God a type of food humans need more than physical nourishment
 - c) Orients devil to communitarian quality of feasting on divine word
 - d) God's word expresses graced manner of being
 - e) Jesus chooses to live primarily off this food and remain in the loop of grace
12. Topography shifts for second temptation 4:5
 - a) Higher more spiritually refined challenge
 - b) Allurements of the heights or *gloria* (Aquinas)
 - c) Temple's important role in Gospel tradition
 - d) Cleansing the temple provoked intense official reaction
 - e) Temple was political cultural religious pole of the nation
 - f) We must imagine a combination of Capitol + Lincoln Center + Wall Street + National Cathedral

- g) Jesus uttered prophetic judgment on such a place and became a marked man
13. All of this anticipated in the temptation (100)
- Jesus symbolically at height of society + culture of his time
 - Master of realms of economy politics religion
 - Perhaps focus of divine attention
 - Devil offers *inflation of the ego through honor*
14. Folly of seeking mere *sign* of achievement as end in itself (Aquinas)
- Desire for honor is essentially divisive
 - Hinges on ego's need to draw outside world into itself
 - If Jesus succumbed the community would have been unstable and dysfunctional
 - (Rw - like the church during the co-pastor experiment?)
 - He would properly draw them together by eschewing their esteem and accepting will of his Father for them*
 - Fidelity would make him a cleanser of the temple
15. Jesus again cites Scriptures *do not put the Lord to the test* 4:7
- Lust for honor = require the other to bear me and protect me and inflate me no matter what
 - Make another subject an audience and reduce subject to a means (101)
16. Third temptation to loftiest possible point of vantage
- Seduction of power most sublime and dangerous
 - Power is a positive value
 - devil I brought Jesus to place where it is not easy to distinguish real from apparent good
 - Temptation is not to be *looked at* but to *look*
 - Look at them in a mastering way casting glance and will simultaneously
17. Tempter makes his move *if you fall down and worship me* 4:9
- Most illuminating and disturbing
 - Devil can offer what belongs to him
 - Clearer in Luke 4:6

(a) *I give to anyone I please*

b) Nature of power becomes clear

(1) *Has to do with devil's task of scattering*

18. Scapegoating mechanism as basic to maintaining order in most human communities (René Girard)

a) When tensions arise outsiders are identified

b) Onto them is cast anxiety of the group

c) *The establishment of order through blaming and expulsion*

d) That the kingdoms of the world belong to scatterer and based on worship of him *Matthew's Gospel in line with Girardian instinct*

19. Greatest contribution of Christianity was this unveiling of demonic character of scapegoating mechanism and proposal of new nonviolent model of social order based on forgiveness and positive mimesis (Girard)

20. Clear demonstration = story of woman caught in adultery in John 8:1-11

a) How long were they waiting to couch this *in flagrante*?

b) Eloquent testimony to common + insatiable human need for scapegoats (102)

21. They rush her to religious spokesperson

a) Scapegoating typically finds religious sanction

b) God or god must smile on process of bringing peace to riven group

c) Quote Scriptural demand

d) Jesus refuses to contribute to energy of gathering storm *writes with his finger 8:6*

e) *Scapegoating becomes irresistible to those feeling threatened by already-existing tensions and rivalries within a group*

f) Jesus breaks the momentum

22. Jesus meets their frustration with spiritually revolutionary remark

a) *Let anyone without sin throw first stone 8:7*

23. Jesus directs counterproductive energy of scapegoating violence toward accusers
- a) Unveils dangerous secret that unstable order of society has been predicated upon violent act of exclusion
 - b) Jesus wrote sins of those threatening the woman (church fathers)
 - c) Compels them to identify with the accused
 - d) So new community of compassion and forgiveness could be forged
24. Healthier connection forced breakdown of scapegoating society
they went away 8:9
- a) Jesus dissolves the crowd by his speech
25. The new order = *neither do I condemn you 8:9-11*
- a) Jesus and woman at core of renewed communion
 - b) Connection not on condemnation but fruit of forgiveness offered and accepted
 - c) They embody the social form participating in loop of grace
26. Ending = reversal of opening (103)
- a) Phony communions are collectives of egotists in which each member is trying to draw every other into his sphere of influence
 - b) (Rw - University Baptist)
 - c) Especially regarding scapegoats (!)
 - d) *Communio* of love predicated upon connection whereby each looks to the good of the other - letting the other be for his own sake
27. Final admonition to sin no more = congruent with this interpretation
- a) Sin is always a form of sundering
 - b) Private + victimless sins contribute to spirit of false *communio*
28. When Jesus resists the temptation to worship the scatterer + become lord of the world he turns from pseudo-*ordo* that deviled the human race from the beginning

- a) *Away with you worship and serve only the Lord 4:10*
 - b) Jesus now addresses devil by name
 - c) Choice of title most telling (in light of Girardian reading)
 - d) *Jesus sends away blamer/scapegoater in whose spirit lords of this world exercise their authority **and announces worship of God alone is matrix for true power***
 - e) Jesus later crucified as wielder of authentic authority
 - f) The scapegoat speaks not curse but prayer of forgiveness
 - g) **What it means to exercise power coming from worship of the true God**
29. After this successful struggle Jesus begins his campaign
- a) After this earthly *agon* against lesser representatives commenced
 - b) Both dimensions of the war are intertwined throughout the Gospel narratives
 - c) Depth and surface enemies come together most clearly at climax of the war = *agon* of the cross
 - (1) Supreme icon of Jesus the warrior

E. The Passion

1. The reason for the birth of the Son of God was none other than that he might be fixed to a cross (Pope Leo the Great) (104)
 - a) More recent Christologies suggest Jesus' death as result of social and political forces
 - b) Classical view = death of Jesus in part of God's purposes (passed over or explicitly denied)
 - c) *If we abandon the conviction that the death of Jesus not simply an historical accident but expression of God's intentionality then we fly in the face of the overwhelming bulk of tradition and of the New Testament itself*
 - d) (Rw - and the way these modern re-interpreters solve that problem is jettisoning tradition and those portions of the New Testament that contradict their new paradigm)

- e) **An interpreter mocks the Gospels if she removes from the texture of the narrative the *dei* divinely grounded necessity of Jesus' going to the cross**
 - f) Ditto for Pauline letters
 - (1) *Cuts against the grain of those texts*
2. ***We begin to make sense of the providential necessity of the cross when we see Jesus' death in terms of the warrior icon***
 - a) Because he = incarnation of God's *ordo* he has come to fight
 - b) Fights most obvious forms of disorder and fights the powers and principalities undergirding more apparent dysfunctions
 - c) ***The fighting not complete until he conquered the final enemy -> fear of death***
 - d) Perfectly consistent with logic of incarnation
 - (1) Brings divine love to darkest corners
 - e) Passion narratives as accounts of ultimate battle
 - f) **Luke's narrative** chapters 22 + 23
 3. Luke 22 opens ominously *looking for a way to put Jesus to death*
 - a) Leaders want to soothe tensions among the people
 - b) John 11:50
 - c) True God will undermine this officially sanctioned scapegoating by becoming the scapegoat
 4. ***Then came the day of Unleavened Bread 22:7***
 - a) Drama starts on a day of slaughter
 - b) Jesus surrenders to executioner so his blood shields the whole human race
 - c) Divine warrior outmaneuvers and tricks the enemy by refusing to fight his way
 5. Jesus and disciples gather *desired to eat this Passover meal with you 22:15*
 - a) Jesus used festive meals as sign of the kingdom he was announcing
 - b) Jesus hosts these suppers to which all are invited

- c) Acted out his role as gatherer of tribes of Israel
 - (1) Center around which disparate elements of God's creation find their proper place and connection to one another
- d) Sits down with disciples ~ twelve tribes of Israel
- 6. Performs supreme coherent act of his life *this is my body and same with the cup 22:19-20*
 - a) Father of prodigal son
 - (1) Whole being was offering of grace
 - b) *Here the icon of invisible God shows his very self is not his to cling to but is a gift given away for sustenance of others***
 - c) Jesus gives himself as food that will become flesh and blood for the other
 - d) *Coinherence Jesus embodied from the beginning reaches unprecedented level of intensity and completeness*
- 7. So climactic expression of coinherence brings forth the dark powers
 - a) *See the one who betrays is with me at the table 22:21 (106)*
 - b) Accusing and scattering power from outset was still operative
 - c) The betrayer's hand on the table soils the beauty and interrupts flow of grace
- 8. Then follows a scene comic and tragic *a dispute arose who would be the greatest 22:24*
 - a) His most intimate followers show they don't understand
 - b) *Concern for greatness (recognition + glory) is standard type of mimetic desire leading to quarreling and rivalry (107)*
 - c) Jesus patiently explains once more *not so with you the leader like one who serves 22:25-26*
- 9. We are reminded the battle is not simply with flesh and blood and not merely on psychological or political stage

- a) *I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail*
22:31-32
 - b) Accuser interested in breaking up + testing seminal community Jesus tried to establish
 - c) **When the church lives in accord with Spirit of Jesus spiritual warfare will heat up**
 - d) *The community can fend off scattering and accusing power only when it is so aligned (linking of community with founder and through him to mystery of divine grace)*
10. Newborn church will be in for a fight *the one who has no sword must sell his cloak and buy one* 22:36
- a) Sets up contrast between missionary journey earlier
 - b) First journey = radical dependence on God
 - c) Second = ready them for a struggle
 - d) *Success precisely hen total dependency upon grace is inculcated*
 - e) “Sword” is symbolic see 22:38
 - f) There will be a fight but not with counterproductive weapons of worldly power
11. Come to a familiar haunt after the supper
- a) David retreated up Mount of Olives and was abused by Shimei 2 Samuel 15:30-16:12
 - b) Son of David involved in terrible struggle with cosmic powers + authorities + those closest to him
12. What he does enables him to win the war
- a) *Not my will but yours be done* Luke 22:41
 - b) Play of wills where coinherence of divinity and humanity on display
 - c) Jesus as icon of invisible God
 - (1) Narrative concerning Jesus concerns God
 - (2) ***What is integral to Jesus in his humanity is not compromised or overwhelmed by presence of God to that humanity***

(3) Human will of Jesus most itself when it enters into coherent harmony with noncompetitive and noncontrastively transcendent divine will

(4) When Jesus makes a correct decision is strengthens him for the right against those power operating out of metaphysical misalignment

13. *Angel appears to him* signals cosmic dimension 22:43

a) Precisely here beings from another dimension of creation are summoned

14. After prayer a crowd led by Judas appears 22:49

a) A disciple cuts off slave's ear

b) Most obvious breakdown of coinherence is violence

c) Most immediate consequences of violence is loss of communication

(1) Ear is severed

d) Jesus often healed organs of communication

e) *Communio* entails communication

f) Even as enemies close in the icon of invisible God says *no more* and performs last act of healing 22:51

15. Luke's passion narrative opened with iconic presentation of properly constituted community = gathered around Jesus eating his body and drinking his blood (109)

a) Here we see display of false *communiones*

16. Mob seizes Jesus and Peter follows

a) Group in courtyard seeks deeper bond 22:56

b) Peter is drawn into vortex of scapegoating failed Messiah

c) Scapegoating impulse spreads like a contagion

d) *Surely this man* 22:59

17. Identification of Peter as outsider

a) *Accent* betrays him

b) Victim chosen by scapegoating mob usually an outsider (Girard)

18. Peter's denials are understandable

a) Gaze of Jesus more dramatic and theologically important 22:61

- b) Those who side with Jesus will face a similar fate
19. Another group comes together
- a) Dynamics similar to the courtyard mob
 - b) Jesus refuses to answer 22:67
 - c) Truth doesn't matter to dysfunctional group bent on scapegoating
 - d) Jesus' response -> breakdown in communication
20. Chilling confirmation of Girard's dynamic
- a) *Assembly brought Jesus before Pilate 23:1*
 - b) Mirror opposite of Christ's church
 - c) They find unity in blaming 23:2
21. Devil is supplanted at climactic moment in Revelation
- a) 12:10
 - b) Jesus' kingdom of coinherent compassion battles with any collectivity organizing itself around accusation
 - c) They know full well Jesus' messiahship has nothing to do with taxes or politics
 - d) Need for victim > all obligation
22. At first Pilate resists blind enthusiasm 23:4
- a) Fears losing political control
23. Justice is second victim of scapegoating mob
- a) Herod toys with Jesus 23:10
 - b) Sends him back to Pilate -> secures execution
24. Wonderful Girardian detail = *Herod and Pilate became friends* 23:12
- a) True friendship according to Aristotle
 - b) Perversion = coming together of two people dysfunctionally around a scapegoated victimized third
25. Incarnation had essentially downward momentum (Balthasar, *Mysterium Paschale*)
- a) God's Son going to limits of Godforsakenness (111)
26. Frodo the Hobbit as Christ figure in Lord of the Rings
- a) His mission is to get rid of something
 - b) Evil has to be engaged on its own ground
 - c) Mt Doom = his final *agon*

d) Jesus addresses the darkness by shining a light into it
 27. After condemnation Jesus is led through Jerusalem to “the Skull”

- a) Jesus driven outside the encampment ~ ritual scapegoat (*azazel*)
- b) Organizer of rightly ordered city is excluded
- c) Only fitting that Jesus finds himself between two sinners (112)
- d) *The icon of the invisible God is friend of sinners*
- e) Not merely wishes them well or provides a norm
- f) **He moves into their world and endures what they endure**

28. *Father forgive them* 23:34

- a) Important element of Jesus’ kingdom ethic = praxis of forgiveness
- b) Matthew 5:39-44
- c) Nothing to do with passivity in face of evil (Walter Wink)
- d) ***Embody a provocative but nonviolent manner of confronting evil and conquering it through practice of coherent love***
- e) By forgiving Jesus draws them onto new metaphysical ground
 - (1) ***Awakening them to truth in which they stand***
 - (2) **Connectedness to him and each other in God**

29. *They cast lots* 23:34

- a) At root of sin is fear especially **fear of death**
- b) People counter by aggrandizing the ego
 - (1) Approval or things
- c) Good life tantamount to loving what Jesus loved on the cross and despising what he despised on the cross (Aquinas)
- d) Jesus is stripped of everything that might protect
- e) ***Ready for the final battle***

30. *This is the King of the Jews* 23:38

- a) Old Testament revels in warrior kings Yhwh sent (113)

- b) Especially rejoiced Yhwh himself was true warrior fighting
- c) *Principal hope of prophets that Yhwh through his Messiah would establish himself as king of Israel and by extension King of all the nations*
- d) Definitive sign that claimant to messiahship was deluded = ***execution at hands of an alien power***
- e) Irony of sign over cross thick with irony
- f) Jesus is indeed king of the Jews
 - (1) King of the World
 - (2) Lordship not in conquest or dominance but in love unto death
- g) **What was anticipated in his humble birth was completed in his death as an official victim of Augustus' successor**

31. In Revelation John sees Holy One on a throne and holding scroll with seven seals

- a) Scroll ~ meaning of history
- b) Heavenly account of time and space
- c) No one can open excel *Lion of the tribe of Judah* 5:5

32. Who is this warrior King?

- a) *A Lamb as if slaughtered* 5:6
- b) Key to meaning of history is not ruler of this world but one of the meekest of animals
- c) Exact parallel between Lion of Judah and King of the Jews hanging on the cross
- d) ***Both mockeries of the phony powers of the world***

33. *Reversal of value and meaning represented by the cross reflected symbolically in certain upheavals in the cosmic rhythms*

- a) Matthew
 - (1) Earthquakes and rising of the dead
- b) Luke
 - (1) Darkness over the whole land 23:44-45
- c) "Light" is darkness and "life" is death

d) *Our sense of rightly ordered religion is revolutionized*
(114)

- e) Curtain protected the sacred
 - (1) Jesus would tear down the temple
 - (2) End old cultic practices + inadequate theology associated with it
 - (3) John 4:21-23
- f) Authentic holy of holies is now on the cross visible to all Jew and Gentile alike

34. Warrior speaks for last time in midst of this upheaval

- a) *Father into your hands I commend my spirit* Luke 23:46
- b) New Testament sense = *suffering of the world is produced by breaking the loop of grace, insisting one's life should be one's own*

(1) *Charis* hardens into *ousia*

(2) We lose what little we think we have

- c) Jesus saved us by whole course of obedience (John Calvin)
 - (1) Life was obedient response to will of God
- d) At last moment signals willingness to live in grace
- e) Confident the Father will return it to him
- f) *The unbearable lightness of the loop of grace***

35. In this the warrior wins the ultimate battle

- a) All the opponents were henchmen of the scatterer
- b) Matrix for the work of the scatterer = fear of death
- c) Jesus takes o the energy source animating powers and the Power**

36. Nonviolent pseudocommunity is sustained by negative mimesis (Girard)

- a) Each person looking rivalrously on desire of the others
- b) Positive redeemed community animated by positive mimesis
 - (1) How to desire by imitating wholesome desire of those around him
- c) Throughout narrative we see examples of dysfunctional community *and* the beautiful community

- d) Joseph of Arimathea
- e) Women who stayed until the end
- f) Women “followed” body of Jesus to its resting place (Luke)

37. Jesus wants to go to the cross because he loves his Father’s will

- a) Those who love him will go to same bitter end
- b) Matthew 16:24
- c) Jesus’ desire to share in will of the Father can be imitated positively without rivalry because object of that desire is inexhaustible
- d) A beautiful community can spring up around it
- e) *With birth of that communio Jesus the warrior has won*

VI. King

- A. Earliest most basic form of kerygma = *Iesous Kyrios*
 - 1. Found in speeches in Acts
 - 2. Expanded upon in Pauline epistles
 - 3. Assumed throughout Gospels
 - 4. ***First Christians tried to tell world Jesus of Nazareth crucified + risen from the dead is the true Kyrios***
 - 5. Clear challenge to earthly potentates
 - 6. Hebrew Scriptures
 - a) *Messiah would gather scattered tribes of Israel and would as king of Israel become gathered of the nations embodying and realizing Yhwh’s lordship of creation which had been compromised by sin*
 - 7. Peter and Paul operated out of this biblical assumption
- B. Throughout his ministry Jesus acted as Messiah of Israel
 - 1. Consistently acted in person of Yhwh the gatherer of Israel
 - 2. Challenge to legitimacy came at crucifixion
 - 3. A pretender fo Messiah would be discredited by a shameful execution
 - 4. ***From a neutral historical perspective there is a serious problem of interpretation regarding the beginning of the***

Christian movement = how could people have declared a crucified man Messiah and Lord?

- a) Only satisfactory answer = his bodily resurrection from the dead
- C. Wide variety of alternative explanations but none can make sense of the claim
- 1. Jews of Jesus' time had plethora of ways to convey
 - 2. But these Jews employed precise term *resurrection*
 - a) Never used to designate a nonbodily event (N T Wright)
 - 3. Referred to eschatological occurrence
 - 4. Novelty = eschatological act took place in time for a particular person
 - 5. Therefore Jesus was declared to be Messiah and Lord of Israel and *Kyrios* of all the nations
- D. Will bring christological section to close by looking at three pictures of Jesus the Lord the King who galvanizes governs commissions his people
- 1. Jesus the gatherer ~ finding the center
 - 2. Jesus the warrior ~ deep knowledge we are sinners
 - 3. Jesus the Lord ~ our lives are not about us but we belong to power beyond ourselves
- E. Road to Emmaus**
- 1. Luke 24 = literary and theological *chef d'oeuvre*
 - a) Narrative of meeting risen Jesus with with two of his disciples
 - 2. Begins with people going the wrong way
 - a) Everything moves toward Jerusalem in Luke
 - b) Two figures fled with everyone else
 - c) Christianity as ***religion in motion***
 - (1) Issue is which way one is moving
 - 3. *Talked about these things* 24:14
 - a) Words + interpretation + speaking hearing properly understanding
 - b) Speech bound to be skewed + misleading
 - c) *Theology* and *theology* (Jean-Luc Marion)

- (1) Speech about God determined by God's own logic
 - (2) Or God-talk that draws divine mystery into conventional categories
 - (3) Too much theological tradition trades in second mode
 - (4) Devolves into useless human chatter
 - (5) Disciples talk but say little of value
 - (6) Discussing away from wider Christian community
 - (7) Away from Jesus
 - (8) Greek hints this with *syzetein* "seeking-together"
4. *Jesus came near and went with them* 24:15 (119)
- a) Jesus went to where sinners were
 - b) Seeks two errant disciples
5. *But their eyes were kept from recognizing* 24:16
- a) Double sense
 - b) Resurrected Jesus clearly physical but possesses unusual qualities
 - c) Also symbolic
- (1) ***To see Jesus is to understand him aright which is to set him in proper hermeneutical grid***
 - (2) They are in wrong spiritual space and employ faulty interpretive lens
6. *What are you discussing* 24:17
- a) With the question seeks to enter their spiritual intellectual world
7. *They stood still looking sad* 24:17
- a) Presence of the Lord arrests their negative momentum
 - b) Sadness as function of cowardice and blindness
 - c) His purpose was to share with them the joy he and Father experience (Last Supper) (120)
 - d) Walking from Jerusalem = refusal to live in grace and therefore exclusion from joy
8. Cleopas speaks *are you the only stranger* 24:18-19
- a) Jesus is only one who understands
 - b) Everyone else fails to see

- c) Cleopas recounts “things” about Jesus
 - d) Has relevant data
 - e) Operating at first level of epistemological perception (Bernard Lonergan)
 - f) Ruminations and conversations have not produced insight
 - (1) Perceiving the pattern that is characteristic of second degree of perception
 - (2) *Sees facts but not the form*
 - (3) *Takes in everything and takes in nothing*
 - g) *Oh how foolish 24:25*
9. Word is ready to speak *beginning with Moses and prophet interpreted to them 24:27*
- a) *Diermeneusen* ~ “applied the hermeneutic”
 - b) Word made flesh reveals the pattern running through data of his life death + resurrection
 - c) Shows that Scripture as a whole is about him
 - d) Provides clarifying lens for what transpired in him
 - (1) What? *We know its general thrust*
 - (2) *Was it not necessary the Messiah should suffer and enter his glory Luke 24:26*
 - e) Cross does not mean they were deluded but is solution to the puzzle
 - f) **Glory of the Messiah is the light that flows from his suffering and self-emptying love the *doxa* of Israel’s God is the splendor of coinherence of being-for-the-other**
10. Then they come close to their destination
- a) Messiah walked with them all the way in their going the wrong way (121)
 - b) *Stay with us 24:29*
 - (1) Greek *meinen* often used in John
 - (2) Give voice to pleading of the church that Jesus will continue to be source of its being

**(3) Without the hermeneutical grid of his presence
they will not see**

11. First part ~ liturgy of the Word and second part ~ liturgy of the Eucharist

- a) Risen Lord does what he did night before he died 24:30
- b) Last section
 - (1) Intense coinherence of Last Supper interrupted by forces of the scatterer
 - (2) Lost moment recovered in quiet of Emmaus evening
- c) Gatherer uses characteristic gesture to bring back two who wandered from center
- d) *Their eyes were opened* 24:31
- e) Through hermeneutics of the Word they began to see
- f) Through hermeneutics of the Eucharist their vision is clarified and completed
- g) Words of Torah and Prophets brought them close
- h) Gesture of the Word made flesh brings them to their end
- i) ***The self-offering of the Son of God is therefore the “place” where authentic theology can alone flourish***
(122)

12. Why Jesus made meals central to his kingdom praxis

- a) Divine friendship lost through a dysfunctional meal and regained only through properly constituted one
- b) The new Adam invites sinners to gracious meals symbolizing God’s invitation to reenter the circle of coinherence
- c) *Two friends of God sit down with Jesus to eat what God offers them in love thereby undoing the anxious grasping of the meal described at the beginning of the story*
- d) Eyes of Adam + Eve were opened and say themselves as threatened vulnerable and alienated

13. At moment of recognition Jesus vanished 24:31

- a) Signals freedom of risen Jesus from ordinary constraints of space and time

- b) Points to spiritual “space” opened by resurrection
- c) *All appearance stories a moment of commissioning and sending*
- d) **Those who see the risen Christ know they must go announce act**
- e) Disappearance of Jesus makes this possible
- f) Leavetaking opens up the “acting-area” (Balthasar) permitting disciples to do and be what he did and was

14. *They got up and returned* 24:33

- a) Narrative comes to reversal of momentum
- b) They return to where they never should have left

15. Search out the Eleven the community of Jesus

- a) Before they speak they hear from others *the Lord has risen indeed* 24:34
- b) They articulate their version of the *evangel* (123)

16. *This play of announcing and listening, this mutual sharing of the good news, is the characteristic life of the body of Christ*

- a) As they share in the fellowship of the table they share the truth of the Paschal Mystery in the coinherence of speech and understanding

F. The appearance to the Eleven

1. Jesus’ appearance to eleven core disciple follows immediately
 - a) Two stories mirror each other thematically
 - b) *While they were talking about this* 24:36 (~ Job)
 - c) Jesus’ appearance ***tied to a dynamic of ecclesial life***
 - d) *Another dimension is signaled symbolically in positioning of characters*
 - e) Risen Jesus stands in their midst
 - (1) Functions as center around which they gather
 - f) *He is the shepherd at work*
2. Medieval rose windows
 - a) Representation of Christ in central medallion
 - b) This icon = image of properly functioning cosmos
 - (1) Well-ordered soul
 - (2) Adequately constituted church

3. Having organized his church ontologically Jesus articulates what he accomplished
 - a) *Peace be with you 24:36*
 - b) **Peace breaks down in the measure sinners turn in on themselves rupturing the loop of grace**
 - c) *By going to the limits of Godforsakenness and fighting the effects of sin through nonviolent love Jesus drew fallen human beings back into communio with God and into connection with one another*
4. Reaction = apprehension and confusion
 - a) *Thought they saw a ghost 24:37*
 - b) Afraid
 - (1) Saw something strange and unexpected
 - (2) Precedence for ghosts and resuscitated persons
 - (3) *That someone would return after his death in eschatologically transformed but still embodied state (harbinger of general resurrection at the end of time) was utterly unexpected*
5. Another spiritually significant reason for fear
 - a) They assume he is back for vengeance
 - b) Ordinary practice of fallen world
 - (1) Breaking of fellowship paid for through retributive violence
 - (2) Offender against *communio* should pay before being readmitted
 - (3) **When order is lost through violence it is restored through greater violence**
 - c) Convinced Jesus is avatar of worldly *ordo*
6. Central to teaching + preaching of Jesus = **forgiveness**
 - a) Restoration of order through compassion and nonviolence
 - b) Central = heavenly *ordo* become *ordo* here below
 - c) When confronting those who violated his friendship says *shalom* a word of pardon
 - d) Introduces **revolutionary understanding of God**

7. earlier Jesus consistently acted in person of Yhwh
 - a) Claiming same authority belonging to Israel's God
 - b) In his death expressed Yhwh's solidarity with sinners + his willingness to endure resistance of those he wished to gather into friendship
 - c) Putting Jesus to death => putting Yhwh to death
 - (1) Expressed definitive rejection of mercy offered by God
 - (2) ***This awful truth is paradoxically ground for salvation - appreciate in light of the resurrection***
 - d) *Shalom* speaking in person of Yhwh
 - e) Even killing God is not enough to block divine forgiveness
8. According to standard interpretation of justice + theology *greatest of crimes would call for great retributions but here is met with nonviolence compassion shalom*
 - a) Authentic justice is ***different from what we imagined***
 - b) God is stranger than we thought
 - c) God's love is such that ... restores order to broken circle of disciples
 - d) God answers their injustice with forgiving love
 - (1) Romans 8:38-39
 - (2) *Nothing is powerful enough to turn back relentlessness of divine mercy*
9. Fathers of church gave account of redemption = Christus Victor theory (Gustav Aulén)
 - a) Variations and accents but basic structure =
 - (1) Sinful humans held captive by devil
 - (2) Devil "takes" Jesus through death on the cross
 - (3) Finds himself captured by hidden power of Jesus' divinity
 - (a) ~ fish caught by hook
 - (4) Result = ***freed humanity and disempowered devil***
 - (a) **Salvation**
 - b) Many have quarreled with this theory

- (1) If properly demythologized (Rw - why? Why would one do that) is illuminating
- (2) God is forgiving + merciful = central proclamation in Torah and Prophets
 - (a) Full extent of that was not apparent to Israel
 - (b) Qualifications and conditions set on divine mercy

(3) How could Yhwh convince his people of absolutely unqualified nature of his compassion
(126)

- (a) Had to become one of us
- (b) Had to accept our total rejection
 - (i) In forgiving surrounded and disempowered it
- (4) Following lines of Christus Victor
 - (a) Devil is sin itself
 - (b) Divine forgiveness is the “hook”???
 - (c) Sin had to be lured into open**
 - (d) Took place through provocative quality of Jesus’ life ministry + death**
 - (e) Thus exposed sin could be undermined and dealt with**
- (5) Prior to incarnation humans could not know the height breadth depth length of divine forgiveness and were held captive

10. Patristic commonplace = sin of Adam a *felix culpa* for humanity in that it won us a savior

- a) For some fathers a *felix culpa* for God since it let him demonstrate the extent of his forgiveness (Balthasar)
- b) Only when we did our worst could God reveal his best
- c) Full meaning of Christ the warrior comes into focus when he demonstrates his victory-through-forgiveness over sin**

11. Concerned they are seeing a ghost Jesus says *look and touch*
24:39

- a) The risen Jesus is despite the strangeness and numinosity is stubbornly objectively physically *there*
 - b) If he were anything else we would still be in our sins
 - c) Psychological phenomena would be infected by fallenness of the world
 - d) *It is essential that something new unexpected and objective happened to the Eleven***
 - e) Without this the exteriority and surprise throughout the New Testament would be unintelligible
12. Jesus invites followers to look at hands and feet
- a) Parts most affected by crucifixion
 - b) Continuity preserves link between Jesus as warrior and as Lord
 - c) *The one who stands before them as embodiment of divine forgiveness is one who mediates the divine judgment***
 - d) In the wounds of that Christ they know intensity of the sin that required forgiveness
 - e) Were the two separated the salvifically delicate balance between sin and grace would be compromised**
13. Dense physicality of risen Jesus indicates whole drama of salvation has to do with real embodied human beings
- a) Nothing of the Platonic-Gnostic myth of descending/ascending souls + escaping matter
 - b) Quickly appreciated as repugnant in Origen's speculations
 - c) *Whatever resurrection life means it does not mean the career of a disembodied soul***
 - d) Something to do with elevation of entire person
14. We don't know if they did but he *could* be touched has important **ecclesiological implications**
- a) It is with and in our flesh we contact the Word become flesh
 - b) Objective physicality of risen Lord grounds sacramental imagination of church

- c) *We find God's presence in things and not by fleeing to realm of sheer interiority or transcendence*
 - d) Signals coinherence of Jesus and his church
15. *While in their joy were disbelieving and wondering 24:41*
- a) **Joy is the mark of anyone caught in the loop of grace**
 - b) Joy is principle "emotion" shared by trinitarian persons
(1) Since their life is nothing but self-forgetting love
16. So accustomed by processing world through receptive powers of fallen mind *disciples are dazzled by what is before them*
- a) *Got anything to eat? 24:41*
 - b) Read this as insisting on realism and embodiment contra Platonizing or spiritualizing
 - c) **The joy Jesus offers his church happens in and to bodies but we see more when we press things symbolically (128)**
 - d) Meal of broken bread
 - e) *Complemented by another postresurrection meal this time featuring fish*
 - f) **The church returns the favor since the disciples give Jesus fish to eat**
 - g) *Here on display is the loop of grace*
17. Having shared the meal that signals divine-human coinherence Jesus applies the hermeneutic
- a) *These are my words that everything written about me in the law the prophets and the psalms 24:44*
 - b) Means *that the Hebrew Scriptures in their entirety anticipate Jesus relating to him as question to answer as anticipation to fulfillment*
 - c) Specifies interpretive key = *Messiah is to suffer and rise on the third day 24:46*
 - d) **Jesus is the lens through which whole biblical revelation is to be seen**
18. Having understood what must they do?

- a) *Repentance and forgiveness to be proclaimed in his name*
24:47
- b) Sent back to Jerusalem
- c) Commissioned to go out to draw everyone into the circle of grace

19. Proclamation of forgiveness of sins is central to work of the church

- a) ***Richest expression and application of the ontological change affected by the Paschal Mystery***
 - b) Task = tell the world the meaning of being has shifted
 - c) Rupture of sin mended and loop of grace reestablished
20. Iconic Christology began with Jesus as Gatherer now *closes by studying him under title Lord*
- a) Christ the Lord scattered them not as *diabolos* would but as a **sower** would
 - b) ***They went forth with the power of Christ the warrior the one who faced down sin death and the devil***
 - c) ***They went forth with a message of victory or/that is the forgiveness of sins***

III. The Epistemic priority of Jesus Christ

VII. The Scriptural warrant

- A. Characteristic mark of modern philosophizing = predilection for commencing the intellectual project with epistemology
 - 1. Limits and capacity of knowledge must be established
 - 2. *I have resisted this modernism by starting with narrative icons concerning Jesus Christ*
 - 3. **We don't read Jesus through lens of predetermined epistemology but we understand nature of knowledge in general through those narratives**
- B. *Is this coherent? Do Christians know in an instinctive way?*
 - 1. Are both object + manner of rational procedure unique? (133)
 - 2. Questions fix us on horns of dilemma

3. *If affirmative we place Christians in irresponsibly fideistic and sectarian position compromising their ability to enter into conversation*
4. *But if negative we force Christians to abandon claim that Christ has primacy in all things including what + how we know*

C. Not a new tension

1. Defining problematic in history of Christian theology
2. Battled between “Athens” and “Jerusalem”
3. *I will try to address this not by “solving” but by showing a way forward*
4. **One form of the liberal-conservative dispute = function of awkward handling of this old knotty tension and a consistently and generously christological approach opens more promising path**
5. *A mind radically conditioned by the narratives (gatherer warrior Lord) grasps reality most richly and makes possible the most creative conversation with non-Christian culture*

D. Scripture’s claims for Christ

1. Difficult to read New Testament and not be struck by maximalist claims constant made about Jesus Christ
 - a) Lord
 - b) Son of God
 - c) Son of Man
 - d) Messiah
 - e) Son of David
 - f) Alpha and Omega
 - g) Author of life
 - h) My Lord and my God
 - i) Most extraordinary and far-reaching description = *Jesus is the image [eikon] of the invisible God the one in whom the fullness of God was pleased to well Colossians 1:15, 19*
 - j) Implications clearly spelled out in 1:16
 - (1) Jesus = **prototype of all finite existence**

(2) Even powers that transcend the world and govern human affairs

(3) In him all things hold together 1:17

(a) Not just past

k) Jesus also the one in whom things were created but one in whom they exist and through whom they inhere in one another

l) The future also is touched by Christ

(1) To reconcile to himself all things 1:20

(2) All will be drawn into an eschatological harmony through him

(3) Not merely a symbol of something that can exist or happen apart from him

(4) He is the active and indispensable means by which these realities come to be

2. A text that parallels Colossians in intensity and range is prologue to gospel of John

a) Colossians -> Jesus is identified with creative power of God

b) John -> process is reversed

(1) Transcendent Logos of God = one who became concretely available in this Jesus

c) Christ's ontological priority remains the same

3. What follows is a centrally important epistemic claim

a) Jesus cannot be measured by a criterion outside of himself or viewed from a perspective higher

b) If we try to know him as an object among many we would arrive at incorrect conclusions *and involve ourselves in operational contradiction*

c) To be consistent we say Jesus determines not only what there is to be known (organizing principle of finite being) but also how we are to know what is to be known (since mind is a creature made and determined through him)

E. A Christ-illuminated mind in search of Christ-determined forms is the epistemology implicit in Colossians and prologue of John

1. Primacy implies the narratives concerning Jesus must be an epistemic trump (Bruce Marshall)
 - a) An articulation of reality holding sway over and against all rival articulations
2. ***Holding to Colossians and Johannine prologue = have a clear negative criterion concerning all claims to ultimate truth***
3. Whatever runs contrary to claims in the narratives about Jesus must be false

VIII. **Modern foundationalism**

- A. Two serious counterproposals
 1. Modern foundationalism
 2. Neoscholastic “natural” theology (136)
 3. Both suggest a realm of rationality outside of or prior to dimension determined by Jesus Christ
- B. Foundationalism -> writing of René Descartes
 1. *Discourse on Method*
 - a) Frustrated by ambiguities and uncertainties running through all the sciences
 - b) No coherent criteria by which to adjudicate disputes
 - c) Multiplicity and confusion across various cultures
 - d) *Christian and classical culture proved deeply unsatisfactory epistemologically*
- C. Solution (after meditation in Ulm) is prototype of subjective foundationalism (137)
 1. Resolved to doubt what can be doubted
 2. (Rw - similar to Bertrand Russell?)
 3. What was left was he could not doubt he was doubting
 4. *Cogito ergo sum* or *dubito ergo sum*
 5. ***The lonely but secure Cartesian ego amidst the ruins of culture intelligence and sense experience emerged as the sure foundation for knowledge***
 6. **Proceeded to build his knowledge of the objective world on basis of his certitude concerning his subjectivity**

- a) Brought all claims before bar of self-validating ego
- 7. Anticipates Copernican revolution in Kant and Hegel and much of modern liberalism
- D. Reconstructed the edifice of knowledge or build up a city that is rational clear and satisfactory
 - 1. Brought God before the bar
 - a) God must exist
 - (1) Important decentering or relativizing of the ego (Emmanuel Levinas)
 - (2) God affirmed *through* the ego
 - b) God would not let us be deceived consistently in our perceptions and intellectual acts
 - (1) World as we sense it must be real
 - (2) Science can proceed unhampered by doubt and insecurity
 - 2. ***For Descartes valid knowledge is either self-evidence or grounded in the self-evident***
 - a) Either *cogito* or through appeal thereto
 - b) **This subjective foundationalism presupposed throughout the *méthode***
 - 3. Another form of modern foundationalism -> grants epistemic priority to sense experience
 - a) John Locke and David Hume
 - b) Locke
 - (1) All valid ideas grounded in indubitable sense data
 - (2) When ideas are unmoored from empirical bases inexact thinking ensues
 - (3) Distaste for scholasticism
 - (4) Anyone can have access to knowledge through the senses
 - (5) *All people are equally gifted in matters of reason*
 - 4. Both forms had huge impact on modern philosophy and physical science

- a) *Seems obvious knowledge is legitimate only in measure it can be justified through evidence and through appeal to indubitable starting points*
- b) That Christ ought to have epistemic priority and truth is discerned through him seems utter folly**
- c) Modern foundationalism only way to have meaningful peaceful conversation???

(1) Foundationalism is problematic on foundationalist grounds

(2) Has more in common with religious claims that proponents would admit

- 5. Simplest best argument = foundationalism is inconsistent with itself
 - a) Claim that valid knowledge is...
 - b) *How is this assertion sensed or subjectively intuited?*
 - c) *How deduced logically from self-evident grounds?*
 - d) *Radicality and universality of foundationalist claim rules out heuristic device that governs and defines foundationalism***
- 6. Other reasons
 - a) Assumption that foundations are easily known and not rooted in deeper ground or situated in wider context
 - b) “Properly basic”
 - c) *Is Cartesian experience of doubting self known in such a tidy manner?***
 - d) Tradition instructed him to look to *cogito*
 - e) “Si fallor sum” *if I am mistaken I am* (Augustine)
 - (1) Antecedents in classical philosophy
 - f) Capacity to feel and formulate power of *cogito* depended on languages Descartes was using
 - (1) Dependent on myriad assumptions and frameworks and contexts and histories
 - g) *The tradition Descartes was placing in epoche while he sought for terra firma was conditioning that search at every point***

(1) Wittgenstein on impossibility of programmatic doubt (140)

h) One should never be under illusion the perception of doubting self's existence is basic or foundational

i) That particular truth situates itself in a preexisting web of interdependent insights assumptions and desires

7. What about empirical form associated with Locke?

a) Verifiable level of sense experience that was prior to interpretation and provided the only viable foundation for claims of science

b) Sense experiences are never simply given

(1) Conditioned in various ways

c) "Theory-laden" from the beginning

8. Wittgenstein's duck-rabbit illustration

a) Knotty problem of seeing something *as* something

b) This problem would not arise if sense data were simply basic

c) Questions the claim they are foundational in wider or privileged way

d) Foundations were being supported by the rest of the house (Wittgenstein)

e) There are no starting places (R O Quine)

9. Modern foundationalist enterprise has much in common with supposedly irrational religious perspective it tries to escape

a) Shot through with assumptions and presuppositions

b) Question is which does it have and what do they make possible (141)

c) Christians approach the world with a particular type of mind

10. Descartes favors a type of intellection and training a type of power

a) Assumed ideal philosopher is basically radically skeptical

- b) *In insisting on primacy of cogito Descartes privileges a subjectivist and inward mode of knowing*
 - c) Sharp demarcation between *res cogitans* and *res extensa*
 - d) **Implicitly encourages to be epistemologically wary of historical physical particular**
 - e) Encourages iconoclastic antitraditionalism
11. When Christian theologians eager to dialogue with modernity adopt foundationalist positions the epistemic priority of Jesus would be compromised
- a) Schleiermacher's theology
 - (1) Correlated Christian doctrines to underlying subjective state
 - (2) Cartesian *cogito* is Schleiermacherian "feeling" of dependency
 - (3) *It is the subjective bar to which whole of theological objectivity is brought for adjudication*
12. Schleiermacher became kind of "church father of the nineteenth century"
- a) Theology became a watershed between *Alt-* and *Neu-Protestantismus*
 - b) Innumerable imitators
 - c) Especially Tillich
 - (1) *The Courage to Be to Systematic Theology* articulated a method of **correlation**
 - (2) Questions arising from human finitude must be coordinated with "answers" in scriptural and theological tradition
 - (3) *Theology breaks down when it ceases to listen to right answers or loses confidence in its answers*
 - (4) Tillich stands in a venerable tradition
 - (a) *Human life is a sort of question - an unresolvable tension*
 - (5) Paul's "who will rescue me" (Romans 7:24) to "quaestio mihi factus sum" (Augustine) and

Kierkegaard's insisting that to be aware of one's finitude = to be anxious (142)

(6) *What is new (Tillich) is typically modern tendency to assess meaningfulness of objective data of Christian revelation in terms of that question*

(a) God never named outside creator-Creator correlation

(b) "God" signals "answer to the question implied in being"

(c) (almost incomprehensible summary of Tillich)

(d) And Jesus is the New Being

(i) Proper relationship between divinity and humanity appearing under conditions of sin and estrangement

d) Defender of Tillich might argue method of correlation refuses to grant primacy to anxious subject or to scriptural symbols but holds them in tense quality (143)

(1) This seems naive or disingenuous

(2) The one who asks questions shapes the conversation

(3) Tillichean subject is dominant element in the correlation

(4) *Christ is fitted to the subject and not vice versa*

(5) It is in Jesus all things including subjectivity hold together (Colossians)

(6) Tillich's method would work in paradise or heaven but not here below (Barth)

(7) Our minds so compromised by sin we ask wrong sorts of questions

e) David Tracy critiques correlationist method of Tillich not on Barthian grounds

(1) Tillich does not account for complexity and multivalence of existential situation brought into correlation with the biblical message

- (a) (Rw - tendency among liberal theologians? Sweeping generalizations?)
- (2) Tillich's reading is too neat
 - (a) Lines up "questions" of the situation with "answers" of the Bible
 - (b) Philosophy does not wait for theology to resolve its problems
 - (c) And theology does not look to philosophy to articulate the questions
 - (d) *Whatever correlation between experience and revelation is more subtle and complex***
- (3) Correlation takes more Ricoeurian flavor as two "worlds" of Scripture and interpreter playfully overlap and interact
- (4) Question + answers contribute to transforming conversation (144)
- f) *Again we face a difficulty*
 - (1) If Jesus Christ is one in whom all things... through whom all things reconciled ***what precisely is the realm or dimension with which his word could be correlated?***
 - (2) (Rw - not sure I understand the question)
 - (3) What stands outside his influence and determination as a properly "secular" sphere?
 - (4) Can there be a demarcation between philosophy and theology or between situation and message?
 - (5) Who is coordinating the correlational conversation? Where does she stand?**
 - (6) *This person would be above Christ and have primacy over Christ and secular realm***
 - (7) We face problem of epistemic priority**
 - (8) *Correlationalism assumed questioning or adjudicating subject has final word*

IX. Natural theology

A. Second challenge to epistemic primacy of Christ

1. Comes from heart of Christian church (!)
 2. ***Perspective of so-called natural theology***
 - a) Discourse about God resting not on revelation but on workings of unaided reason
 3. Scriptural warrant from *ever since the creation of the world*
Romans 1:20
 - a) Paul asserts certain truths about Creator can be known on basis of honest intellectual investigation of creation
 - b) The pagans have no excuse for their ignorance of God
- B. Seems desirable to engage in investigating things of God using ordinary tools
1. Karl Barth voices standard objection to such a reading (145)
 - a) *Natural theologian has no faith or is in bad faith*
 - b) Either bracketed the claims of Colossians and Johannine prologue
 - c) Or playing with them and pretending for sake of audience
- C. Formula of natural theology used in neoscholasticism of nineteenth-twentieth centuries
1. ***This account of what practitioners of Christian theology were doing is inadequate and a more proper description will lead to resolution of our dilemma (see above B.1.b-c)***
 2. *Turn to Thomas Aquinas*
- D. A few remarks
1. Too many restrict to considering the two *Summae* especially *Summa theologiae*
 2. His commentary on the *sacra pagina* was basic to his theological work
 - a) *Questiones disputatae* covering various topics
 - b) Finally composed two great *summae* and *Commentary on the Sentences of Peter Lombard*
 - c) Second *Summa* written for beginners
 - d) ***Can be misleading to read only treatments found in summae without attending to more basic and often more thorough analyses in disputed questions and biblical commentaries***

- E. When neoscholastic commentators turned to *Summa contra gentiles* they found exaggerated demarcation between what can be known through natural reason and what can be known through revelation
1. *Summa contra gentiles* Thomas treats trinitarian nature of God in book 4
 2. Seems like one can say much about God based on purely philosophical arguments
- F. Neoscholastics drew attention to language of *preambula fidei* in later *Summa theologiae*
1. Entire range of data can be known about God purely on basis of reason prior to what can be known through articles of faith
 2. These “preambles” are grist for mill of natural theology
 3. Christ + incarnation + Paschal Mystery only discussed in third part of *Summa theologiae*
 4. ***Such a program hardly based on epistemic priority of Jesus Christ***
- G. But such a reading is superficial**
1. During 1260s Thomas write massive commentary on Gospel of John
 2. In interpretation of prologue ***makes key remarks about nature of knowing (theological and otherwise)***
 3. Turns to *what has come into being through him was life... darkness did not overcome* 1:4-5
 4. ***This light signifies the power of the Word regarding human beings especially their capacity to see and know***
 - a) Light used metaphorically to describe any event of manifestation (following Augustine + Ambrose + others)
 5. Mind knows through light of intelligibility and soul comes to spiritual awareness through light of grace
 6. Both forms of “vision” depend on light of the Word
 - a) Divine Logos must fall on object of vision
 - b) One who sees must share to some degree in that light
 - c) *Must be a correspondence based on mutual participation*** between knower and known
 - d) Rational knowing

- (1) Subject participates in *lux intellectiva* or *lux agentis intellectus*
 - (2) Logos is power through which things are intelligible
 - (3) Word is power through whom all things are known
 - (4) It is in Christ and through Christ even the simplest act of cognition takes place**
 - (5) “Natural” reason is christological
 - (6) *All truth is fro the Holy Spirit*
 - (7) Knower need not be aware
7. Aquinas considers “and the light shines in the darkness”
- a) *Tenebrae* either ordinary weakness of finite mind in presence of divine light or intellectual debility produced by sin
 - (1) Second type - only when converted can is see divine things
 - (2) Sinners require the illumination of CHrist
 - (3) But to a lesser degree so do saints
 - (4) *Even the ordinary functioning the mind based upon participation in the Word***
8. Theme of participation more clearly emphasized when Thomas turns to *the true light was coming* John 1:9
- a) “True light” because it is the sheer intelligibility of God beyond which nothing further can be known
 - b) All forms of knowing are a function of participating in this unsurpassable luminosity
 - c) ***“Natural” reason is not to be demarcated from theology***
 - d) ***Both on spectrum of seeing (running from less to more intense)***
 - e) For mainstream of Christian tradition philosophy and theology not so much separate epistemological forms but born of selfsame eros for vision + communion (Balthasar the proponent of neoscholastic reading of Aquinas)
 - f) *Best understood as existing in a sort of circumincesso*
9. What would induce someone to use this lesser mode of seeing?

- a) Why does Aquinas both with “natural” theologizing???
 - b) We must look in those *tenebrae*
 - c) Thomas comments on man born blind
 - d) The spittle of Jesus ~ divinity in him
 - (1) Earth ~ frail humanity
 - (2) When the two mix in the incarnation they produce a healing balm
 - (3) Able to produce vision in finite sinful human beings
 - e) ***The debilitas weakness of mind***
 - (1) Less intense forms of knowing are desideratum as a **pedagogical tool** to revelation-based theology
 - (2) Easier for weakened minds to take in
10. Johannine commentary (Aquinas) helps us appreciate + interpret more accurately texts on relationship between theology and philosophy in the *Summa theologiae*
- a) Opening article of opening question
 - (1) Aquinas will explore *sacra doctrina* and this is based **on revelation**
 - b) Second article of first question
 - (1) *Sacra doctrina* is scientific in measure it proceeds from first principles known in light of higher *scientia* (knowledge of God enjoyed by God himself and the saints)
 - (2) ***Through revelation human beings participate in luminosity otherwise surpassing them***
 - (3) ***This participation not so much abstract knowledge as a “science” by way of shared experience***
 - (4) **Theology draws out in a disciplined and logically focused way the implications of this experience**
 - (5) (Rw - theology properly speaking is articulating one’s experience of God)

11. What is rapport between sacra doctrina and philosophical investigation of God? (150)

- a) Thomas realizes he will use vocabulary and frameworks of philosophy
- b) *Must show relationship between this unique science (sacra doctrina) and properly human science*
- c) Article 5
 - (1) Is sacra doctrina more dignified than other sciences
 - (2) Relative certitude of philosophy
 - (3) *What is more certain seems more dignified*
 - (4) Theology should cede primacy to reliable philosophical sciences
 - (5) ***Anticipates attitude of Enlightenment regarding religion (especially view of Hegel)***
 - (6) Anticipates Aquinas's method throughout the *Summa*

12. Aquinas' response congruent with analysis in the Johannine commentary

- a) *Nothing prevents what is more certain according to nature to be less certain for us due to the weakness of our mind... hence the doubt that comes to some with regard to articles of the faith is not due to any lack of certitude in the articles but is due to that weakness of the human intellect (151)*
- b) *Debilitas ~ tenebrae*
- c) ***Darkened minds of sinful human beings are overwhelmed by clarity and certainty of the divine light given by revelation***
- d) "Certain" is simply easier to take in
- e) "Doubtful" is too much to absorb

13. In play of second objection + response we see precise nature of rapport between these higher and lower forms of knowing God

- a) Theology borrows from various philosophical disciplines
- b) Therefore seems theology is inferior to natural reason

c) *Anticipates objections of Luther and other Reformers concerning lordship that secular Aristotelian conceptuality seems to exercise over language of the Bible in scholasticism*

(1) **This science [theology] can accept something from philosophical disciplines, not that it requires them, but rather it might make more manifest those things that are treated in this science**

d) Philosophy is used for pedagogical purposes to make subject matter more accessible

(1) *But to whom?*

(a) To the entire human race

e) *What we fallen knowers require is a leading by the hand to orient us toward realm of pure light*

f) Philosopher leads the fallen seeker to the light

14. *What emerges here is balanced vision so typical of Aquinas*

a) Natural reason as participation in the light of the Logos

(1) And ancilla of theology

b) But not in opposition to or on par with theology

c) Emerges as requirement because of limitation of fallen intellect

d) *There is an essential nondualism between theology and natural reason*

15. Is Aquinas caught on horns of Barthian dilemma?

a) No faith or bad faith?

b) Aquinas' project is theological and conditioned by and dependent upon revelation

c) He stands in the great Augustinian and Anselmian tradition of faith seeking understanding

d) Whatever means of perception or communication he employs ***he will never leave the confines or influence of the Word***

16. We come to heart of my argument in this part

a) *It is precisely the epistemic priority of Jesus Christ (Word made flesh) that warrants the use of philosophical and cultural tools to explicate and propagate the faith*

(1) Since those means come from and lead to that Word

b) Jesus Christ = Logos incarnate

c) *Signs of his presence and style are everywhere and he can relate noncompetitively to them*

d) Paradox = the lower the Christology the more problematic the dialogue with philosophy and other cultural forms

e) *Modern foundationalism is irreconcilable with epistemological primacy of Christ*

(1) Philosophically flavored theologizing of Aquinas and colleagues is not

X. The nature of the Christ-mind

A. Having considered two possible challenges we can look more carefully at epistemic claim in Colossians and Johannine prologue

1. What exactly is the Christ-mind

2. What does it mean to say we approach all our knowing through this mind?

3. *Have the same mind Philippians 2:5 what is at stake?*

a) That we know and how we know is conditioned by what was revealed in Christ Jesus

b) Christ-consciousness reveals itself in seven dimensions

B. The intelligibility of coinherence

1. In Jesus all things have come to be and all things hold together and find their fulfillment in Jesus (Colossians)

a) Jesus = incarnation of Word by which Father made all without exception

b) *To acknowledge the epistemic priority of Jesus Christ is first to assume the intelligibility of all that is*

c) What comes to be through Logos is logical

- d) *Unavoidable correspondence between activity of the mind and structure of being*
2. No accident that physical sciences developed and flourished in the Christian West
- a) People formed in conviction that finite reality is intelligible (made through Logos) will naturally move out to meet the physical world with confident rationality
 - b) Investigations will proceed to farthest reaches
 - c) This correspondence can be tuned in opposite direction
 - d) ***Universality of objective intelligibility can be explained only through recourse to transcendent subjective intelligence that thought world into being***
 - e) *Every scientific fact is ipso facto an affirmation of God's existence*
3. Similar intuition of claims of Jacques Derrida and George Steiner (154)
- a) *To know anything at all is to know God exists*
 - (1) Derrida denies this logocentrism
 - (a) Asserts permanently open-ended and undecidable nature of human knowing
 - (2) Steiner accepts it because he affirms possibility of real speech + knowledge
 - (3) ***What is interesting is the logical connection both see from different sides + with different intentions between knowledge and what can only be called "faith"***
4. More to it than his
- a) **The ground of the world's intelligibility is a Word spoken by a speaker**
 - b) Bears full power of one who utters (John 1:1)
 - c) Word cannot be one who speaks it
 - d) *Primordial intelligibility is a being-with-the-other or a being-in-the-other*
 - e) *A coinherence*

- f) Relationality (being-for-the-other) must be form that at deepest level conditions whatever is and the truth that satisfies hunger of the mind*
5. This principle becomes clearer when we follow narrative of prologue to point of enfleshment of the Word
- a) Primordial divine conversation partner becomes a creature to draw creation into the embrace of the divine life
 - b) Logos personally delineates nature of this mission
(1) God so loved the world
 - c) Through the incarnation the coinherence of Father + the Logos seeks to provoke a coinherence of creation with God and of creatures with one another
 - d) Momentum is toward total self-gift of the cross (John 12:32)
 - e) *Through the blood of the cross* Colossians 1:20
 - f) Christian revelation insists the most radical sort of being-for-the-other is nature of the Logos that has marked all created reality*
 - g) Any philosophy science or worldview that does not see relationality as ontologically fundamental must be false**
 - h) What the mind correctly seeks is always a form of coinherence
6. All non-theological arts + sciences in university find proper center in theology (Bonaventure, 13th century)
- a) *Christ is the physical mathematical and metaphysical center of the universe and the point of orientation for all the sciences dealing with those dimensions*** (156)
7. Newman felt compelled to call for reinsertion of theology in university disciplines (19th century)
- a) Theology must be the *centering element* in the conversation
 - b) Speaks of Creator God who is metaphysically implicit in finite existence

- c) When theology is displaced some other discipline takes its place and disturbs proper harmony among the sciences
- 8. Theology does not determine methods strategies and technique
 - a) *But names their fundamental orientation as a quest for intelligibility of coinherent relationality*

C. A praxis of epistemic participation

1. If relationality = basic form of the real then *optimal mode of knowing is through relation with the thing or event to be known*
 - a) If mutual participation = fundamental form of intelligibility then subject's participation in the object and object's sharing in the subject is ost correct epistemic method
 - (1) *The like is known by like*
 - b) This sounds odd to those shaped by concern for **sheer objectivity in knowing**
2. Aspects of Aquinas' deeply Christian account of knowledge illustrates the principle
 - a) All things are intelligible because they are thought into being by the Creator (Aquinas)
 - b) Things exist because God knows them
 - (1) **Being known by another (God) = ontological perfection of a created being**
 - (2) Plays out for purely finite knowing
 - c) *Intelligibility of object calls out to potential knower and knowere seeks out intelligibility of object it otherwise wouldn't have*
 - (1) **Knower is not distanced from object in knowing - quite the contrary**
 - d) Aquinas' epistemology = "objective-participant" not "subjective-observer" (Fergus Kerr)
3. *The intellect actualized by the object is the actualization of the intelligibility of that object*
 - a) (somewhat confusing exposition)

4. Goethe voiced critique of Newtonian form of reason (18th century)
 - a) A rationality fiercely analytical experimental and invasive
 - b) Goethe proposed *more contemplative form of rationality*
 - (1) ***Respects otherness of the object***
 - (2) Refuses to impose itself
5. Thomas' account goes beyond split between Newton and Goethe
 - a) Not privileging subject or object
 - b) Rather **seeing the essential link between them born of unbreakable bond between knower and known**
 - (1) Ground in connection between divine knower and creaturely existence
 - c) ***That mind object and Creator coinhere is assumed by Aquinas***
 - d) **Aquinas proposes active mutuality of knower and known that can be described as type of love** (158)
6. Against this background we can understand Aquinas' definition of truth as *adequatio rei et intellectus*
 - a) Correlation of thing and intellect
 - b) Frequently attacked by critics from William James to Richard Rorty
 - c) ***They read Aquinas' definition through lens of modern demarcation between subject and object and thereby misinterpret it***
 - d) What Aquinas speaks of = mutually enhancing coinherence of objective intelligibility and subjective act of intelligence
7. There are two types of emptiness (Lonergan)
 - a) Box
 - b) Stomach
 - c) The mind prior to experience is empty but like a stomach
 - d) It seeks participation with being
 - e) *To exist = emerge into light of intelligibility*

(1) *To show up + become available to a possible knower*

8. Here we effect a link between this Christian idea of epistemic participation and William James' account of knowing
 - a) Basic to James = *categories of subject and object must be transcended in favor of unified notion of experience*
 - b) Such a tight connection between knower and known that usual distinctions break down and they become aspects of one totality
 - c) ***On basis of this radical Ineinander of subject and object James objects to classical "correspondence" theory of truth***
 - (1) But his own account is dramatic assertion of knowing through epistemic participation
9. Real advance effected by James = his claim that emotion is as involved in act of knowing as intellection
 - a) One-sided valorization of the rational cuts off important dimensions of experience access in non-rational ways
 - b) Most of great advances in sciences have been through intuitive insights feelings emotionally charged gropings in direction of things vaguely seen
10. Echoed recently by Martha Nussbaum
 - a) Feelings have a cognitive value
 - (1) They amount to assessment of importance of given object
 - (2) Emotions as body's way of knowing the truth
11. None of this is incompatible with Christian doctrine of knowing through coinherent participation

D. Intersubjectivity

1. Principal illusion of Descartes = that he could find epistemic *terra firma* by retreating into privacy of his own subjectivity
 - a) Turned toward stubbornly private "I think"
 - b) **This is operationally self-defeating**
 - c) The *cogitamus* matters much more than the *cogito* (Lonergan)

- d) Every act of knowledge that mathematician or scientist achieves is **intersubjective**
2. One who assumes epistemic priority of Jesus Christ should be perfectly at home with asserting dimension of intersubjectivity in knowing (161)
- a) For the Christian authentic knowledge comes through something like love
- b) *Fullness of knowing through an intersubjective process with knowers participating in one another as each participates in the thing to be known*
- c) Ground of being = conversation between two divine speakers
- d) **Search for intelligibility here takes place in context of a steady and loving conversation**
3. A healthy conversation is something like a game (*Truth and Method* by Hans-Georg Gadamer)
- a) Two or more interlocutors enter into rhythm of intellectual exchange
- b) Quite often carried beyond individual concerns and questions
- c) *Each conversationalist must surrender her need to dominate the play for her purposes*
- d) *Each must effect herself before the transcendent goal they all seek*
- e) Accept possibility one might be challenged or corrected
4. Friendship must provide the matrix for productive intellectual exchange (David Burrell)
- a) More than mere mutual respect
- b) Friendship will endure in measure the two friends have given themselves to a transcendent third that surpasses both of them (drawing on Aristotle)
5. Philosophical schools in antiquity were not so much academies where a doctrine was learned as **training grounds where a form of life was inculcated** (Pierre Hadot)

- a) Platonic dialogues as instruction manuals for how to engage in constructive philosophical conversation
 - b) Socrates as positive model
 - c) *Clear implication = not so much think like Socrates as be like him*
6. One senses same thing in writings of Aquinas
- a) First responsibility was ***preaching of the Word*** and this led to Scripture commentary and holding disputed questions on controversial issues
 - b) *Quaestiones disputae* were public debates + lively exchanges between master and students
 - c) Question -> objections in logically coherent way -> citation from Scripture or patristic authority -> answer laid out -> objections carefully reconsidered
 - d) Aquinas rarely brushes aside an objection
 - (1) Response shows validity of some element
 - e) Valorization of tradition everywhere apparent
 - f) ***Thomas' method encourages virtue of friendship necessary for productive pursuit of truth***
 - g) Thomists distilled Aquinas' conversations into clear distinct ideas
 - h) **For Aquinas the ultimate purpose not indoctrination but inculcation of method**
 - (1) **Radically intersubjective way of thinking**
7. To complete the picture we must clarify further the limits and rules of productive intellectual conversation
- a) Humility
 - b) Openness to the other
 - c) Willing to be corrected
 - d) Inclusion of challenging perspectives
 - e) *Shrill chattering unless restrictions in place*
 - (1) Gadamer does not invite everyone to the table
 - (2) Too many conversations = cannot cogently hear an argument
 - (3) People capable of fluent and coherent speech

- (4) No one who doesn't share moral convictions of community of conversation
- f) Aquinas attends to impressive array of perspectives
 - (1) Doesn't entertain every objection
 - (2) Or listen to every voice
- g) *An intellectually and ethically disciplined intersubjectivity that honors the Christ-mind***
- 8. Something similar in writings of John Henry Newman
 - a) *Essay on the Development of Doctrine*
 - b) Uses fact of doctrinal development to validate more ancient and "conservative" version of Christianity
 - c) Protestantism solves problem of development in teaching and practice by *ignoring it*
 - d) Radically valorizes form of Christian life discernible in Scriptures
 - (1) *Requires believer to bracket much of church history***
 - (2) Anglicanism a more subtle method with roots in Vincentius of Lerins
 - (a) *Always everywhere by everybody*
 - (b) But this principle cannot be applied consistently
 - (c) (Rw - Vladimir Lossky on traditions versus Tradition)
 - e) Newman proposed notion of development of doctrine
 - (1) In line with *Lebensphilosophie* of his time
 - (2) An idea is a living thing existing only in a lively mind
 - (a) Contra Hume
 - (3) *Idea like a multifaceted diamond***
 - (4) Fullness is "sum total of possible aspects"
 - (5) This is not possible simply through efforts of one mind

- (6) Only when idea brought to far richer and more powerful sifting process of an entire community of minds it begins fully to show itself
- f) True for ideas in general and more so when a master idea of Christian faith is under consideration
 - (1) Incarnation
 - (a) Aspects implications dimensions and applications appear only gradually through especially concentrated play of lively minds
 - (2) Evolutionary quality of the idea of incarnation
 - (a) Rahner, "Chalcedon: Beginning or End"
 - (b) Chalcedonian formula ended debate by precluding certain interpretive possibilities
 - (c) Closed off corrupt readings (Newman's language)
 - (d) Laconism of its expression called forth further development and explanation (165)
- g) Newman uneasy with modernity and Protestantism regarding living quality of ideas
 - (1) Modernity in Cartesian and Newtonian forms
 - (2) Lutheran Protestantism
 - (3) Both assume certain status at level of ideas and subjectivism at level of epistemology
 - (4) *For Newman knowing more like a disciplined game involving a ball in motion and a team of lively players in accord with definite rules***

E. A mind in love

1. First words Jesus speaks in Mark 1:15 *the time is fulfilled repent and believe*
 - a) "Repent" < *metanoiete*
 - (1) Beyond + mind
 - (2) Change not just behavior but go beyond the mind they have
 - (3) *See things in a new way + adopt different attitude***
 - b) Essential to this epistemic conversion is faith (*pistis*)**

- (1) *Metanoia* will make possible trusting acceptance of the good news
- (2) ***Willingness to enter into the world opened by by novelty of Jesus himself***
- c) Kingdom of God is not primarily social reform ethical renewal or political transformation
- d) **The kingdom first is Jesus**
- (1) Coming together of divinity and humanity
- (2) Word made flesh
2. Opposite of this trust = *why are you afraid? Have you no faith?* (Mark 4:40)
- a) Opposite of trust is fear
- b) To have the Christ-mind = to know the world through clarifying lens of the kingdom
3. Theology is discipline that goes beyond range of philosophical sciences (beginning of *Summa theologiae* by Aquinas)
- a) ***Revelation-based sacra doctrina orients us to properly supernatural end that is naturally ours***
- b) Culmination of revelation = event of the incarnation (beginning of third part of *Summa*)
- c) **Theological vision is an ecstatic form of seeing conditioned by the novelty of the enfleshment of God**
- (1) Theologian = willing to be drawn up beyond herself in attitude of trust in the power of that miracle
- d) Mark's Gospel
- (1) Theological knower is one who has undergone *metanoia*
- (a) ***Radical transformation of vision through the incarnation***
- e) If theological mind is paradigmatic then all forms of human knowing are best marked by this same trust (166)
4. Fatal flaw in Aristotle's metaphysics and epistemology is their focus on being (present constitution of being) (Martin Luther)

- a) Aristotle held proper object of philosophical investigation is substance (*ousia*)
 - (1) From biblical perspective this is distorted (Luther)
 - (2) God more interested in future or destiny of things
 - b) God is interested in figures insofar they serve divine purpose of bringing about transformation of world through grace
 - c) Philosopher (who focuses on the present) labors under illusion he controls object to be known
 - d) ***A trusting decentering of the ego is essential element in Christian epistemology***
 - e) *Prescient anticipation of modern science* (167)
 - f) **Mind that has undergone *metanoia* reads all things through lens of incarnation - from perspective of absolute future God holds out to his world**
 - (1) (Rw - sounds almost like Pannenberg?)
5. We see something related if we consult hymn text Paul integrates into letter to Philippians
- a) *Let the same mind be in you* Philippians 2:5-7
 - b) Like Jesus in inaugural address
 - (1) In Markan context moving from fear to trust
 - c) Here from arrogance to humility
 - (1) Autonomy to obedience
 - d) ***Jesus' mind is a supreme paradox - a mind that obeys that does not cling to its own prerogatives but rather looks to the direction of another***
 - (1) **And this obedience is total** Philippians 2:8
6. In line with Thomas intuitions Bernard Lonergan appreciated God as lure for the mind even in simplest acts of cognition
- a) Whenever the mind seeks truth it operated under impulse and aegis of the Truth itself (168)
 - b) **God's intelligence has grounded the intelligibility of that world and animated the intelligently seeking human mind**
 - (1) Dynamisms of mind must be oriented to the other

- (2) Cognitive act corrupts when it turns outward
- c) ***Any cognitive act is a sort of obedience to God because God is Truth that suffuses all that can be known***
 - d) *Be attentive be intelligent be reasonable be responsible*
(Lonergan)
 - e) All four = calls to overcome self-absorption
 - f) Directives to habituate mind toward love + trust in God
7. To be attentive is more difficult than it may seem
- a) If mind = *tabula rasa* would rest passively
 - b) But mind is alert even to emptiness
 - c) Must take time to watch object or event unfold
 - d) Must overcome tendency to selective perception
 - e) ***To be attentive = take in the novel strange disconcerting dangerous***
8. To be intelligent = look for formal patterns - seek intelligible structures running through whatever exists (Lonergan's sense)
- a) ***Summons to intelligence ~ assumptio of universal reasonability***
(1) Mystical intuition undergirding sciences
9. When a scientist is sufficiently attentive to the data she formulates series of hypotheses + explanations for unique arrangement
- a) Senses a number of possible patterns undergirding the phenomenon
- (1) What Lonergan means by *intelligence*
10. James Joyce description of aesthetic intelligence in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*
- a) Daedalus asks Lynch to consider "basket slung inverted on his head"
 - b) *To see at this level to participate with mind in rhythm of thing's complexity = consonantia to be intelligent*
(Aquinas)
 - c) ***Seeing of the form calls one outside oneself into ecstatic participation in thing or event being investigated***
11. Third imperative (Lonergan) = "be reasonable"

- a) Summons to mind to be decisive
- b) Make judgment among various hypotheses
- c) Which bright idea is right
- d) *Finally there is one adequate explanation for a phenomenon - one rational structure that truly informs it*
- e) At end of long process of experimentation + evidence + argument and counterargument
- f) Decision is a blood movement involving *cutting off*
- g) ***In judgment the knower is called to accept the hard truth***
 - (1) Reasonably conclusion even if it goes against hopes + expectations

12. In the Christian vision the truth of a thing = reflection of the Truth that made it a participation in the Logos that informs it

- a) Making a judgment honors will of the Creator God following his elemental decision
- b) Properly functioning mind has “unrestricted desire to know” (Lonergan)
- c) To want the truth above all
- d) Hence to love God with one’s mind even at greatest cost
- e) Connection to Paulin hymn in Philippians
 - (1) To have same mind as in Christ Jesus + emptying one’s self
- f) ***Christian knower = one who honors God through her judgment overcoming self-absorption that would blind her to the truth***

13. Final Longergian imperative = call to live out implications of one’s judgments

- a) Can take various forms
- b) Some remain incapable of living out their decisions
- c) Those who lack courage of convictions are alienated from participating in truth
- d) If the four imperatives (body will mind heart) are followed habitually + mind is allowed to develop in

accord with deepest intentionality one grows into being
“unconditionally in love with God”

(1) This is heart and mind of the saint

(2) Mind has undergone *metanoia*

14. How much is particularity of Christ-mind related to mind as such?

- a) Enter into conversation with non-Christian?
- b) Would non-Christian admit well-functioning mind operates according to something like Lonergan’s imperatives?
- c) If so how many of these imperatives distinctively Christian?

15. These are pseudoproblems (Lonergan)

- a) It should not be surprising what appears as an epistemic implication of the incarnation is participated in to degrees by anyone who exercises his mind responsibly (171)
- b) Close to Aquinas’ treatment of relation between theology and “natural” reason

(1) Both are participation in the Logos

- c) *The Christian is called to love of the truth mirroring the Truth’s love of him/her and this love is manifested as gift of self unto death*
- d) Lonergian “saint” marked by kenosis of the mind and self in presence of the truth

16. Combine the two insights (Rw - which?)

- a) The mind by which all things came to be is a mind of other orientation trust and obedience
- b) Looks with attention to the present and future intentions of God in the world
- c) *Mind that cannot be contextualized or positioned by any higher perspective is a mind of love and in love*

F. The fallen mind

- 1. The fall had implications at all levels of a person’s being
 - a) Original sin affected body passions imagination and mind

- b) Powers within a person fallen into disharmony with one another
- c) Romans 7
- d) Paul would have realized this inner disharmony through Greek philosophical tradition (172)
- e) Paul knew depths of the problem from biblical tradition
- 2. Paul bequeathed this sense to subsequent Christian tradition
 - a) Developed by Augustine, *Confessions*
 - (1) Darkened mind comes to glimpse of the light
 - b) *City of God*
 - (1) How corrupt and perverted civilization called to conversion
 - c) *De Trinitate*
 - (1) How poorly ordered soul achieves integration through alignment with persons of Trinity
- 3. Through Augustine this notion transferred to medieval Christian consciousness
 - a) Sinful mind sunk in *tenebrae* (Aquinas)
 - b) Especially in Bonaventure
 - (1) Anticipated Luther
 - (2) *What bothered Bonaventure was uncritically taking in thinking of philosopher whose mind was fallen and untransformed by grace*
 - (3) Luther's reasonable suspicions devolved into contempt for "whore reason"
 - (a) Hence *sola scriptura*
- 4. Perhaps this contributed to counterreaction of the Enlightenment
 - a) Taken for granted = there is something the matter with the mind
 - (1) Saw that as exterior not interior
 - (2) Shackled by uncriticized dogmatisms
 - (3) Descartes, Spinoza, Kant

(a) What they believed the enlightened mind could produce with various hindrances removed

(4) “What is Enlightenment?” (Kant)

(a) The mind is good and strong but underdeveloped

(5) Postmodern thinkers are less impressed and more willing to consider the Christian view

5. Lonergan helps us grasp nettle of this issue

a) Lonergan as a Jesuit

(1) Ignatius of Loyola

(2) Conversion as essential lifelong occupation

b) Stress of this dynamic in relation to functioning of the intellect

c) Mind must be summoned to conversation because it tends to dysfunction

d) Poorly operating mind = one that turned in on itself (curvatus in se) and in self-preoccupation lost contact with objective world

e) A mind insufficiently in love

f) Authentic objectivity (contact with the real) = function of properly constituted subjectivity (the converted mind)

g) It is the weakened intellect that prevents the “things in themselves” from properly appearing

6. Return to four imperatives will be helpful

a) First mark of fallen mind

(1) Inattentiveness

(a) Tendency toward selective perception

(b) Person willing to assert without sufficient attention to objective

(c) Sometimes because of *fear*

b) Second = *unintelligence, stupidity*

(1) Seeing of related patterns

(2) Unintelligent person dazzled by surfaces but doesn't look deeper

- (3) *Not* to raise questions
 - (4) Intelligence requires greater level of engagement and self-transcendence
 - (5) Ask questions relentlessly
 - (6) Follow evidence where it leads to participate in endless conversation
 - (7) “Self-complacent finitude” (Tillich)
 - (8) Many curious minds cowed into complacency by threat
- c) Third = *unreasonability, incapacity to make a judgment*
- (1) A thinker will entertain possibilities and hypotheses
 - (2) *Only one can be relatively adequate***
 - (3) Unreasonable mind stays fixed on fence of ambivalence
 - (a) Perhaps entertained by beauty + multiplicity of options and unwilling to close off any
 - (b) Terrified to choose
 - (i) Will hurt or disappoint those she loves + relies upon
 - (c) Might involve major change in life
 - (4) *Fallen mind can settle into self-regarding unreasonableness***
- d) Mind in *tenebrae* is **irresponsible**
- (1) Unwilling to carry out practical and ethical implications of a judgment
 - (2) Reasonable person makes objective truth the norm of his subjectivity**
 - (3) Call for a clear correspondence between freedom and truth (John Paul II)
 - (4) *Irresponsible mind is equivalent to unintegrated self*
 - (5) Hamlet
 - (6) Pilate

e) *The fallen mind in the shadows has tendency toward inattentiveness, stupidity, unreasonability, irresponsibility*

(1) *Curvatus in se*

(2) **Only those who have been touched by the Christ-mind realize limitation of the minds they have**

(3) Saints most aware of sinfulness

(4) Those illumined by the Christ-mind most conscious of fallenness of their intellect

(5) *Saints of the mind realize that perfect attention, intelligence, reasonability, and responsibility are only asymptotically approached through grace, thus they cultivate a becoming epistemic humility*
(175)

G. The incarnate mind

1. Johannine prologue celebrates the transcendence and divine majesty of the Logos

a) *Just as clearly states the immanence and humility of that same Logos*

b) Colossians also posits his particularity and historicity

(1) *Head of his body the church*

c) Same juxtaposition in 1 John

(1) 1 John 1:1

(2) The Word of life is *touched with human hands*

2. *This incarnation of the Logos gives Christians a distinctive epistemic style*

a) The Word is at home with messy particularity

b) **Christians don't seek intelligibility even of the highest sort apart from matter and history**

c) Uneasy with epistemological dualisms and angelisms of any kind

d) Christians prefer to know "on the rough ground"
(Wittgenstein) (176)

3. Both Plato and Plotinus advocated praxis of separation from the body as condition for possibility of authentic knowing
 - a) Otherwise one remains at level of mere opinion
 - b) *Solitariness of this process became especially clear in Plotinus*
 - c) If body = problem then association with other bodies exacerbates the difficulty
 - d) “Along with the Alone”
 - e) Descartes’ radical demarcation between body and mind
 - f) Similar preference for pure mind + distrust of the physical in Spinoza and Kant
4. Locke’s philosophy of mind = interesting locus of modern epistemic angelism (177)
 - a) Locke seems innocent of Platonism Cartesianism or epistemological dualism
 - b) ***But we can pick up the strain we’ve been exploring***
 - c) Deeply concerned with clarifying + purifying process of thought
 - d) Locke identified core problem = *often faulty relationship between inference and assent*
 - (1) Too many give assent to propositions out of proportion to the quality of inference offered as foundation for the assent
 - (2) We give full assent to somewhat convincing or no argument at all
 - (3) Or no assent to clear inferential support
 - (4) This is a **moral** problem
 - (5) ***It is unethical to give assent to a proposition that is disproportionate to inferential support***
 - (6) **Authentic seeker of the truth?**
 - (a) **Not entertaining any proposition with greater assurance than the proofs it is built on will warrant**
5. John Henry Newman’s disagreement with Lockean proposal in *An Essay in Aid of a Grammar of Assent*

- a) Tight linking of assent to inference makes sense only if we assume some sort of epistemological angelism
 - (1) *A view of the human mind which seems theoretical and unreal*
 - b) We fully assent to numerous propositions for which there is vague inferential support
 - c) Numerous assents endure after logical substructure has vanished or been forgotten
 - d) And sometimes assent give way when the inferential arguments are still vigorously in place
 - e) *Though the reasons for a conviction remain unassailed the conviction fails* (178)
 - f) In many cases transition from belief to disbelief has nothing to do with shifts in argumentative base
6. ***Sometimes assent never given in face of well crafted and persuasive arguments***
- a) Mind might grasp truth immediately but take years for act of assent to develop
 - b) Body emotions + heart remain unconvinced
 - c) ***Pressure and coercion***
7. For Newman these ruptures between inference and assent should not be construed as signs of moral and intellectual dysfunction
- a) *The mind does not operate according to rationalist strictures*
 - b) **The mind finds itself embodied conditions and situated - but this can be appreciated as a contributing factor to the intellectual process**
8. Newman examines advantages and limitations of the classical syllogism
- a) Aristotle's logical tool contributed only in part to act of assent
 - b) A and B, then C
 - (1) Symbols are substituted for words or abstractions for individuals

(2) Stripped of all particularization *this very streamlining enables them to be manipulated with such compelling logical force*

(3) Words indicate individuals in all their particularity

(4) This disqualifies words from use in syllogisms

9. Premises of syllogism catch universal qualities and general trends but tend to miss individual exceptions to the rule
- a) The syllogism is open “at both ends”
 - b) *The nondefiniteness of the abstract premises conduces to the nondefiniteness of the conclusion*
 - c) **Syllogistic inference in and of itself is never enough to bring mind to assent in concrete matters**
 - d) *Correlation between abstract logical form of syllogism and purely disembodied mode of intellection*
 - e) **If we are embodied spirits in search of an incarnate truth more is required**
10. This “more” is “informal inference” (Newman)
- a) Includes formal element of syllogistic ratiocination
 - b) Supplements with range of intuitions feelings hunches and an instinct for convincing power of convergent probabilities
 - c) Best example of this = how we know Great Britain is an island
 - (1) We are frustrated if we look for set of clear logical inferences
 - (2) How did this judgment operate?
 - (a) Through sifting and assessing range of probable arguments
 - (b) *If Locke were correct assent should be strictly yield to quality of inference these numerous probabilities ought to lead to mitigated or partial assent*
11. What prevents this embrace of informal inference from devolving into irrationality?

- a) ***The illative sense - epistemological innovation (for which The Grammar of Assent is known)***
- b) We speak of aesthetic sense or moral sensibility
- (1) *Phronesis* (Aristotle) or *prudentialia* (Aquinas)
 - (2) Both orient one to particular case not general principles
 - (3) ***The aesthete determines this sculpture is beautiful through feel for art born of experiences past judgments and intuitions***
 - (4) The good man knows what to do *here and now* through his feel for the situation varied experience in making nuanced judgments
- c) **Newman asserts a parallel capacity regarding determinations concerning what is true** (181)
- (1) This is the allative sense
 - (a) < Latin *latus* carrying or bringing over
 - (2) ***Feel for the truth which allows one to sift through assess and assemble probably arguments converging in the same direction***
12. Hundreds of steel strands of same size + density wrapped around the other can constitute a cord more powerful enough to lift the weight
- a) *One flawed or probable argument will not bring the mind to assent*
 - b) **But conglomeration of probable arguments each imperfect but conducting to same conclusion will move the mind to acquiescence**
 - c) *The illative sense = intuitive power that presides over this process*
 - (1) Largely unconscious
 - (2) *Through the illative sense one can be right in epistemological judgment but incapable of telling how or why this is so*
13. When *Grammar of Assent* published 1870s met fierce resistance from traditional Catholic philosophers

- a) How to adjudicate dispute between two responsible + intuitive people who uses their illative senses and came to opposite conclusions?

b) The illative sense adds the necessary complement to pure reason

(1) Congruent with cognitive quality of emotion

14. Newman presented an epistemology that is incarnational and therefore christological in style

- a) The Word manifests in vagaries and particularities of history + received according to capacity and complexity of the embodied mind

b) *We come to truth neither through escape from body (Platonism) nor sequestration of the mind from the body (modern Cartesianism and Lockeanism) but through rough incarnate interaction of after + spirit*

- c) Classical + modern epistemologies are relatively dualist
- d) Newman's Christian epistemology is one of coinherence

15. Deftest move = Newman shows this illative way of knowing is characteristic of all manners of intellection (scientific psychological philosophical)

a) Every type of knowledge develops from array of assumptions received traditions creative intuitions leaps of faith

b) *All forms of intellectuality are participations in the Logos and are incarnate in their mode and finality*

H. The prophetic dimension

1. Jesus' confrontation with demoniac in Capernaum synagogue Mark 1

- a) Takes place in a *synagogue* place of prayer
- b) Foreshadows long struggle throughout public life with representatives of official religion of his time
- c) Jesus described as prophet
- d) Prophets as antagonists of religious-political establishment
- e) Hebrew *nabi* = truth-teller and religious visionary

- f) Keepers of worldly order frequently look through other lenses + listen to other words
- 2. Now Jesus is incarnation of that Word
 - a) Prophetic to depth of his being
 - b) His confrontation with powers + dysfunctional traditions will be focused intense disruptive
- 3. Act of cleansing the temple in all four Gospels
 - a) Temple = political economic cultural religious center of the nation
 - b) Cleansing the temple struck at most sacred institution
 - c) Historical critics hold this persuaded leaders Jesus merited execution
- 4. Crucifixion as elegantly crafted narratives as supreme prophetic gesture of Jesus
 - a) Standing before Pilate
 - b) “The king of the Jews”
 - (1) Meant as jest + mockery
 - (2) *Indictment of the corrupt powers that put to death the author of life*
 - (3) *Disarmed rulers + authorities* Colossians 2:15
 - c) Jesus displays powers of the world he defeated through his cross
- 5. ***How does this impinge upon questions of epistemology?***
 - a) In this prophetic quality of the incarnate Logos the central epistemic category of the capacity for self-criticism emerges
 - b) (Rw - ???) (184)
 - c) Nothing acquiescent passive or uncritically accepting in attitude of Jesus regarding his own sacred traditions
 - d) ***Reverences the traditions of his people but willing to turn on them when they are corrupt or self-contradictory***
 - e) Refuses to back down when threatened by power of the state

f) The risen Jesus stands as permanent criticism of the powers that marked Him

6. But note **how** Jesus question and criticizes

- a) Not standing outside the tradition but appeals to forgotten strand or deeper intuition of the tradition
- b) Goes to the cross because he is rooted in the will of his Father

(1) That will informing the tradition as a whole

c) Does not assume a perspective outside of revelation and then critiques from that abstract space

- d) He moves from place to place within the whole of revelation
- e) Sees from various points of vantage the signs of corruption - indications the tradition is out of line with himself

f) Embodies the paradox of the fiercest loyalty giving rise to fiercest self-criticism

7. The *Aufklärers* need for hoary traditions to submit to analysis and critique

- a) Hence quality of much Enlightenment epistemology
- b) Strongly antireligious bias
- c) Jürgen Habermas = consistent defender of Enlightenment tradition
- d) *A brief analysis of his philosophy helps us assess the relationship between the prophetic critique characteristic of the Christ-mind and the critique of tradition and institution associated with the Enlightenment*

(1) Roots in Frankfurt school (!)

e) Societies and cultures can become eurotic and destruction

f) Violent imposition of one viewpoint leads to silencing self-loathing antagonism throughout a society

(1) Leads to profound distortion of speech

(2) People in oppressive situations lose confidence in category of truth and in power of speech to bring clarity and liberation

8. Taking seriously J L Austin's distinction between locutionary (declarative) and illocutionary (performative) dimensions of speech act
 - a) *Every declaration made in the course of conversation has at least rudimentary illocutionary force* (Habermas)
 - b) This breaks down if one speaker holds the gun to the other as she makes her statement
9. This becomes more pointed and complex when question of constructing arguments and counterarguments
 - a) If we formulate an argument and threaten you with dismissal from your job the argument and response have no illocutionary force
 - b) The means + modes of intimidation in dysfunctional societies are usually subtler the effect is the same
10. We can begin to sketch contours of ideal speech situation according to Habermas
 - a) *In which the equality of the conversation partners is guaranteed*
 - (1) No threat
 - b) *Only ordinary or commonly accepted canons of reasonableness may be invoked*
 - c) **The capacity to engage in criticism of any institution that threatens his/her integrity and freedom in self-expression**
11. *How can one who accepted the epistemic priority of Jesus assess this Enlightenment-based proposal?*
 - a) In willingness to critique any form of corruption even in sacred places Christianity and Enlightenment come together
 - b) Jesus cleansing temple + hanging from cross is more radical than anything of the Enlightenment
 - c) Call to institutional reform as disturbing as any slogan of the *Aufklärung*
 - d) *In repudiating all forms of violence*
12. Actual Christian communities have rarely lived up to this

- a) Same can be said of systems emerging from the Enlightenment
- b) *The Christ-mind looks for and relies upon coinherence as it goes about its work***
- c) Balance of identity and community = basic form of Christian intellection
 - (1) As opposed to epistemic praxis of violence
- d) *Habermas + committed Christian come together in suspicion of overly subjective + privatized views of truth*
 - (1) *And embracing lively exchange as best matrix for seeking truth*

13. At this point the differences become evident

- a) Claims to special revelation or privileged insight are precluded in Habermasian community
- b) *Practitioners of the Christ-mind take as epistemic starting point not neutral “quest” for truth but ontological priority of Jesus Christ crucified and risen***

14. Do the two sides fall into antagonism + mutual suspicion?

- a) We can show Habermas’ program is not so different from Christian program
- b) Habermas assumes “secular” reason = model of rationality
- c) *Why does bracketing all claims to revelation or religious insight make conversation more reliable?***
- d) Might skew the quest in immanentist direction
- e) Finally a question not of revelation versus reason but two competing claims to revelation and two competing sets of elemental presuppositions**

15. Issue of egalitarianism

- a) Equality of all conversants respected in Habermas’ ideal community
- b) *The Christian holds what is ontologically and epistemically ultimate arrived in a historical revelation witnessed by privileged individuals and these receivers passed on to their successors the power of the revelation***

- c) *I handed on to you 1 Corinthians 15:3-4*
- d) *We declare to you what we have seen and heard 1 John 1:3*
- e) **On display here is a hierarchically organized and epistemically disciplined society** in which passing on central conviction is essential
- f) (Rw - this raises question about whether University Baptist Church is truly an ideal speech community at least from a Christian perspective)

16. From the beginning Christian communities recognized the indispensability of order + authority and have been suspicious of appeals to radical egalitarianism

- a) If everyone has access to truth + claim to authority the conversation devolves into chatter
- b) (Rw - yup and I have witnessed it)
- c) *The Christian peeks behind the facade of Habermasian system and spies forms of ordering hierarchy and exclusion*
- d) (Rw - yup this is what we see in “liberal” society)
- e) **Her religious voice has been silenced and her equality as a conversation partner is hardly acknowledged**

(1) The Enlightenment critique of religious authoritarianism rings hollow (187)

17. Can the Christ-mind meet the demands of the Enlightenment?

- a) In its call for respect among conversation partners
- b) Insisting on non-coercion and nonviolence
- c) Summons to criticize corruption of sacred institutions
- d) ***But in its egalitarianism and antiauthoritarianism and rejection of claims to revelation and embrace of purely immanentist construal of rationality no***

I. Conclusion

1. This chapter showed the coherence of unabashedly Christian epistemology
 - a) Those assuming the epistemic priority of narratives concerning Christ are neither insane nor irresponsible

- b) *Or at least no less sane or responsible than those assuming “neutral” epistemic stance of modernity*
- c) Just as Cartesians Humeans Kantians presume certain principles *so Christians presume certain principles flowing from Scripture and theological tradition*
- d) **The battle is not between prejudiced and unprejudiced**
- e) **But between two camps each prejudiced in a distinct manner**
- f) *This does not lock us into sectarianism or relativism*
- g) Opens door to argument far more fruitful than what held sway between Christian + secular thinkers throughout modernity
- h)

Part IV - The noncompetitively transcendent and coherent God

XI. Thomas and James

- A. Jesus Christ = hermeneutical lens through which whole of reality is properly viewed
 - 1. Narratives function as epistemic trump
 - 2. *Whatever runs counter to them must be false*
 - 3. **Examination of ourselves in moral dimension of our existence is topic of fifth major section**
 - 4. **Subject of this fourth section is God**
- B. In line with christocentric epistemology I choose to begin with distinctively Christian theology of Thomas Aquinas
 - 1. (Rw - this is interesting contrast(?) with Benedict XVI)
 - 2. Agnosticism is remarkable feature of Aquinas' doctrine of God
 - 3. Question 3 first part *Summa theologiae*
 - a) *We can consider how God is not*
 - b) Language from realm of creatures
 - c) *Res significata* can be indicated adequately through ordinary speech
 - d) *Modus significandi* (how these words mean) remain mysterious

4. Problem = terminus of process of theological carving is something strange and uncanny
 5. (Rw - compare “negative theology” in Orthodox Christianity)
- C. Ground for theological agnosticism = great anti-idolatry principle
Aquinas inherited from biblical tradition
1. *I am who I am* Exodus 3:14
 2. God is not a reality that can be caught in net of intellectual scheme or defined by sublimest denomination
 3. Just speaking his name fraught with danger
 4. *As the heavens are higher than* Isaiah 55:9
- D. Parables of Jesus often exercises to confuse and confound the hearer
overturn expectations and upset theological convictions
1. God is just
 - a) Ordinary notion of justice vaguely indicates divine justice
 2. Compassionate
 - a) Divine compassion surpasses radical mode of human love
 3. Original sin as grasping knowledge of deep things of God
 4. ***Whole of Bible can be understood as story of God’s relentless attempt to undo ill effects of that unfortunate and self-defeating reach***
- E. Why is Bible so elusive + resistant to description and nomination
1. Why is anti-idolatry so central?
 2. *In the beginning God created* Genesis 1:1
 - a) **God must be other in a way that transcends any + all modes of otherness discoverable within creation**
 3. To the theologian that glimpses it this otherness is vertiginous disorienting
 4. The mind is never so strong as when it has been overthrown (Newman)
 5. ***For the biblical and classical theological tradition the revelation of Creator God fortifies the mind precisely because it constitutes a permanent overthrowing - a salutary bouleversement***

- F. This healthy agnosticism was undermined through work of late medievals such as Scotus and William of Occam
1. Stressed univocal character of concept of being
 2. Consequence = *God and worldly things can be compared since they can be gathered under same metaphysical category*
 3. As late medieval world gave way to modern
 - a) This conception of the God-world relationship became solidified
 - b) *Great confidence one could speak of God in rationally clear manner*
 - c) Transcendence of God spoken in “spatial” terms
- G. Especially on display in philosophy of God developed by founder of modern thought René Descartes
1. *Discourse on Method* and *Meditations on First Philosophy*
 2. ***Idea of God is “clear and distinct” and comparable to other ideas with same qualities***
 3. John Locke, Isaac Newton, others in deist camp
 - a) Rationalist conception of God
 - b) As supreme being whose existence can be established mechanistically from effect to cause
 4. **How far we are from Aquinas’ cautious agnosticism**
 - a) Explicitly denies God is a substance or *ens summum* comparable to similar substances within genus of existence
- H. Second strain of modern thought about god flowing from late medieval turn to univocity and rationalism
1. **Pantheist view**
 - a) Common to Spinoza, Schleiermacher, Hegel, others
 - b) God is substantially identical to what Bible called created realm

(1) Deus sive natura
 2. Especially in Schleiermacher’s second speech on religion (194)
 - a) Religious person lying on bosom of the *Universum* and becoming its soul

3. *Romantic pantheism has in common with that view a compromising of the strangeness and otherness of God assumed throughout the Bible*

4. *Modern pantheism as logical fulfillment of Scotus' adoption of univocal conception of being*

a) **Finally no difference between God and world**

I. Very far from Aquinas' understanding of God

1. *Ipsum esse subsistens* (sheer act of being itself)

2. Careful to distinguish between that and *ens commune* (being in general)

3. Divine existing not identical to generic "being" which creatures share or the totality of creatures

J. A Jamesian interlude

1. Series of lectures by William James to Oxford 1908

a) Best articulation of two modern approaches to God

b) *A Pluralistic Universe* (1996)

(1) Central concern = existence and nature of God

c) First a characteristically modern caricature of classical theism

d) Second the two rationalistic views of God that followed from rejecting that purportedly inadequate theology

e) *To grasp what is at stake in postliberal doctrine of God instructive to follow twists and turns of James' archetypically liberal analysis*

2. Contrasts "materialist" and "spiritualist" approaches to metaphysics

a) Latter subdivided into "monist" and "dualist" branches

b) Dualism form associates with scholastic theism

(1) *God and his creation are distinct*

(2) Leave "human subject outside deepest reality in the universe"

(3) Impies God not in real relation to creation + totally unaffected

- (4) James expresses numerous concerns about classical God's "non-relationality" and "impassibility"
 - (a) Staple of process theologians seventy years later
 - c) *This leads to a fundamentally rivalrous understanding of God + creatures*
 - (1) God as magistrate
- 3. Barron will not make lengthy rejoinder here (195)
 - a) Notion of God and world as radically distinct "entities" is result of late medieval univocity
 - b) ***The paradox = attempt to gather God and creatures under one metaphysical canopy effectively separated them and turned them into rivalrous "beings" (James)***
 - c) James is wrestling with corrupt form of medieval theism
 - d) James champions individual over + against oppressive deity
 - e) *If only he could have spied behind late medieval voluntarism the theology that advocated radically the noncompetitiveness of God and the created world (196)*
- 4. James prefers "monist" view that makes divine more "organic and intimate" to creation
 - a) Calls this "pantheist" (?!?)
 - b) *God as indwelling divine rather than external creator*
 - (1) ***Notice the anomaly that creation is described as act of God "external" to the world***
 - (2) ***Classical reading = Creator God as radically other could never be characterized as contrastive to the world he makes***
 - (3) James wants a God who does not compete with human flourishing
 - (4) **But he operates within a modern framework proposing only pseudosolutions**
- 5. James' "pantheism" falls into two categories
 - a) More all-embracing monistic

- b) Relatively pluralist
- c) Corresponding to Cartesian-Lockean account and Spinozan-Schleiermachian account
- d) (confusing explanation bottom 196)
- e) James also presents absolutism of his friendly rival Joshua Royce the American Hegelian
 - (1) James has little sympathy with this sort of universalism
- f) *We can relate on a personal and experiential level with God who suffers loves responds moves but the Over-Soul the Universum the Eternal has none of these (197)*
- g) Emerson provides no clue how we can raise our minds to the One

6. **An intriguing progression**

- a) Creator God as alien and threatening (magistrate)
- b) James moves to more immanent conception
 - (1) Confirmable by experience
 - (2) Compare Schleiermacher
- c) For James such experience of God is superior to “knowledge” of distant God known through classical theology
 - (1) But this intuition of Universum still problematic
 - (a) The modern All has many objectionable qualities of the theistic God
 - (b) Not “friendly” to human concerns

d) James turns to other great modern notion

(1) God as a being among others

(2) Somehow accessible through experience with no alienating or overbearing features of classical God

7. James sets out this pluralist version of “pantheism”

- a) Considers work of Gustav Flechner
 - (1) Obscure 19th century German physician + philosopher
- b) Striking similarities in their experiences

- c) Both found solution to their maladies in a kind of “faith” decision to believe
8. Heart of Flechner’s metaphysics = *whole universe in its spans and wave-lengths exclusions and developments is everywhere alive and conscious*
- a) Greatest intellectual folly = presume dualist hypothesis
 - (1) Spiritual as *exception* in order of nature
 - b) *This metaphysical pansychism would find its way into thought of Teilhard de Chardin and Alfred North Whitehead*
 - c) ***That every entity desires seeks “prehends” world around it and actual entities are arranged in various societies and hierarchies that prehend in their own way***
 - (1) ***Ideas central to Whitehead’s process metaphysics***
9. James -> *our minds + bodies are contiguous to this higher Mind and the key to spiritual life (for Flechner) is make this connection to the divine spirit clear explicit and operative*
10. Jaems chides Fechner for quasi-monist tendencies but remains convinced Fechner shows us a way forward theologically
- 11. *That the divine impinges on us without crushing or absorbing us is crucial (for James) (199)***
- a) The World-Soul can act through particular consciousnesses without overwhelming them
 - b) *Stripped of its absolutist husk this theory can account for noncompetitiveness between God + the world*
12. This stripping in James’ eight lecture “The Continuity of Experience”
- a) Culminating essay
 - b) ***Metaphysical density of relationality***
 - c) Radical empiricists know that relationality has metaphysical pride of place since all things are constituted by their relationships
 - d) (Rw - everything exists by communion so Zizioulas)

13. Honest survey of flux experience reveals *impossible to isolate one thing from all others or one sensation/feeling from what surrounds it*

- a) *To specify present as anything other than blend of past + future*
- b) (confusing discussion about flux experience and being able to demarcate moments events and things)

14. *All this introduces quasi-Fechnerian idea of God as mind complicated with oves of human minds*

- a) “consciousness”
- b) This attentive intellect is a “field” surrounded by a fringe stretching “into a subconscious more”
- c) “Every bit of us is part and parcel of a wider self” (James)
- d) Our thoughts are ingredient in a higher consciousness**
- e) Perhaps a more universal mind coexists with variety of particular minds in a sort of ordered hierarchy or complex nexus
- f) *This is James’ wager***
- g) A God who is neither external creator nor abstract absolute

(1) Fellow sufferer

15. Much to recommend this view

- a) But fatal modern quality of James’ reflections as he specifies the details of relationship between higher + lower mind
- b) Looks for concrete “experimental” evidence
- c) (more discussion that is hard to follow)

16. *That these empirically verifiable occasional interventions of a higher being upon lower being could be described as “religious” only possible for someone who has an attenuated sense of God as the creator* (201)

- a) The modern quality of this theory is its rationalism
- b) Interactions being surveyed by an observer within a framework of space and time shared by all three

c) Every detail of this ruled out by Aquinas' creation-based agnosticism

17. Let us follow James to end of his argument

- a) Final lecture
- b) Spells out clearly nature of the God who is implicated in pluralistic play of finite things
- c) Properly religious life = "an unexpected life succeeding upon death"**
- d) Birth of keener deeper sense of life after despair
- e) Clearly Protestant
- f) *Person's self-complacency must be shattered*

18. Adapting language from *Varieties* believer's experience "the tenderer parts of his personal life are continuous with a *more* of same quality which operates in the universe outside of him ... believer is continuous to his own consciousness with a wider self from which saving experiences flow in"

- a) James prefer "thicker" account of experience verified through "unwholesome facts of person biography"
- b) James concerned for vital sense of god that he draws the divine into confines of flow of experience (202)**

19. Delicious analogy

- a) Cat or dog in a library
 - (1) Sees books + hears conversation
 - (2) Has no inkling of the meaning
 - (3) *Most of us make our way through universe seeing everything but "getting" very little*
 - (4) *The mystic "twice-born" saint is like the dog who can participate in higher consciousness*

20. James: there is a superhuman mind with which religiously aware can establish contact

- a) How is that higher consciousness to be conceived?**
- b) Divine mind must be thought of as finite
 - (1) To avoid problems of absolutism
 - (2) *There is a God but he is finite in power or knowledge or both*

- c) James' influence on Whitehead
 - (1) Intellectual descendents of William of Occam
 - (2) *God is not the absolute***
 - (3) Like Scotus' claim God + creatures are both beings
 - (4) God is a being among others**
21. Modernity of James' religious imagination apparent in his construal of otherness regarding God
- a) *Let God have the least infinitesimal other of any kind beside him - and empiricism and rationalism strike hands in a lasting treaty of peace* (203)**
 - b) Everything was preparation for that statement
 - c) What bothered James was eternity of God-world relationship
 - (1) Modern forms of theological absolutism?
Crushing quality of God-world rapport
22. Modernity leaves us forced to choose between
- a) Schleiermacher's absolutized collectivity
 - b) James' supreme being
 - c) *Caught in nexus of conditioned relationality*
 - d) Modern thinkers misconstrue (or forgot) the dynamic biblical view of God which held sway in Christian thought through High Middle Ages**
 - (1) *Allows one to affirm full godliness of God + full flourishing of human subject in relation to God***
 - (2) God exist in a modally different way from any creature or collectivity of creatures
 - (3) Otherly other than nondivine
 - (4) Capable of intimate and noninvasive relationship with the nondivine
23. This view has been occluded from unique and densely textured narratives of Bible especially of Jesus Christ
- a) Michael Buckley and William Placher
 - (1) When Christian theologians and philosophers lost confidence in power of those narratives they

adopted more generically philosophical accounts of God

(2) These philosophers of God became subject of modern debates + discussions

b) Wager: vibrantly recovered biblical and christological theology of God more rationally compelling than any competing religious philosophies of modernity

c) More capable that they of responding to modern concerns about independence of the human subject

XII. The distinction

A. Will attempt to lay out doctrine of God conditioned by distinctive revelational forms contained in biblical witness as a whole and in the event of Jesus Christ

1. (Rw - sounds like this thesis)
2. Congruent with theological masters of Christian tradition
 - a) Irenaeus, Origen, Augustine, Aquinas, Newman, and so on
 - b) Neoscholasticism tainted by Cartesian assumptions proposed purely rational neutrally philosophical account of God as foundation for theological superstructure
3. The masters employed philosophical language according to theological discipline for theological purposes
4. Truth arrived at through proofs + demonstrations was positioned by + in serve of fullness of truth made plain in biblical witness
5. Michael Buckley highlighted fatal weakness in traditional neoscholasticism
 - a) Contra Étienne Gilson's claim (204)

B. What do we Christians know of God?

1. Much hinged on disquieting claims about Jesus of Nazareth
2. First proclaimers shaped by theology of Hebrew Scriptures
3. Yet said something new + distinctive about God
 - a) *As Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*
4. Used Old Testament forms + sometimes adopted philosophical categories

5. ***Communicated a truth about God that earlier thought forms couldn't encompass***
- C. Mark implies this novelty when Jesus forgives sins of paralyzed man
1. *You heard it said but I say* in Matthew
 2. *The word became flesh and lived among us*
 3. *Glory of God shining in face of Jesus Christ* Paul
 4. ***God revered as one powerful Lord of the universe and as compassionate/demanding elevator of Israel is now declared to be the one who has become personally present in the life teaching career death and resurrection of a particular first-century Jew***
 5. ***God must be otherwise than was thought***
- D. Coming together of divinity + humanity in Jesus was given classical doctrinal expression in two-natures formula of Council of Chalcedon
1. *God becomes a creature without ceasing to be God or undermining integrity of the creature he becomes*
 - a) ***God must not be a worldly or finite nature***
 2. His otherness to world is both radical and noncontrastive
 3. "Transcendence" but we have to nuance the notion immediately
 4. **God and what is not God are not comparable within a common frame of reference or according to shared properties univocally interpreted**
 5. ***God is otherly other***
 6. **God transcends/inheres - even as we in line with Aquinas don't know quite what we're saying when we affirm it**
- E. ***God disclosed in the incarnation can let the other be even as he draws close*** (206)
1. Mutual exclusivity is not ontologically basic
 2. Represents a falling away from what is metaphysically prior
 - a) ***God is nonviolent in dealing with what stands outside of him***
 - b) **God's qualities of immanence and transcendence regarding the created world must be seen not as mutually exclusive but mutually implicative**
- F. This is disclosed also in drama of Paschal Mystery

1. When risen Jesus appeared he offered forgiveness
2. God extended *shalom* to those who killed him
3. *Behavior of risen Jesus = "ethical" manifestation of metaphysics of nonviolence undergirding the incarnation*
4. ***God is love and Word became flesh***

G. Coinherence of God + creation = loop of grace manifested in stories of woman at well and prodigal son

1. Transition from antagonistic relationship with divine grace to relationship of receptivity nonviolence and mutuality
2. Similar dynamic in Christ on road to Emmaus

H. This unique modality of divine existence = what great theologians and spiritual teachers of the tradition try to make plain

1. The spiritual seeker grasps how his life must change
2. ***In appreciating God's capacity for noninvasive coinherence one walks more perfectly the path of discipleship***
3. Before 1300 no distinction between theology and spirituality
4. *The nonviolence and unique transcendence of God on display in writings of Anselm of Canterbury and Thomas Aquinas*
5. ***My hope = carefully crafted philosophical accounts of these two thinkers are determined by a biblical form and their ultimate purpose is to effect a gospel-inspired transformation in those who appreciate them***

I. Anselm's God

1. Regrettable that most treatments of Anselm's doctrine of God focus on demonstration of God's existence from second chapter of *Proslogium* aka ontological argument
 - a) Ignore the charged prayer that precedes and illuminating elaboration that follows
 - b) The famous *ratio* in chapter 2 is neither argument nor ontology (Michel Corbin)
 - c) What Anselm tries to show throughout the *Proslogium* is the strangeness of God's way of being
 - (1) Calls forth radical spiritual realignment
2. Anselm not primarily a philosopher nor a modern-style skeptic
 - a) A monk and man of prayer

- b) *Monologion* and *Proslogion* (between 1075 and 1078) before he became abbot
 - c) Products of recollective prayer + desire to help those needing guidance in spiritual life
 - d) The arguments invite to deeper love of God
 - e) The wager for awakening such love is correct understanding of who and how God is
3. Anselm's best-known work begins with autobiographical preamble
- a) Echoes in Eadmer's biography (208)
 - b) Prompted to search for single elegant demonstration that would "guarantee that God truly is, which all other things require for existence and well-being"
 - c) He wants insight into God that is simple clear unifying and direct for one here below
 - d) Struggled to find the *argumentum*
 - e) Finally let the idea come to him
 - f) ***What he despaired of gave itself to him and with ardent heart he embraced that he had previously been pushing away***
4. This account (echoing crucial moves in Augustine's *Confessions*) provides hermeneutical key to reading rest of *Proslogion*
- a) Anselm wanted clear knowledge of God like a geometrician seeking demonstration of a point
 - b) Seeking such tripped up Adam and Eve
 - (1) *Knowledge of deep things of God cannot in principle be grasped by created mind*
 - (2) (Rw - contra Reuven Kimelman?)
 - (3) Turns true god into idol
 - (4) ***Mind can seize only what falls in the nexus of conditioned rationality***
 - (5) Saint's experience of frustration was salutary
5. Turning away was equally dysfunctional
- a) Fleeing from divine presence was hopeless

- b) **True God cannot be grasped or hidden from**
 - c) *Anselm turned away but discovered God would not allow him to remain hidden*
 - (1) **The argumentum began to press upon him**
6. *Another important interpretive lens here*
- a) **What characterizes worldly nature is they can be seized by the mind**
 - (1) *The soul in a certain sense is all things (Aristotle)*
 - (a) All finite categories can be categorized there
 - b) **They can also be set aside ignored turned away from**
 - (1) Every finite reality can concern me but not ultimately
 - c) Anselm's interaction with this *argumentum* hints he is relation with the true God that radically nonworldly reality which can be neither seized nor avoided (209)
7. Turning point was **moment of surrender**
- a) *The very thing he sought and feared se obtulit handed itself over to him*
 - b) God did not want first humans to **seize** divine life
 - c) **Divine life can only be received as a grace**
 - d) **Can be maintained only by being given away in turn**
8. This is not one-sidedly passive (210)
- a) With ardor Anselm embraced what was offered
 - (1) Prodigal son and woman at the well
 - b) Anselm received the gift then gave it away
 - c) **The writing of the Proslogion is act by which he maintained himself in the loop of grace**
 - d) The rest of the work explicates these intuitions
9. We must first pass through first chapter of his masterwork
- a) Should not be dismissed as boilerplate from a medieval monk
 - b) *Reader must endure purification of heart + clarification of spirit before reading the theology Anselm offers*
 - c) Otherwise God disclosed in chapter 2 will be misconstrued

- d) Compare rationalizing misinterpretations of “ontological argument” through the ages
10. First chapter title = the Awakening of the Spirit toward the Contemplation of God
- a) The mind in relation to God tends toward sluggishness and groggy misperception + must be shaken out of slumber
 - b) “Eia nunc” (up now, pay attention) to *homuncio* man of nothing
 - (1) Engagements with world of conditioned things must be broken so contact with the one unconditioned reality can be affected
11. Enter into the cell of his mind + exclude everything except God and what will help him find God
- a) Recalls Jesus’ admonition to go into our room
 - b) Redolent of Benedictine tradition of holiness of monastic cell
 - (1) Where solitary one communes with God
 - c) ***Many conditioned things set aside in favor of the unconditioned one***
12. Then pray wholeheartedly
- a) *I seek your face; your face O Lord I search out* (211)
 - b) The God who is not idol of the mind can only be received as a gift
 - c) Seeker must ask and ask again
 - d) ***Whatever is seized by the spirit through its own efforts is a conditioned form and not the radically other***
 - e) Only within the loop of grace one experiences the true God
13. Anselm rouses God to action
- a) *And you Lord my God rise up and teach my heart where and how to seek you where and how to find you*
 - b) So far from modern confidence
 - c) We cannot trust the mind to lead us toward God because the desire has become distorted

- d) *We must pray also for the grace that is condition for possibility of seeking the right way*
14. Anselm argues for existence of the fall on basis of painful split in the human spirit (like other Christian thinkers)
- We desire God but are unable to find him
 - Anselm's theological anthropology in summary form = *denique ad te videndum factus sum, et nondum feci propter quod factus sum* (212)
 - Moving and honest lament at condition of the children of Eve
15. The agony Anselm described = consequence of this dire condition
- The homeland can move toward us
 - Look at us Lord hear us illumine us show us yourself*
 - Only possible relationship with Creator is of grace ***receiving then giving away***
16. Toward end of first chapter uses language of Augustine to disclose precise nature of fallen condition
- Lord turned in on myself I can only look downward lift me up that I might tend toward the heights*
 - Fundamental problem = tendency to become collapsed around the infinitely boring space of one's ego***
 - Self becomes substance cut off from flow of grace
 - God becomes projection of the self
 - Illusion of self-sufficient ego cut off from supreme being is what Scotus Occam and moderns took as metaphysically basic***
 - Anselm tries to show us seeing God with at least relative adequacy and being in the right spiritual attitude are correlative and mutually implicative**
17. Second chapter of *Proslogion* -> most studied + controverted texts in Christian tradition
- We must read the argument from perspective of a medieval monk - with biblical eyes***

- b) *Therefore Lord you who give understanding to faith give me as far as you judge it to be good to recognize that you are as we believe you to be and that you are what we believe*
- c) Asks for understanding that will not alienate him but increase his faith
- d) **The key is donation**
- e) **Asks that God give him this insight on God's terms**
- f) ***Acceptance of grace will be the controlling element throughout the exercise in theological understanding***
18. In preamble told us what he sought came to him as a gift (213)
- a) The content was a name
(1) *And indeed we believe you to be that than which nothing greater can be thought*
- b) Similar to Moses who received a nonanswer
- c) Anselm's name has no positive content and provides no conceptual clarity
- d) Any idea of God can be overshadowed
(1) Hegel and the thought of a limit is beyond the limit
- e) *To think of God as the highest reality is already to be beyond God and in a position to judge and categorize him*
- f) To complement God is to imply superiority
- g) ***Anselm's name rules out this sort of move***
- h) In accord with *si comprehendis, non est Deus* (Aquinas)
- i) We must call this a name
- j) Anselm's name is alien to Descartes' distinct idea of perfect reality
- k) Anselm's name is not clear or distinct
19. Further implication of Anselm's mysterious name (214)
- a) ***Any supreme being proposed by philosophers or concocters of myth would exist competitively over + against other lesser beings***
- b) Zeus is one god among many and one being among many

c) Even Aristotle's first mover or Herclitus' universal logos is one power in/alongside cosmos as a whole

(1)(Rw - so much for atheist arguments against God as maker of everything)

d) *Anselm's name for God signals absolutely unique form of transcendence we saw in connection with Chalcedonian formula*

(1) That which neither competes nor contrasts to a worldly nature is that than which no stranger can be thought

(2) God + the world not greater than God alone

e) God must be so modally different from anything else that exists that any comparison between him and the rest of reality is impossible

20. Close relationship between Anselm's name for god and "naming" of Christ in Paul's letter to Philipppians

a) *The name above every other name*

b) *That than which no greater can be thought* correlates to one whom no greater can be named

c) Anselm expresses elemental Christian conviction that divine power in Jesus Christ must be utterly strange

21. So does it correspond to anything real (outside the mind)

a) Fool in Psalm 14 is right?

b) Even the one who denies existence of God has idea of God in mind

c) *It is this unique distinctive idea of od that Anselm places in the mind of the doubter*

d) "Than which cannot be conceived" cannot be sequestered in the intellect

e) *If we say god is fantasy or clever idea we are caught on the horns of a dilemma*

(1) *We are saying we are thinking bout something greater than that which no greater can be thought about*

**(2) Denial of God's existence involves us in a
hopeless conundrum**

(3) (Rw - ??? really??? How so???)

22. Beyond scope of book to rehearse the innumerable debates
around this

a) Anselm's colleague Gaunilo started tradition of
misreading

(1) Existence of perfect idea from idea of such an
island

(2) But idea of God is unique and not comparable to
other notions

(3) "Than which cannot be thought" as a perfect being
(?!?)

**(4) On the basis of such a concept nothing can be
demonstrated**

23. Thomas Aquinas

a) Anselm makes logical mistake of moving from notional
to real from intramental to extramental

b) And idea cannot warrant the claim it corresponds to
something real

c) This sets aside the preamble to Proslogion

d) He was given this argument through grace of God

(1) He starts with an experience of God summed up in
a sacred name

e) Forgets how Anselm came by this name

24. What happens in the *argumentum* is not drawing conclusions on
basis of premises

**a) But showing forth implications of that experience and
that name**

*b) Anything sequestered in one finite category is set over
and against another finite category and cannot possibly
be the unconditioned*

c) If God is "this" not "that" God is caught in web of finite
things (216)

d) God cannot be supreme object "out there" either

- e) “That than which” cannot be a supreme or perfect being
 - (1) Such would be contrastable to entire dimension of subjectivity
 - f) *It is “greater” to exist both in mind and outside the mind alone or in the objective realm alone*
 - g) **Anselm is showing us how the true God exists**
25. To understand spiritual dynamics of *argumentum* refer back to grounding experience
- a) What is within categories descriptive of finitude can be **grasped or hidden from**
 - b) *To say God = an idea or object is eo ipso to grasp him intellectually and find a way to avoid him*
 - c) **To objectify or subjectify God = be in sin** (thinking with fallen mind)
 - d) Hence Anselm’s discipline of chapter 1
 - e) *We must deal with tendency toward idolatry before we glimpse ungraspable and unavoidable quality of that than which no greater can be thought (217)*
26. Jesus Christ is breaker of idols
- a) God in the incarnation is not in above or alongside the world
 - b) Cannot be turned into conditional object
 - c) Strangeness of true God ***allows him to operate in world peacefully and noninvasively***

J. Aquinas’ God

1. Christological character of Thomas’ overall project
 - a) Despite distortions *authentic Thomism conditioned by person of Jesus Christ whom Thomas the Dominican preached and proclaimed*
 - b) **Aquinas’ doctrine of God explicates difference on which I have insisted**
 - c) Unique mode of otherness on every page of Aquinas’ treatment of God
 - d) *Will focus on three*
 - (1) ***Simplicity***

(2) *Creativity*

(3) *Direction of world through secondary causality*

e) **Modern concern for integrity + freedom of creature against God honored in medieval theology than in constructs of modern philosophers**

2. Divine simplicity is master idea for Aquinas
 - a) *Most detailed treatment in disputed question De potentia Dei*
 - (1) Mid 1260s
 - (2) Same time as *Summa theologiae* and commentary on John
 - b) *Summa* as text for beginners compared with *De potentia*
 - (1) Lengthy + densely complex *respondeos* with many objections + responses
 - (2) Arguments more fully developed + nuanced than in *Summa*
3. Overarching issue = divine power or God's capacity to give rise to what is other
 - a) Trinitarian processions and act of creation analyzed
 - b) ***Ground for both = peculiar nature of God as that which simply is***
 - c) Question seven removes from idea of God any creatureliness
 - d) Article 2
 - (1) Essence and existence in God
 - (2) Constitutes indirect proof for existence of God
 - (3) More elegant and convincing than demonstrations from *Summa* part one
 - (4) **When a variety of causes producing diverse effects come together in giving rise to one common effect this must be due to influence of higher cause**
 - (5) *The fire that warms the whole stew*
4. All finite causes despite their diversity come together in producing *esse* act of being

- a) A builder makes the house to be
 - b) *They come together + give rise to be-ing*
 - c) Only through appeal to higher or more elemental cause that works through them and whose proper effect is to-be
 - (1) **That explains be-ing**
 - d) This fundamental cause is God
 - e) Particularly effective argument
 - (1) ***Points to properly creative power and not to mover or cause among many*** (219)
5. Preliminary step in overall argument for identity of *esse* and essence in God
- a) Proper effect of a cause proceeds as similitude to nature of that cause
 - b) ***It follows that God the cause whose distinct effect is to-be must himself be to-be***
 - c) If God were anything other than act of to-be he would be a type of being
 - (1) Could only give rise to particular mode of existence
6. Does this stand in tension with agnosticism emphasized at beginning of chapter?
- a) No
 - (1) In saying that to be God is to-be *we are not making any positive claim*
 - (a) ***We are gesturing toward the darkness of what we do not know***
 - (2) As act of *esse* God cannot be qualified defined delimited specified or compared to anything else
 - b) This is why in two *Summae* and elsewhere Aquinas carefully clarifies God is not a body
 - (1) Not material or composed of substance and accident
 - (2) Otherwise God would be caught in net of conceptual knowledge

(3) Prohibition of “catching” is practical purpose of claim he is to-be itself

7. This negativity emphasized in next article
 - a) Whether God might be categorizable in any genus
 - b) ~ *can God be known scientifically?*
 - (1) ~ *when they ask your name what do I tell them?*
 - c) Three arguments why God cannot be placed in a genus
 - (1) God is simply perfect + contains within him the perfections of all genera
 - (2) If in a genus would be determined according to perfections of that one category + not simply or inclusively perfect
 - (3) ***Because God is not namable according to most generic of categories he cannot be circumscribed defined grasped***
 - (4) ***In no sense a being an individual***
 - (5) Would make him comparable to other individuals
 - d) **As simpliciter perfectus must be prior to and beyond any + all customary ontological divisions and contrasts**
 - e) Identical to Anselm’s *that than which*
8. Both theologians rule out grasping + hiding tendencies of the sinner
 - a) Adam’s first move is rendered absurd
 - b) Adam’s second is problematized by God’s infinity
 - (1) Where could one run?
 - c) These descriptions are disconcerting + disorienting because of fallen human consciousness
9. *This strange God (not individual or specifiable reality) cannot be in competition with the world*
 - a) Even when he enters creation intimately he allows it to be itself
 - b) *To do otherwise would compromise his otherness*
 - c) ***Even as God exerts his primary causality + gives rise to being he does so through near infinite variety of***

secondary causes each of which retains integrity + uniqueness

- d) God can be both everything + nothing
- e) Paul Tillich *God's to be cannot be illuminated through categories applicable to finite beings*
- f) Karl Rahner *in heaven the blessed would see for first time how incomprehensible God is*

(1) The divine mysteriousness is not so much function of our noetic limitations as an essential attribute of God

- g) **Behind this metaphysics is distinctive relationship between divine and human natures in Christ anchored noncompetitively to unity of divine person**

10. This christologically oriented metaphysics unraveled at beginning of modern period

- a) Allowed various “supreme being” doctrines by philosophers from Decartes to James
- b) James couldn't see past competitive God who had to withdraw into finitude to allow other beings freedom
- c) ***Unable to appreciate how the God is Aquinas is somehow else he had to make God somewhere else***
- d) Irony = God in finitude is more competitive with finite beings

11. When young son wandered into far country his wealth disappeared

- a) Clung to *ousia* and became lost hungry homeless
- b) ***So modern person having escaped from clutches of supreme being + clinging to freedoms and prerogatives becomes sojourner in far country his liberty turning to dust***
- c) **True freedom and joy are discovered in act of surrendering completely to Grace who cannot even in principle undermine the integrity of one who surrenders**

12. This other-enhancing quality of the one whose nature is to-be emerges in Aquinas' surprising discussion of act of creation

- a) Modern debates about evolutionist + "creationist" accounts are marked by modern assumptions about distant competitive and sometimes intervening God
- b) "A plague on both your houses"
- c) Aquinas' metaphysics rests on metaphysics of strange God who lets other be in very act of constituting that other as other
- d) *We will explore his by looking at dispute question De potentia Dei*

13. Question 3 in *De potentia* deals with creation and is longest with nineteen articles

- a) ***The proper treatment of this issue was crucial to Aquinas (222)***
- b) *Whether God can create something from nothing*
- c) This formulation is actually redundant
- d) *Creatio* means to make something from nothing
- e) We must hold God creates *ex nihilo* + this rests upon God's nature as purely actual
- f) Every agent acting in the measure that it is in act (in possession of some perfection of being)
 - (1) Finite cause produces finite mode of existence
 - (2) Any natural or finite cause acts by moving another by changing or further specifying its being in some manner**
 - (3) But God (simple reality) must be totally in act and produces the whole of finite being**
 - (4) Not acting as mover on something preexisting but bringing forth existence of the world in its entirety
- g) ***The web of interdependent realities as a whole is brought into being by what remains necessarily other***

14. Therefore creation is not a change or motion

- a) In any *mutatio* there exists some substrate that remains the same

- b) Neither substantial nor accidental change obtains in creation since there is nothing preexisting that receive or endure the act of creation
 - c) Unformed matter is not recipient of creation (since matter = creature)
 - d) Even time is a creature
 - e) Space is not unchanging theater in which creation takes place
 - f) ***When we say time began or space emerged we speak on basis of primitive imaginative representations not exact metaphysical ideas***
 - g) *We struggle to speak positively of creation*
 - h) ***We know roughly that it is but we have no real idea what it is***
15. This elusive quality is made plain in third article of question 3 (223)
- a) ***Whether creation is something really in the creature and if it is what it might be***
 - b) In the case of creation we have an instance of a mixed relation
 - c) ***For creature is dependent on causal influence of God***
 - d) ***Whereas God is not contingent upon the world***
16. If we take “creation” as creative act we must say it is “in” God since it is same as divine essence
- a) But if in the passive or relational sense we cannot say it belongs to God *but we ascribe it fully to the creature*
 - b) At best we can say ***creation is “only the beginning of being and a relation to the creator from whom it has being and thus creation is nothing other really than a kind of relation to the God with newness of being”***
(1)(Rw ~ “It is communion [relationship] which makes beings be. Nothing exists without it. Not even God”. [Being and Communion, 17])
 - c) “Beginning” not chronological inception but ongoing grounding of deepest center of a creature’s existence

(1) “Freshness” or “newness”

(2) Thomas Merton

(a) Contemplative prayer = realizing that place where one is here and now being created by God

17. Aquinas refers to creation as “kind of relation”

- a) Not Aristotelean terms as rapport between two already existing things
- b) Creation does not have a relationship - it *is* a relationship (224)
- c) Yeah but to give being something must exist to receive the gift
- d) *But then God does not create ex nihilo*
- e) ***In giving being God simultaneously produces that which receives being***
- f) **Coinherence is built into structure of creaturely existence**

18. We must wrestle with objections of James, Whitehead, process theology that this God is cold unresponsive heartless and domineering

- a) Thomas’ Latin language makes him vulnerable to this
- b) God’s rapport with world is not “realis”
 - (1) Contemporary reader hears distance
- c) God cannot be said to “respond” to what creature does
- d) ***God is ground of any and all creaturely activities and hence is more connected to creature than an outsider actor***
- e) God is *in* all things by “essence presence and power” (*Summa theologiae*)

19. Were God a finite thing his relation to others would be interruptive and invasive

- a) The simple one who gives being *ex nihilo* stands in relationship of radical nonviolence with the world he makes (John Milbank)
- b) God does not wrestle recalcitrant matter into form

- c) Nor subdue divinities outside himself
- d) Nor order chaos
- e) (Rw - how do we account for what Levinson describes?)
 - (1) *None of these could exist outside God's creative power*
 - (2) God allows the other to be
- f) James Allison observes traces of mythological account in Genesis
 - (1) (Rw - ah here we go)
 - (2) *Doctrine of creatio ex nihilo came into Christian tradition because of nonviolence of Paschal Mystery*
 - (a) Divine way of establishing order is peaceful not coercive
 - (3) This forces reconsideration of theology of God
 - (4) Leads toward claim of 1 John 1 that *God is light in him no darkness*
 - (a) Love untainted by violence
 - (b) Very nature of creation must be rethought**
 - (5) *If God is nonviolent love then creature must be a pure relationship to its creative source*

20. Why does God create?

- a) One way = because he has to
 - (1) Aristotelianism of Arab commentator Avicenna
 - (a) Anticipating dialectal theology of Hegel
- b) Aquinas has no truck with emanationsim
 - (1) Causes acting through intelligence and will produce wide diversity of effects
 - (2) God's mode of creativity is not automatic but intelligent purposive and artistic
 - (3) *God must possess all ontological perfections including mind and will*
- c) Therefore what he does is conditioned by mind and mediated by choice

d) God chooses with artistic intent to give rise to the universe but does so in freedom and from self-interest

(1) Implies God's creative act = gesture of love

(2) *God's creative act is like shining of the sun*

(pseudo-Dionysius)

(a) Because its nature to share himself with the other

e) God's love shines on good and bad alike

f) God creates because he is good and good is diffusive

(1) First Vatican reiterated this in response to Hegelianizing tendencies

21. Aquinas' teaching concerning relationship between divine causality and creaturely causality

a) Much hangs on its resolution

b) Modern mind reacts against any claim God interferes with nature or mind and will

(1) (Rw - radioactive leopard)

c) Objection is theoretical but existential

d) How does the noncompetitiveness of God play out in terms of specific interior and exterior events?

22. Thomas speaks of God as both Creator and as mover

a) Not contradiction or tension between the two

b) God affects creatures at deepest level of their existence and in relatively secondary ways

c) When God moves or affects he is not creating but he never ceases to be Creator

d) God can bring his actualizing power to bear on a creature to varying degrees of intensity

e) Aquinas joins these together in question 22 of first part of *Summa*

(1) Argues for absolute universality of God's providential reach on basis of God's status as all-embracing all-grounding Creator

(a) Same noncompetitiveness holds analogously regarding less dramatic divine influence

23. Pointed discussion in seventh article of third question of *De potentia*

- a) *Does God operate in operation of nature*
- b) If God creates whole finite reality ***what is left for free exercise of creaturely activity?***
- c) *O Lord all we have done you have done for us* Isaiah 26:12

(1) Could function as leitmotif for entire discussion of God-world relationship

- d) Places dimensions of created and un-created causality side by side without attempt to explain
- e) ***We have really done certain things and they have been accomplished in us by God***
- f) Our agency is affirmed

24. Aquinas works out details in *respondeo* to article 7

- a) Begins considering radical position of Maimonides
 - (1) Natural agents do not communicate effects since they do not operate according to their own power
 - (a) No common language concerning God + creatures because no metaphysical point of contact between them

b) Aquinas finds this repugnant

- (1) Our ordinary perceptions + judgments about objects are incorrect
- (2) *God's goodness is contradicted***
- (3) If God refused causal integrity to natural creation he would be withholding his goodness from what he made
 - (a) Interfering and lording over it

25. How does universal divine agency work?

- a) Several models for understanding
 - (1) One thing can operate in another insofar the former provides the latter with *virtus* or power to act
 - (2) A thing can cause agency of another inasmuch as it moves it to act

- (3) One can cause act in another insofar the former is the principal cause and latter instrumental cause
 - (a) Soul moves the body
 - (b) “The higher a cause is the more common and efficacious and the more efficacious the more profoundly it can penetrate into the effect”

b) This comes to heart of the matter

(1) All these scenarios are borrowed from ordinary realm of being-to-being relationships

(2) *A curious tensive balance*

- (a) The “using” cause invades the being of what is used
- (b) Influence of “invader” is restricted and to that extent integrity of the effect is maintained

(3) *When we apply this to God the equilibrium breaks down*

- (a) One assumes God would be utterly invasive in his influence
- (b) To allow finite causes seems God must join them metaphysically as one being among many

26. But remember the adage

a) *The higher + more all-embracing the cause the more ingredient that cause can be in those it effects*

b) **Therefore the highest cause must be able to influence another not invasively from without but noncompetitively from within**

- (1) The highest cause is not a being among many
- (2) Can operate in realm of being nonviolently or “sweetly”

(3) Very otherness and simplicity of God permits him to operate for and among creatures

27. Clearly on display in play between human freedom and divine causality

a) God moves the human will to accomplish providential purposes but without interfering with human freedom

(1) God energizes the will from within

(2) Freedom = ordered pursuit of the good in accord with deepest desire of the free subject

(3) God lures the will in accord with its ownmost nature

(4) Enables the subject to be itself through surrender

b) God's capacity to become noninvasively ingredient in the creature in whom he operates resolves the tension between human and divine freedom (229)

c) Incarnational dynamic stands behind and informs the principle

28. With breakdown of classical Christian worldview and emergence of more mechanistic modern perspective this resolution was forgotten (William Placher and others)

a) Problem of God's involvement took on new urgency for natural scientist and humanist

b) Scientist

(1) Problem = reconciling divine causality with seemingly closed system of causes and effects

(a) Preferred solution = deism

c) Humanist

(1) Problem = reconciling divine influence with human freedom

(a) God as inspiration and model for heroic human project

(b) Even this proved too interfering

(c) Placher and colleague saw clearly this way of framing the question is foreign to premodern theological tradition

(d) Never a matter of zero-sum game

(Aquinas)

29. This teaching shows the possibility feared by modern philosophers (that overbearing supreme being threatens human freedom and integrity) is an idol - fantasy of fallen mind (229)

XIII. God as giver and lover

- A. In account of creation Aquinas speaks of God as one who *dat esse* gives being
1. Corresponds to Christian intuition that God is gracious giver of good gifts
 2. *Intriguing conversations today = aporetic self-contradictory quality of giving*
 - a) Difficulties flow from peculiarly modern description of God and creation criticized throughout part III
 - b) Resolution *when an understanding of God as simply and noncontrastively transcendent holds sway*
 - c) Engaging postmodern problem brings into focus premodern notion of God
- B. Aporia of the gift taken up by Jacques Derrida, Jean-Luc Marion, John Milbank
1. *Roots in anthropological work of Marcel Mauss*
 2. In primal peoples economy of exchange served as cover for system of obligation and coercion
 3. Led to speculation concerning possibility of gift-giving
 4. The first indispensable condition of the gift = that it be free on part of giver and receiver
- C. Second condition = presence
1. *Appearance of the gift qua gift*
 2. True gift something that must clearly appear as such
 3. *On object becomes a "gift-object" inasmuch as it is either formally offered as gift or taken in as one*
- D. Jacques Derrida
1. Wonders whether there can be such a phenomenon
 2. Can these conditions ever in principle be met
 3. *Criteria of freedom and presence seem mutually exclusive*
 - a) Awakens obligation to reciprocate

- b) Or awakens consciousness of generosity and call for reciprocation
- 4. German *Gift* poison
- 5. Any gift is poison to giver + receiver
- 6. *In Derrida's analysis the gift cancels itself by being elemental in an economy a cycle of return. The gift cancels itself because as a presence it is never completely free* (Roby Horner)
- E. Similar tension regarding act of hospitality (Emile Benveniste)
 - 1. In many cultures implicate host and guest in mutually obligating exchange
 - 2. Sometimes host + guest ruin each other
 - 3. Hospitality related to Latin *hostis* enemy
 - 4. ***Our neediness and ontological insufficiency compel us to enter these debilitating rhythms of exchange rendering authentic love an impossible ideal***
- F. *All of this comes to a head when applied to properly theological question of God's capacity to give good gifts*
 - 1. God's offer subjects creatures to obligation of reciprocity and thanksgiving
 - 2. Aquinas' account of the liturgy corresponds to contours of Derridean dilemma
 - a) Praise and thanksgiving to God as act of justice
- G. Recall narrative of prodigal son
 - 1. Theme of economic exchange
 - 2. ***The sons go wrong spiritually in assuming they are in a relationship of strict economic justice with their father***
 - 3. Attitude leads to commodification of love and spiritual famine
- H. Father reveals his love does not have to be earned and cannot be earned
 - 1. *Everything I have is yours*
- I. Aquinas' doctrine of simple God who creates everything *ex nihilo* is theological description of father in Jesus' parable
 - 1. God is sheer act of to-be *actus purus*
 - 2. Needs nothing outside himself
 - 3. Nothing else can complete or add to his being

4. *Therefore God neither creates nor relates to universe to gain something for himself*
5. **God cannot in principle be involved in economic exchange with his creatures**
6. Only created things existing interdependently engage in such reciprocity
7. **God's relation to world and sustains can only be sheer generosity being-for-the-other** (233)
8. Universe of economic exchange is product of sinful imagination
9. *At center is projection of supreme being who enters the mix through domination and manipulation precisely the god images by modernity and the idol exposed through parable of prodigal son*

J. *When we relate to this false god we enter metaphysically anomalous space like chora makra*

1. **Lose contact with loop of grace the stream of uncompromised generosity flowing from true God**

K. Only with these clarifications in mind can we grasp Aquinas' teaching on "obligatory" quality of liturgy or Christian insistence our lives must be acts of praise or gratitude

1. These obligations come from one who cannot compete with us and has no need
2. *The gratitude we offer true God is not absorbed by him but breaks against rock of divine self-sufficiency and rebounds to our benefit*
3. *You have no need of our praise yet our desire to thank you is itself your gift*
4. Hence **our gratitude is a gift and not a poison**
5. **Our prayer intensifies our participation in the loop of grace**
6. ***The solution to the Derridean dilemma is God who has no real relation to the world*** (234)

L. A theme developed later in the book

1. Love described as a theological virtue
2. Love is participation in the divine life

3. *The simple Creator God is uniquely capable of love in the complete sense since he alone can fully will the good of the other as other*
4. **What makes real love possible among humans is only sharing i the love with which God loves**
5. (otherwise we tend toward economic modes of relationship)

M. It is no longer I who live Galatians 2:20

1. **Presupposes a liberating transformation**
2. *Old self has given way to Self-in-God hence Paul is capable of love characteristic of the divine-to-be*
3. We don't truly love the other until we live him "in God" and for sake of God (Augustine)
4. *This recentering of the ego on the simple God is only escape from the far country*

N. A Marion interlude

1. Barron has been relying on Thomistic notion of God as sheer act of to-be to counteract modern understanding of God as competitive supreme existent among existents (235)
 - a) Shifted focus from God in himself to God as giver of being
 - b) Smooth transition or no?
 - c) *Move into thought of Jean-Luc Marion*
 - d) Heart of his argument in *God Without Being* = description of God as being itself in danger of devolving into intellectual idolatry
 - e) Qualification of God as the good (one who gives) remains iconic

f) Clarify further antimodern notion of God we must follow lines of Marion's analysis
2. Marino studied under Thomas Étienne Gilson
 - a) Gilson embroiled in controversy over metaphysics of Exodus
 - b) Self-description in Exodus 3 *ehyeh asher ahyeh* grounded metaphysics of God in sheer act of existing

- c) Many argued the expression should be rendered more personalist and less ontological register
 - (1) "I will be with you" more accurate than *ho on* or *ego sum qui sum*
 - d) ***Even if we set aside these and accept Gilson's reading of Exodus 3:14 we are left with problem of determining whether this name is primary especially in light of 1 John ho theos agape estin***
3. Aquinas raised this question in his early *Commentary on the Sentences* and in first part of *Summa*
- a) Aware of Dionysian claim the divine name of "good" (*bonum/agathon*) higher than divine name of "being"
 - (1) In Platonizing tradition
 - b) Aquinas disagrees
 - (1) "The good does not add anything to being either really or conceptually"
 - (2) *Qui est* remains God's highest most proper name
 - c) Moved from Platonic to Aristotelian thought world
 - (1) Good = "that which is desirable"
 - (2) *Being* and *the good* are convertible terms
4. At same time Bonaventure answered it the other way (236)
- a) *Itinerarium mentis in Deum*
 - b) Being and the good (sacred mystical names of God) under ***symbolic rubric of cherubim that face one another on side of the ark***
 - c) *Being* < *ego sum qui sum*
 - (1) Unity of divine essence
 - (2) Highest title of Old Testament revelation
 - d) *He good* < God is love
 - (1) Plurality of trinitarian persons
 - e) When Jesus answered the rich young man used "good" when naming God (Luke 18:19)
 - f) Damascene says "he who is" = first name of God
 - g) Dionysius (following Christ) says "good"
5. What is at stake?

- a) Marion analyzes in terms of distinction between **idol and icon**
 - b) Dionysian + Bonaventurian concern name *being* can function as conceptual idol
 - (1) Evidence = Aquinas himself (!)
 - (2) *Commentary on the Sentences*
 - (3) *Summa theologiae*
 - c) What worried Marion is stress on concept that can be immediately known and falls under apprehension of human mind
 - d) Does notion of “ens” come dangerously close to taking on quality of conceptual idol? (237)**
 - e) **The good stands prior to any and all beings that appear as effects and remains elusive + properly iconic**
6. Attempted response on behalf of Aquinas
- a) In light of *nemo dat quod non habet*
 - (1) Naive or disingenuous to claim act of giving has clear priority over being that is given
 - (2) Platonic sun gives light because it first *is* light
 - b) Aquinas consistently argues we do not see diving being directly or with conceptual clarity
 - (1) ***We appreciate it as reflected in finite beings to which it has given rise***
 - (2) Concern about “visibility” regarding idea of God is unfounded
 - (3) **Any knowledge we have of God is thoroughly iconic**
 - (a) Mediated through visible effects
 - c) One might show being and good come together in God
 - (1) God’s capacity to give in full sense is predicated upon unique quality of divine to-be
 - (2) Aquinas typically opts for Aristotelian notion of good over Platonic

(3) Aware of Dionysian tradition of *bonum diffisivum sui*

(4) Thomas makes provocative use of the principle in relation to question of fittingness of incarnation

(a) God as highest good must give in most generous way

(5) What enables God to give this way if not ontological self-sufficiency?

(a) Remember response to Derridean aporias of the gift

(6) Creaturely being is effect of divine giving but divine giving is function of peculiar texture of divine being

(7) The two qualities exist in circumcision

d) Something still nags in Marion's critique

(1) If Old Testament name of God is highest we the need for New Testament name

(2) If Being itself points to unitary essence of God why fuss with trinitarian speculation?

(3) We can honor novelty of what is disclosed in Jesus Christ without crude supercessionism

(4) *The Gatherer, the Warrior, and the Lord was above all the One Sent*

(5) John 3:16

(6) Jesus appeared among us as supreme Gift of the divine Giver

(a) Hebrews 1:1-2, 3

e) Something we did not know = ***there must be within the structure of the divine to-be a play of giver, gift, giving***

(1) Before Jesus Christ we could not see the divine being itself is play of generosity

(2) That God *is* love only appears through icon of the incarnation and its display of manifold within divine reality

(3) What the simple God gives with utter generosity is the giving that he is

(4) *The to-be of God is to-give is to-be-for-the-other*

(5) We could not grasp by meditating on creation alone

(6) *In the ecstatic play of Sender Sent and Sending we see that coinherence is not accidental modification of God but very God*

f) Final step = meditation on trinitarian dynamics that obtain in the Simple One

O. The God who is love

1. Approach the question of God's triune nature with trepidation
 - a) Dante's pilgrim can say *How my weak words fall short of my conception* (239)
 - b) Ratzinger claims trinitarian language has same function as incense at a liturgy
 - (1) Obscure one's vision
 - (2) Precludes clear seeing and description
 - (3) We are stopped by puzzle of term *trinity*
2. But even negative formulations shape some sort of positive conception
 - a) Idea of God as trinity
 - (1) Uniquely Christian account of God
 - b) *Though notion of God as simple flows from event of incarnation and compatibility of divine and human natures in Jesus this notion has been entertained and developed by other philosophical + religious schools*
 - c) When invoking the blessing of God "which God are you talking about" (Stanley Hauerwas)
 - d) ***The Christian God is the god who in the Spirit sent Jesus Christ for salvation of the world***
 - (1) Abstract dogma of Trinity = halting attempt to indicate mystery implicit in the narrative
3. Most modern philosophical accounts of God are nontrinitarian
 - a) Descartes, Spinoza, Locke, Kant, James, other moderns

- b) Refer at best occasionally to the Trinity
- c) Schleiermacher in *Glaubenslehre*
 - (1) Considers three persons only in brief appendix
- d) Hegel = exception to the rule
 - (1) But his “trinitarianism” tied to peculiarities of his philosophical system + scarcely draws on biblical revelation

4. *The postmodern Christian theology of God being developed here reflects impatience with this marginalization of the Trinity* (240)

- a) Symbol of three persons => summation and intensification of all said to this point about simple self-sufficient impossibly generous ground of all that is
 - b) Coinherence God achieves with created natures is rooted in radical coinherence among the Father Son and Holy Spirit
 - c) *Being-for-other apparent in God's rapport with creation falls into shadow when compared to being-for-the-other that marks very to-be of triune God himself*
5. Fully developed doctrine of the Trinity not explicitly presented in Scripture
- a) New Testament filled with seeds from which the doctrine grows
 - b) Matthew 28
 - c) Romans *we call God “Abba”*
 - (1) Jesus has been established Son of God by Father in spirit of holiness
 - (2) (Rw - so trinitarian structures)
 - d) 1 Corinthians 12:4-6
 - e) 1 John 4:2
 - (1) Entire Gospel of John = meditation upon the Trinity
 - (2) At heart = *communio* between Father and Son
 - (3) Summed up in implicitly trinitarian formula in 1 John 4:16 *God is love*

(4) If love is not simply an activity but what God essentially is then God must be in his nature a play of lover beloved and active love

6. Sustained and theologically rich prototrinitarian mediation in John 14-16
 - a) Jesus lays out dynamics of this coinherence between himself + his Father
 - b) *Communio* in which he invites disciples
 - c) *Mutual implication of Father Son + Spirit nowhere in New Testament fully explored than in farewell address*
7. Connection between speech of Jesus and farewell discourse of Mose in Deuteronomy
 - a) Jesus the New Moses prepared followers for entry into novel way of being
 - b) Marked by coinherence and mutuality of divine persons
 - c) Old form of life conditioned by enslavement to power of death (James Alison)
 - d) Promised land = participation in to-be of God
 - e) Mode of existence not knowing fear of death
8. Discourse begins on note of reassurance *do not let your hearts be troubled* John 14:1
 - a) Not assent to propositions but existential trust
 - b) Extraordinary that Jesus urges them to have same confidence in him as in God
 - c) Not simply prophet/teacher awakening proper attitude

(1) Object of deepest religious feeling and aspiration
 - d) Act of trusting in God is ingredient in concomitant act of trusting in Jesus and vice versa
 - e) God + Jesus are coequal
 - (1) Coimplicative to a degree that having confidence in one = confidence in the other
 - (2) *In my Father's house are dwelling places* 14:2
 - (a) Jesus referred to temple as "my Father's house"

- (b) His body as new purified temple where tribes would gather properly in prayer
 - (c) Father's house = Jesus himself
 - (d) Many dwelling places because he is coextensive with Father's to-be
 - (e) Temple large enough to contain whole of divinity
 - (f) Confirms central praxis of Jesus = bring people into circle of divine life**
9. Thomas wonders how they will know the way
- a) *I am the way the truth and the life* 14:5
 - b) Jesus claims not simply to know the path but to *be* the path (Balthasar) (242)
 - c) No full access to Father apart from him
 - d) His to-be *is* the truth any religious seeker wants
 - e) His to-be *is* the lie to which spiritual person aspires
 - f) *If being Father entails relation to Jesus and if being Jesus entails relation to the Father then statement is valid***
 - g) If the to-be of God is essentially relational then paradoxical language of Jesus remains coherent**
10. When Philip presses the issue
- a) *Have I been with you so long you do not know me?* 14:9
 - b) *Icon of the invisible God Jesus is supersaturated with divine presence of the Son who is utterly reflective of Father's being so to see Jesus is to see the Son and to see the Son is to see the Father***
 - c) Display of coinherence here is dizzying
 - d) A being-for, a being-with, a being-in-the-other**
11. Noncompetitiveness between God + world is seen to be rooted in more basic noncompetitiveness of the Father + the Son
- a) *The words I say do not speak on my own* 14:10
 - b) Works are those of Jesus but they belong to Father as well and function as vehicles of his presence
 - c) John's Gospel

(1) Works of Jesus are acts of re-creation, redolent of primal creation affected by the Father

(2) Same being-fr-and-with-the-other evidence in the latter are reconfirmed and elevated in the former

d) The creature is most itself precisely in surrendering to noncompetitive God just as So is nothing but reflection of being of noncompetitive Father

12. Reference to mysterious third *if you love me ... another*

Advocate 14:15-17

a) Jesus had just identified himself as the Truth + one with the Father

b) Reference to *parakletos* clear prototrinitarian formula

c) This third reflects mutuality of Jesus + the Father since both are involved in his sending

(1)(Rw - well sort of - Jesus asks + the Father sends)

d) *Paraketos'* role = animate the church which Jesus is about to leave

e) Will lead followers into fullness of truth = vibrant continuity with Lord + with the Father *will teach you everything 14:26*

f) Densely packed coinherence among the three (243)

13. *I am the true vine and Father the vinegrower 15:1*

a) Church = those grafted onto this vine

b) Sharing Jesus' life that in turn come from the Father *I am the vine and you are the branches 15:5*

c) Urges a ***decentering of the ego that mimics the being-in-the-other of the Father and the Son***

d) The divine life will glow from the Father through the Son into his church

14. When this organic relationship is interrupted life fades *whoever does not abide withers 15:6*

a) The loop of grace is key to Christian ontology + morality

b) When we turn away like prodigal son we wither + lose what little we have

15. To live good life not matter of autonomy but obeying commandments
- a) *If you keep my commandments* John 15:10
 - b) Listening is tied closely to love on part of one who commands
 - c) ***Since love is willing of the good of the other the obedience Jesus speaks of is not alienating heteronomy but theonomy - surrender to one who massively wants what is best for the surrenderer***
 - (1) Entire to-be of the Son = listening to command of the Father that is the to-be of the Son
 - (2) Creature is meant to be a listening to command of the Son
16. Hence Jesus says *you are my friends if you do* 15:15
- a) ***The climax of biblical revelation***
 - b) Friendship with God was lost in den
 - c) **The original sin resulted in deeply distorted conception of human relationship with God**
 - d) Devolved into fear + resentment of alien divinity
 - e) **Whole of biblical revelation culminating in Jesus is the story of God's attempt to restore friendship with the human race** (244)
 - f) Last Supper => conditions for this restoration
 - (1) Coinherence with God (insertion into coinherence that God is)
 - g) Adam + Even decided the safest and best-defended mode of being is egocentric
 - h) At Last Supper Jesus shows folly of that decision
 - i) ***To be in such a way even death is not fearsome is to be in Jesus whose to-be is in the Father***
 - j) Why teaching concerning Trinity is crucial for right ordering of one's life
17. Jesus states clearly that this risky and other-oriented manner of existing strikes most as utterly wrong
- a) *If the world hates you* 15:18-19

- b) “The world” = collectivity of persons institutions armies nations predicated upon loss of friendship with God
- c) Hates followers of Jesus because it cannot frighten them
- d) *Jesus is about to be swallowed up by forces of the world but he is not held captive or entranced by them because he does not live in himself - in fear - but in the Father the power that conquers the world*
- e) ***Participation in the coinherent dynamics of God’s being (loop of grace that God is) makes such liberating detachment possible***

18. Jesus again speaks of *parakletos* John 16

- a) “Spirit of truth” who guides church into fullness of truth
- b) Presumed to be ontologically one with Father + Son
- c) 16:14-15
- d) *In receiving the Spirit the church through its history will take on the identity of the Son an identity rooted in the Father*

19. zSynoptic accounts of Last Supper

- a) Bread + cup anticipate divine drama unfolding the next days
- b) Johannine Gospel
 - (1) Washing the feet + delivery of mystical speech
- c) The play between Father Son and Spirit described in the discourse would become historically visible in crucifixion and resurrection
- d) Sending of Son by Father reaches climax as Jesus enters unsurpassable spiritual suffering of Godforsakenness (Balthasar) (245)
 - (1) And darkness and silence of death itself
- e) The “separation” of mutual letting-be of Father and Son becomes sacramentally apparent
- f) ***However the Son and Father never exist as separate beings - clear in resurrection of Son from the dead through power of the Holy Spirit***

- g) *Parakletos* is the love that essentially binds Father to Son
- shared being-for-the-other of Sender and Sent
- h) The otherness between Father and Son is not alienation
or over-and-againstness

(1) But love - willing the good of the other

20. Great salvific achievement of Paschal Mystery is including the world into the to-be of God

- a) Having gone to the limits Jesus embodies divine outreach to those aspects of creation that wandered into alienation from God
- b) Drawn back to the Father in the Spirit Jesus gathered unto God those he embraced on his downward journey
- c) *The participation in the differentiated divine life of which Jesus spoke is in principle accomplished through his dying and rising*

XIV. Augustine, Aquinas, and the Trinity

A. Augustine's argument with the Arians

1. To probe peculiar metaphysics of Trinity we leap forward to the *De Trinitate* of Augustine
 - a) Many wrestled with seemingly conflicting data of revelation by the Old and New Testaments
 - b) The Shema
 - c) On the other hand the Paschal Mystery
 - d) *Monarchian subordinationist tritheist explanations were proposed but rejected as inadequate to complexity of revelation*
 - e) Council of Nicaea 325
 - (1) 4th century theologians began to articulate nuanced + carefully balanced metaphysics of the Godhead
 - (2) Mirrored in West by Augustine
2. After laying out hermeneutical directives in first several books Augustine in book 5 considers the logical conundrum presented by Arian challengers to standard orthodoxy
 - a) Augustine pushes classical metaphysics into a new key

- b) Effects shift in understanding of being comparable to what Anselm and Aquinas effected centuries later
- c) Augustine knows these are uncharted waters
 - (1) *From now on I will attempt to say things that cannot altogether be said as thought by man*
- 3. Argument begins = God is a substance or essence - the fullness of being - since he says *I am*
 - a) Other “substances” admit of accidents (they can change)
 - b) God cannot be of this type
 - (1) ***His to-be is realized and incapable of increase or diminishment***
 - c) *One may never predicate qualities accidentally of God or speak of God as though he possessed accidental modifiers*
- 4. In light of this Arains object to trinitarian talk which is “cunning and ingenious”
 - a) *Orthodox speaks of God in an incoherent way*
 - (1) *Characterizes Father + Son are both God and Father as “unbegotten” and Son as “begotten” yet maintain oth are God and of same substance*
 - (2) Mutually exclusive terms can be logically predicate of a substance only if they refer to that thing’s accidental modifications
 - (a) “Both in the room and not in the room”
 - (i) Accidentality of existence in time
 - (b) But not “human and dog”
 - (i) Speaking of him substantially
 - (3) “Unbegotten and unbegotten” must speak of God in accidental way
 - (a) Yet it is inappropriate to predicate things of God accidentally (248)
 - (4) This talk in incoherent unless they are two substances
 - (a) Central to Arianism = Father and Son are two distinct essences

- (5) Orthodox Christianity caught in a dilemma
- (a) Either “unbegotten” and “begotten” are accidental and God is not absolute
 - (b) Or they describe substances and God is not one
5. Augustine compelled to search for a metaphysical category beyond pair of substance and accident
- a) *Accident* and *modification* = names given to dimensions of a substance that can be changed or lost or wax and wane
 - b) None of this obtains regarding God
 - c) ***However the negation of accidental predication of God does not “mean everything said of him is said substance-wise”***
 - (1) From standpoint of classical philosophy this is nonsense
 - (2) ~ Anselm saying God is that than which no great can be thought
 - (3) ~ Aquinas claiming God makes world *ex nihilo*
 - d) Regarding ordinary created things this customary either-or remains in force
 - (1) **But more complicated regarding God**
 - (2) Father spoke of only in measure he gives rise to the Son
 - (3) Son inasmuch he is generated by the Father
 - (4) ***Each is described necessarily ad aliquid in relation toward some other***
 - (5) **Neither can be named accidentally**
 - (6) Son is not “born” in ordinary natural sense
 - (7) Father did not subsist “prior” to the Son
 - (8) ***Both are ad aliquid being toward the other***
 - (9) “Father” and “Son” are not said substance-wise **because each is said only with reference to the other**
 - (10) And are not said modification-wise

e) *So what are these peculiar nonaccidental relations?*

(1) Much later Aquinas calls them “subsistent relations”

(2) They have something in common with ordinary substances (249)

(3) And something in common with accidents

(4) They are not like ordinary accidental relations hovering between substances

(5) They are utterly **subsistent** ordered *ad aliquid*

(6) *The Father and the Son are distinct from one another but qua substance they are the same so that the Father is utterly like the Son except he is the one who gives rise to the Son and the Son is the same except he is generated by the Father*

(7) What is subsistent in relationalities (Father and Son) is grounded in identical substance they share

6. Later in book 5 Augustine refers to these relations as “persons” but with hesitancy

a) Could lead to misconception of three separate spiritual beings or three instantiations (Socrates, Plato, Aristotle)

b) *“Yet when it is asked ‘three what?’ human speech labors under a great dearth of words. SO we say three persons not in order to say that precisely but in order not to be reduced to silence”*

c) The three trinitarian persons are three *nescio quids* (don’t know whats) (Anselm)

d) *Begotten* and *unbegotten* designate neither accidents nor separate substances but the sheer relations that while remaining distinct constitute the unitary essence of God

7. Trinitarian language has negative purpose but it has a positive purpose as well (Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*)

a) *“The paradox ‘una essentia tres personae’ is subordinate to the problem of absolute and relative and*

emphasizes the absoluteness of the relative, of relativity”

- b) The words are less important than the metaphysical tension they express
- c) But not arbitrarily constructed
- d) *Being and relationship - irreducible and mutually implicative qualities of the divine - must be equiprimordial*

(1) Contradicting Aristotelian privileging of substance over relationality

- 8. This abstract philosophical language game expresses ontology implied in the Last Supper
 - a) Jesus and Father and Spirit are complicated to point of identification
 - b) *Clear separation of the three and constitution of each through something like radical coinherence is essential datum of revelation Augustine articulates through breaking/transcending customary metaphysical categories*
- 9. ***Now we can perceive dimply the deepest ground for coinherence between God and creation***
 - a) God enters noncompetitively into being of a creature
 - b) And the creature without losing its integrity participates in the to-be of God
 - c) There is between divine and nondivine a shared being-in and being-for the other
 - d) Shadow of the intimacy and differentiation between trinitarian persons
 - e) ***There is no creaturely otherness, no distance of space time or quality greater than the “distance” between the Father Son and Spirit***
 - f) ***For any and all creaturely qualities participate in the more primordially divine reality (Balthasar)***
 - g) And no creaturely connection surpasses the oneness enjoyed by trinitarian persons

h) Coinherence in creation is iconic representation of the Coinherence that is the to-be of God

B. Aquinas' simple God is many

1. Earlier chapter argues on Thomist grounds for simplicity of God
 - a) *Only when this metaphysical quality of the divine (coming together of essence and existence) is maintained can we speak coherently of God as noncompetitive Creator and Sustainer of the universe*
 - b) But we face a problem = Bible unambiguously speaks of God as differentiated
 - c) How can we reconcile nondifferentiation of God (simplicity) with diversification of Father Son and Spirit?
 - d) Aquinas' complex treatment of Trinity in fourth book *Summa contra gentiles*
2. (like Augustine in *De Trinitate*) Aquinas begins with biblical witness
 - a) Both Old and New Testaments speak of "generation" within God
 - b) *What is the person's name?* Proverbs 30:4
 - c) *When there were no depths I was brought forth* 8:24
 - d) *No one knows the Father except the Son* Matthew 11:27
 - e) *Beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ the son of God* Mark 1:1
 - f) *Long ago God spoke but in these last days by a Son* Hebrews 1:1-2
 - g) We cannot deny but struggle to understand this
 - (1) Divine immutability and simplicity
 - (2) Chapter 10 book 4 of *Summa contra gentiles*
 - (a) Several compelling arguments against generation or procession within God
 - (b) *If Father and Son are two separate persons yet one in essence there must be something other than essence by which they are distinguished***

- (i) This seems impossible
 - (ii) *If one says relationality this names something not in itself but a “to something”*
 - (iii) Any dependency is irreconcilable with absoluteness of divine essence
3. Chapter 11 as tour de force in writings of Aquinas
- a) These powerful arguments can be turned back once we understand dynamic quality of divine simplicity
 - (1) Aquinas always interested in question of emanation
 - (2) *De potentia* as meditation on different modes of “coming forth” in and from God and among creatures
 - b) Opening remark question eleven in *Summa contra gentiles*
 - (1) Summary statement of Aquinas’ thinking
 - (2) “Following a diversity of natures, one finds a diverse manner of emanation in things, and, the higher a nature is, the more intimate to the nature is that which flows from it”
 - (3) *Metaphysics of Aquinas is not static*** (contra process philosophers)
 - (4) Being constantly gives rise to another**
 - (5) Mode of emanation is worth investigating**
4. Inanimate bodies hold lowest place in hierarchy of being (Aquinas)
- a) Sign of ontological inferiority = emanation occurs in such things only in most extrinsic and imperfect way
 - (1) Fire
 - (2) Next level = plants
 - (3) “The sensitive soul” characteristic of animals
 - (a) Mirroring quality of memory
 - (b) No animal knows itself as a knower
 - (4) *Human level***

- (a) Peculiarly intellectual power of self-presence
- (b) Participant in higher mode of existence
- (c) Human *mens* can engage in self-examination through formation of an image (“interior word”)
- (d) Act of emanation that surpasses in its completeness and interiority anything at lower levels of being
- (e) Even human mind takes data from outside arena of sense
- (f) We are “spirits in the world” arriving at self-presence through nature and sense (Rahner)

5. Next = angelic dimension

- a) Angels in *Summa theologiae* over sixteen questions
- b) Capacity for self-replication to more intense degree than we
- c) Because “intellect knows itself through itself”
 - (1) Unmediated and intuitive
 - (2) Angel = mind separated from materiality
- d) Angelic mode not highest form of life
- e) *Angel is a creature*** deriving its being from God
- f) Its knowing is not identical with its existing (254)

6. ***Thus we come at last to the simple God whose to be is to-be***

- a) How this unique divine emanation is not understood (Aquinas)
- b) Not lines of generation found in inanimate beings
- c) Nor how plants and animals reproduce themselves
- d) *Must be interpreted along the line of the process of intellectual mirroring we remark in humans and angels***
- e) The act of intelligent self-replication is the divine substance itself**
- f) *Since to be God is to be to-be every act of God is same as God***

- g) *Very act by which God effects a self-othering emanation is interior to God himself*
 - h) (rather complex and important line of thought)
7. Play of unity and plurality in God cannot stop here
- a) In any rational nature will must be found
 - b) Will as function of intellect in measure that understanding of the good as good is tantamount to an act of desire (Aquinas)
 - (1) *To know value as value is ipso facto to love it*
 - c) All God does coincides with who God is
 - d) *The love going out from the Father to the Son (and from Son back to Father) must be one with the divine essence*
 - e) *This love of the Father and the Son for one another which is not other than God is the Holy Spirit (255)*
8. Now Aquinas can show that the play between subsistent relations within God is not incompatible with supreme simplicity of the divine to-be
- a) *There must be an interior Word that confronts the divine knower as other even as it remains interior to the divine being*
 - b) God must know himself as God and must love himself
 - c) This self-love cannot be other than the divine essence
 - d) **Triunity follows from simplicity**
9. **With this observation we come to center of Christian revelation**
- a) The ground of being - the simply God creator of all finite existence - is in his ownmost nature the supreme instance of coinherence
 - b) *The one and the many are mutually implicative at the most primordial level of being*
 - c) *Relationship and unity are equally basic*

Part V - The display of the CHristian form: *ethics by means of the saints*

XV. Deontology and proportionalism

- A. Longest section of *Summa theologiae* deals with moral life
1. *Summa theologiae* is book of moral theology with doctrinal introduction
 2. ***What is interesting is tight connection between ethics, doctrine, sacraments that Aquinas assumed as he composed three sections of the Summa***
 3. Moral life is path followed by those who seek God
 4. Moral theology proceeding without adequate description of God would be failure
 5. If morality is a way *via* then moral account leaving aside the one who claimed to be *the* way Christ would be crippled
- B. Fundamental problem with moralities of modern provenance is this isolation of ethics from environment of the church
1. Church ~ community whose life is disciplined by specified beliefs and practices (260)
 2. Two typically modern philosophical accounts of the moral life
 - a) **Deontologism** and **proportionalism**
 - b) Neither is compatible with vibrantly imagined Christianity
 - c) ***A postliberal Christian morality must take bearings not from abstract notions as from persons who have sufficiently incorporated the beliefs and practices of the church - saints***
- C. Kantian Deontologism
1. Modern philosophers obsessed with finding universal form of reason
 - a) Convictions or way of thinking that would unite divided Europe
 - b) *Customary procedure = find universality through examination of subjectivity*
 - c) **Immanuel Kant = prototypical modern**
 - d) First *Critique*
 - (1) Unifying form of reason in a priori structure of consciousness

e) Second *Critique* and *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals*

(1) Unifying element in categorical imperative implied in nature of the will

f) Plato looked for goodness in forms and form of the Good

g) Aristotle sought in patterns of nature

h) Kant in interiority of his capacity for choice

2. *What makes the will good?*

a) Self-formation according to duty in accord with moral law rather than desire for pleasure or happiness

3. Ground for dutiful action = fidelity to the law

a) Complete conformity to universal

b) *Exceptionalness = mark of law*

c) From this logical sequence (duty, law, universality) **Kant derives first form of categorical imperative**

(1) I should never act in a way I could not also will that my maxim should become a universal law

(2) Never out of step with what moral agents resolve in a similar situation

d) *Kant affects a reversal of Aristotle*

(1) Purpose of moral life = establishing through virtue a coincidence between law + personal preference

(2) (Rw - sounds good to me)

(3) Kant's moral theory encourages the actor to assume a godlike position - a thoroughly consistent moral universe (Susan Neiman)

(4) The oddly isolated quality of Kantian moral self which legislates free from any connection to nature, the discipline of a community, the practice of virtue, or consideration of consequences

(5) Kant would interpret this as compromise of autonomy of the moral ego

4. Some have seen in second formulation a nod in direction of moral classical understanding

- a) *Act in a way a human being can never be treated as means but only as end*
 - b) But what is at stake is not moral obligation to love the other
 - c) Rather *intellectual obligation* to recognize irreducibility of another godlike subjective agent
 - d) **To treat another moral subject as a means would be logically incoherent**
5. ***What role does God play in this?***
- a) God (heteronomous source of moral obligation) is unnecessary even repugnant to moral life
 - b) But God has function in moral enterprise *as postulate of practical reason*
 - c) (Rw - ???)
 - d) (struggling to understand this part) (262)
6. Kant sunders duty + obligation to show dynamics of categorical imperative
- a) Yet brings them together under *summum bonum* the approached ideal energizing moral life
 - b) We must postulate eternal dimension where they could come together and a being powerful enough to prejudice over this
 - c) ***We must presuppose immortality and God***
 - d) But God only as part of conceptual apparatus necessary to support autonomous ego in its decisions
7. Hence why a reductive account of God in *Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone*
- a) *Morality requires no support from religion*
 - b) *Yet leads to imagining God as supreme lawgiver*
 - c) Hence Kantian interpretation of biblical narrative as symbolic war between categorical imperative and inclination
8. ***What made this ethic of autonomous self and marginal God possible?***
- a) We must look at late medieval period

- b) Clear link between Occam's nominalism and Kant's deontologism
- (1) Between collapse of participation metaphysics and emergence of threatened and assertive self
 - (2) *Much hinges on Occam's radical reconfiguration of idea of freedom***
 - (3) Classical patristic and medieval traditions
 - (a) Freedom correlated to definite ends and to quest for happiness through union with the ultimate good**
 - (b) Relationship to habituation in virtue and *disciplines and practices of a community of people sharing common values*
 - (c) Freedom not as autonomy but an ingredient in nexus of ends, conditions, goods, activities, centering on the desire for God
 - (d) *Liberté de qualité* or freedom for excellence (Servais Pinckaers)**
9. Occam (with his nominalist metaphysical assumptions) maintained freedom is self-contained absolute to say yes or no to any end even supreme end of God's goodness
- a) Freedom linked to mind
 - (1) Intellect proposes ends that lure the will
 - (2) But on Occamist reading freedom is prior to the mind because it remains sovereign regarding anything the mind might propose**
 - (3) For heaven to be sinless the blessed must be compelled through grace to choose the God who is fully before them
 - (4) In freedom they could choose against the ultimate good
10. Sheer autonomy of the will -> the monadic quality of each act of freedom
- a) Will is not determined by good proposed or behaviors or legal prescriptions

- b) *Each of its movements is absolute + self-contained*
 - c) *An Occamist free act appears then fades away*
 - d) **All sense of character formation through virtue is set aside**
 - e) **All natural inclinations (to happiness truth goodness) are bracketed in favor of purity of will's liberty**
11. Strange mirroring relationship between this autonomy human freedom and autonomous divine freedom
- a) *When connections between God and creatures (participation metaphysics of Aquinas) fell away the only relation possible between God and world becomes one of will*
 - b) This comes to full in Kantian ethics
 - (1) Primacy and autonomy of the will
 - (2) Absolute separation between goodness of will and inclination
 - (3) Marginalization of God
 - (4) **Freedom of indifference became structuring element in Kant's characteristically modern construal of modern life**
12. One could argue metanarrative of Western modernity = autonomy of the will *defined as increase in Kantian freedom* (power of self-determination)
- a) Principal enemies = the nominalist God who threatens human autonomy and institutional representatives of God (churches)
 - b) **Authentic Christian morality predicated upon conception of *liberté de qualité* cannot flourish within such conceptual and institutional constraints**
 - (1) *Assumes human freedom develops in correlation to and not abstraction from those elements Kant construed as heteronomous*
 - (2) *Also affirms the true noncompetitive God is everywhere and always ingredient in exercise of real liberty*

(3) Within an integrated Christian framework the decision of the autonomous will is not paramount in determining ethical uprightness

(4) Moral goodness = function of apprenticing process by which person is won over into surrender to God and his purposes

D. Proportionalism (264)

1. Proportionalist position in contemporary theological ethics usually seen as opposed to deontology
 - a) Kant puts stress on the will
 - b) Proportionalism emphasizes consequences of concrete moral act
 - c) *Three modern assumptions they have in common*
 - (1) Atomistic quality of ethical moves
 - (2) Primacy of “Decisionism” (James McClendon)
 - (3) Universal nature of ethical reasoning
 - d) Proportionalism examines acts without attention to character community and virtue
 - e) Concentrates on making moral decisions rather than the setting for moral life
 - f) *And blithe assumption a rational and universal ethical form can be discovered apart from conditioning and specifying elements of Christian tradition (265)*
2. Barron will make these modernisms clearer + more concrete
 - a) Using work of contemporary Catholic ethicist Timothy O’Connell
 - (1) Starting point = anthropology distinguishing between inner person and external realm of action
 - (2) Personhood + action are co-implicative but can be distinguished
 - (3) Our identity cannot be reduced to acts
 - (4) Human person is mysterious subjectivity ungirding and uniting all relatively superficial dimensions of thought feeling action***

(5) Human self like an onion none of which stands by itself

(a) “Very center that dimensionless pinpoint around which everything else revolves - the I”

3. Deepest self can be known in highly paradoxical way
 - a) (in line with Kantianism from Rahnerian anthropology)
 - b) The person cannot be object of its own investigation
 - c) Cannot render itself objective
 - d) Known only indirectly
 - (1) Seeing yet never itself seen
4. Therefore we must distinguish between human person and human act
 - a) Act can be described objectively
 - b) Person is irreducible subjective and elusive
 - c) This demarcation between “categorical” and “transcendental” evokes Luther’s distinction between inner and outer man
 - (1) Descartes’ split between *cogito* and realm of *res extensae*
 - (2) Kant’s divide between interior demand and categorical imperative and exterior arena of inclination and temptation
 - (3) *O’Connor privileges more mysterious inner self - deepest ground of thought and action*
5. Against this backdrop O’Connell addresses “fundamental stance”
 - a) We make thousands of concrete practical decisions
 - b) Beneath all is a sort of self-determination at *the level of the person*
 - c) This is the stance which gives life direction significance definition
 - d) **This irreducible exercise of transcendental freedom = “the fundamental option”**
 - (1) Not a “once and for all reality”

(2) We can reverse most basic direction of our lives
(Council of Trent)

(a) *Final status of one's soul before God remains mysterious* (Trent)

6. *What is relationship between fundamental option and categorical choices we make?*
- a) Latter = externalizations expressions + symbols of the former
 - b) “The human person we sense ourselves to be does not stand apart from the actions we do - the fundamental stance giving us the identity we so treasure is not found in a vacuum but rather is found incarnated in behavior by which we build our lives”** (266)
 - c) Fundamental stance becomes stronger + clearly perceives as one moves through number of categorical decisions
 - d) The two dimensions of the self and their accompanying modes of freedom exist therefore in mutually conditioning but asymmetrical relationship**
7. With this O’Connell addresses vexing question - *nature of sin*
- a) Classical Catholic moral thought
 - (1) Distinction between mortal and venial sin
 - (2) O’Connell resituates this in context of Kantian anthropology
 - (3) *Mortal sin shifts at level of fundamental stance and not as a particular categorical act***
 - (a) Act of transcendental freedom resituating one’s life away from God and divine friendship
 - (b) Cannot be known in reflexive way
 - (c) *Were this obscurity removed there would be no room for third of theological virtues*
 - (i) “The Christian has no alternative to hope - no place for premature judgment”
8. *What is venial sin?*

- a) A human act that is not fully so
 - (1) Does not come from core of the person and does not involve a fundamental option (267)
 - b) Acts that are wrong but do not compromise fundamental orientation of our lives toward God
 - c) Level of **categorical freedom**
 - d) Decision to do but not to be this or that
 - e) Difference between mortal + venial sin is ***kind and not degree***
 - f) Moral manuals on topic
 - (1) “Gravity of the matter”
 - (2) But this is inadequate
 - (a) Option to perform gravely serious act would not entail shift in fundamental stance
 - (b) Performance of objectively trivial act could involve such a shift
 - (3) ***This is important observation***
 - (a) Cannot simply place mortal sins on “transcendental” side and venial sins on “categorical”
 - (4) **Categorical act can express and bear fundamental option and hence be mortal sin though not qua categorical**
 - (5) “Mortal nature” of sin is not *in* categorical act as such but in depth of moral agent’s self-determination
9. O’Connell then turns to the objective
- a) The “world” confronting the moral person
 - b) Stubbornly objective character of *Wert* value (following Dietrich von Hildebrand)
 - c) Above and beyond subjectively satisfying and objectively useful is the **level of value**
 - (1) Good and worthy of reverence for its own sake
 - d) Values = ***aesthetic, intellectual, moral***
 - (1) Last is most pressing

(2) We condemn someone who fails to respond to the good

(3) We adulate the saint

10. In stressing this objectivity O'Connell avoids traps of relativism or subjectivism - and of legalism

a) Moral worth not function of sincerity of agent's act of will or authority of moral legislator

b) In determining moral quality there is always a densely objective realm

c) Real values confront freedom and are not its product

(1) (Rw - contra reasoning of Supreme Court Justice Breyer)

(2) "Such values are not creatures but are found by us"

(3) (Rw - contra radioactive leopard)

11. As objective goods + evils emerge into the world they come into relationship with one another (clashing and competing)

a) Realizing certain goods might involve accepting clear disvalues

b) All of these conflicted goods are "preoral" values (O'Connell)

(1) The stuff that moral subject works with when deciding

12. What is a moral act?

a) Willed action by which an ethical subject attempts to realize certain premoral goods and avoid premoral evils knowing that a perfect realization of the former and perfect avoidance of latter are impossible (269)

b) How does one assess moral quality of an act?

(1) Making a reasonable calculation of actual goods + evils flowing as consequences

(2) Do the values outweigh the disvalues

c) "Actions are judged on the basis of actual effects on human persons and on living of human life. Actions are judged on their consequences"

(1)(Rw - contra Marxian faith - that it's all to advance the Revolution and usher in Utopia)

13. No act therefore is intrinsically evil

- a) One could find a proportionate reason for a particular decision even those seen as intrinsically bad
- b) *What matters is the quality of the proportionate calculation informing the judgment*
- c) "Certain acts are intrinsically evil" is moral tautology
- d) **Characterizing an act as inherently wrong depends on complete moral description of the act and cannot be attempted apart from considering intentions and consequences**

14. O'Connell made significant adjustment in revised edition of his book

- a) Before he argued no act could be categorized as *intrinsic malum*
- b) Now *there is one such act = direct killing of the innocent*
- c) At first seems tautological
- d) But suggests something more basic obtains in this sort of action
- e) *Whole moral project centers on maximizing goods + minimizing evils*
- (1) *Determined in measure they impinge upon life*
- f) Direct taking of life cannot be one moral move among many but *act effectively undermining foundations of moral enterprise as such*

(1) **If one could find reason for direct attack upon life one would legitimize unraveling of moral thinking as such**

- g) Here is something of Kant's suspicion that certain acts would be ethically incoherent

15. This sort of proportionalist program has been criticized from many perspectives

- a) Will focus only on "modern" aspects of proportionalism

- b) *Much hinges on anthropology unergirding the system*
- c) Separates realms of action and person (latter over the former)
- d) There is level of being more basic than level of acting
- e) **But this bifurcation allows the moral subject to hide behind her acts**

(1) A *cordon sanitaire* around her interiority and freedom

(2) Deepest self can maintain integrity in face of most egregiously immoral acts

(3) “Fundamental stance remains unchanged”

16. Classical tradition avoids this anthropological dualism

- a) Suspensions of mysterious transcendental knower who dwells behind concrete acts of knowing or a transcendent willer who lurks behind acts of the will (Aquinas)
- b) “The I is not agent behind categorical but that which is known and constituted through the categorical” (270)
- c) Koral Woytyla in 1950s on moral philosophy
 - (1) *Would be most coherent to speak not of the person behind the action but “the acting person”*
 - (2) When someone chooses in morally deliberate way she opts for a particular course of action and the kind of person she will be
 - (3) Each act shapes the moral self
 - (4) This self-creating capacity is “transcendental” relating to range of concrete choices of action
 - (5) ***This is not bifurcation at anthropological level***
 - (6) **We choose what to do and thereby choose who to be**
 - (7) The “fundamental stance” of proportionalists is problematic assumption
- d) Woytyla prefers to speak of *gradual formation of character through virtue rather than definitive choice made at level of transcendental freedom*

- e) Proportionalist account of mortal + venial sin is unwarranted

17. *Process by which value of moral act is determined*

- a) **Number of problems**
- b) Problem of judging premoral goods and evils which are incommensurable
- c) *Various values cannot be evaluated in terms of another*
- d) **How is one to determine/measure???**
- e) Something *Cartesian* about reducing complexities and incommensurabilities of life to a rational grid
- f) *We make moral decisions all the time but not on rationalist calculating basis*
- g) (Rw - no but sometimes we have the luxury to do so yes?)

18. Second problem = the proportionalist moral field is wide open

- a) Apart from directly killing the innocent *there is no act that could not be justified through determination of a balancing good*
- b) How could another moral agent cogently disagree?
- c) **When intrinsically evil acts are relegated to level of premoral disvalues, when dense objectivity of moral project is compromised, this kind of subjectivism and relativism follows**

19. Another more basic difficulty = universalism

- a) Another distinctively modern feature of proportionalist program
- b) *Classical Catholic natural law tradition as inspiration => a human ethic available to any thoughtful human being*
 - (1) *What would prevent any moral agent of any background from deciding what is “helpful or harmful to real human beings”*
 - (2) **Christian revelation adds nothing to the humanist moral program**

(3) *Stories law teachings prophecies of Scripture only stir explicit consciousness of those values emerging naturally in general human experience*

(4) *Life of grace possible outside proclaiming gospel of Jesus*

20. But this cannot be right

a) **God's definitive revelation through the Bible (his unique manner of being) constitutes a world of meaning - a new way of imaging ourselves - a matrix of thought action value otherwise unavailable to us**

b) The narratives *make a people*

c) The evangel of Jesus *shapes a new creation*

d) "Saved without the gospel, without faith in Christ, without discipleship, without the way of the cross!"
(James McClendon)

e) *O'Connell presented an attenuated version of the Christian moral program*

21. Both deontologism and proportionalism (with their modern presuppositions) present an isolated moral subject cut off from influence of tradition and practice engaging in a rationalist calculus

a) The God of Jesus Christ remains marginal

(1) At best a cheerleader

(2) At worst a threat to authentic autonomy

b) Therefore irreconcilable with consistently christocentric and tradition-oriented approach which Barron argues for

c) **What is the ethical form emerging from the narratives and practices centering on Jesus Christ crucified and risen Lord?**

XVI. The breakthrough

A. Odd story about Jesus and Peter in Luke 5

1. Two boats

2. *We have worked hard but have caught nothing*

3. *From now on you will be catching people 5:1-11*

4. *Picture of discipleship and mission*

5. *Also central dynamic in Christian ethics*

- B. Symbolic significance of boat
1. Galilean fishermen sent product also to distant cities within Roman Empire
 2. Boat as *instrument of professional creativity*
- C. Jesus just gets into his boat
1. ***The invasion of grace***
 2. God not content to leave us in “natural” state
 3. To live in us, become Lord of our lives, move into our minds, wills, bodies, imaginations, nerves, bones
- D. Something similar in story about Zacchaeus Luke 19:1-10
1. Natural life of human being about to be invaded by transforming grace
 2. ***Does not involve compromising nature but perfecting and elevating it***
 3. **When Jesus moves into house of the soul the powers of the soul are heightened and properly directed**
 4. Life is preserved strengthened + given new direction
 - a) *Put out into deep water*
 - b) Manner of knowing and willing intensifies exponentially
 - c) We are enraptured and overwhelmed
- E. Story of graceful elevation of human soul told over again in Scriptures
1. Abram in Ur
 - a) His goals were trumped by goal set for him
 2. Saul of Tarsus
 - a) Why are you persecuting me?
 - b) What was good and true underwent massive transformation
 - c) ***This reversal, decentering, turning upside down = invasion of grace***
- F. Biblical tradition presents an ethical program radically different from those proposed in classical philosophies (Emmanuel Levinas)
1. *What shall I do? What goods?* Plato and Aristotle
 - a) Ethics in nominative case
 2. Biblical heroes do ethics in accusative case

- a) *Here I am* (Genesis 22)
- 3. Often accusing voice of God is mediated through voices of the suffering (especially in great prophets)
 - a) Not moral goods worth seeking but they interrupt self-absorbed reflections of moral agent and seek him
- G. Biblical theme of *bouleversement* of the self (Council of Trent)
 - 1. Nodding toward Reformers
 - 2. Justification can never be initiated through the law of ordinary moral achievement of human subject
 - 3. ***Made possible through gracious opening of new world on part of God***
 - 4. (Rw - sounds like Brueggemann)
 - 5. Something similar at beginning of *Summa theologiae*
 - a) Discipline of *sacra doctrina* beyond range of philosophical sciences
 - 6. *To argue that Christian ethics is simply human ethics with unique set of motivations misses the heart of the matter* (contra O'Connell)
 - 7. ***Revelation pens up context of meaning and value that revolutionizes natural morality at every level***
- H. Great tradition described this transformation by speaking of intruding of divine life into natural person with accompanying gifts of faith hope + love (277)
 - 1. Faith
 - a) Virtue that corresponds to God opening door to transcendent dimension
 - b) Knowing mind can grasp range of truths ***but can never grasp inner life of God***
 - c) Can only be received as grace
 - d) Faith = virtue by which one intellectually accepts this gift
 - 2. Hope
 - a) Aspiration to good transcending goods within the world
 - b) *Desire for properly eternal value becomes possible only when structures of this world no longer appear as ultimate*

3. Greatest is love
 - a) Love allows us to participate in very life of God
 - b) Essential dynamic of divine life is
being-with-and-for-the-other
 - c) ***To be God is to be love - willing of good of the other***
- I. Creation cannot be understood as expressing divine neediness since God needs nothing
 1. Rather an exercise born of sheerest desire to be for good of the other
 2. Overflow of trinitarian love
 3. ***Theological virtue of love = participating in this unique divine manner of being and acting***
 4. *Be perfect* Matthew 5:48
 5. Includes radical love of enemies
 6. Nonviolence in face of aggression
 7. Refusal to judge
 8. Embrace of poverty meekness simplicity of heart
 9. **Not desirable or possible within natural framework**
 10. ***Invasion of sacred does not overwhelm or undermine the secular but transfigures it***
- J. Helpful illustration in *The Idea of a University* by John Henry Newman
 1. Educational ideal = capacity to see whole of knowledge in abstraction from consideration of practicality and utility (Rw - !?)
 2. Liberal education produces the “gentleman”
- K. None of this is to be despised
 1. This gentlemanly form is not itself the life of holiness
 2. ***Inrushing of faith hope + love can transfigure the natural moral form such that authentic saint is not gentlemanly moderate and refined***
 3. What is this added element that transforms the naturally good person into a friend of God
- L. Aquinas assumed this difference in his account of the moral life

1. Aquinas is not just a medieval Aristoteian in his ethics but rather **a master of the Christian life** (279)
2. *What interests him is manner in which virtues are transfigured by addition of theological virtues of faith hope + love as well as infused moral virtues*
3. Courage -> boldness
4. Temperance -> chastity
5. Justice -> poverty of the mendicant
6. Prudence -> canny attunement to love

M. This transfiguration is born of the breakthrough of grace into one's life

1. *Center of remaining chapters of book*
2. **To make clear the essence of the Christian moral life, not enough to remain in modern mode at level of abstract exposition and rational calculus**
3. Not level of natural moral excellence
4. *Rather we must look at concrete exemplars of life of grace (saints)*
5. **Just as Jesus is not made real to us except through textured iconic narrative so moral life is not made vivid except through similar narrativity**
6. (Rw - relation to narrative theology?)
7. *How we determine what to do depends on determining who we ought to be*
8. **That means being a saint**

N. Sketches of lives of four saints

1. Edith Stein
 - a) Elevated courage
2. Thérèse of Lisieux
 - a) Elevated prudence
3. Katharine Drexel
 - a) Elevated justice
4. Mother Teresa of Calcutta
 - a) Elevated temperance

5. *Iconic descriptions of each concentrating on how the love of Jesus transfigured a natural virtue into something supernatural*
6. Relatively contemporary
7. *I hope to demonstrate the form of the Christian ethical life as it display itself dynamically*

XVII. Edith Stein - elevated courage