

## "Barth and the Holy Spirit" theme of last fall's AAR meeting in San Francisco

The program of the Karl Barth Society in advance of the annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion in San Francisco last November was another success. "Barth and the Holy Spirit" was the overall theme of the program, which for the first time featured a Saturday morning session in addition to the customary Friday afternoon meeting.

The session on Friday afternoon, Nov. 20, featured another capacity crowd. The room (with a posted capacity of 74) was filled (SRO). After the meeting, people stood around talking for another hour or so.

The first presentation was by **John Webster** (University of Toronto), who dealt with material on the baptism of the Holy Spirit in *Church Dogmatics* IV/4, §75, 1. He noted that much of Barth's teaching about the Spirit is indirect, via discussion of other topics. For Barth, the Holy Spirit is "the awakening power of the risen Jesus." He uses the rubric of baptism to focus other questions, primarily Christian ethics understood as human action evoked by grace.

Webster contends that what Barth says in this section is much more important than his criticisms of the sacramental understanding and of infant baptism. The basic question is the significance of human action. Barth insists that there really is human faithfulness to God, but it originates from God the Holy Spirit. There is no docetism here, according to Webster, because it really is human action. But this human action has no basis other than God alone.

Webster observed that Barth's late work is alert to the danger of a "christological totalitarianism" that would absorb all other reality so as to render human action irrelevant. But, he insisted, Barth guards against such an outcome through Christology and not in some other way. For Barth, a true Christocentricity evokes and generates other histories. "The omnicausality of God," said Webster, "is not sole causality."

Webster then discussed 5 main points concerning the church's confession of the Holy Spirit.

(1) The Holy Spirit is not detachable from Jesus Christ; the work of the Spirit is not a subsequent activity of a separate divine agent.

(2) The baptism of the Holy Spirit is effective grace; it is the direct/immediate presence of Jesus Christ (vs. claims for sacramental efficacy).

### ANNUAL CONFERENCE SET FOR JUNE 18-19 IN TORONTO

The Karl Barth Society of North America will hold its second annual June conference this year in Toronto on June 18-19. The theme will be "Barth and Luther."

See the detailed program listing on page 3.

(3) The theme of gratitude: the work of the Holy Spirit has an ethical dimension. Human autonomy is not in competition with divine freedom. Barth denies that conflict by denying its ontological basis. Freedom is what we *are* in Christ.

(4) The ecclesial dimension: the Christian is the fellow or brother/sister of these others, bound to them for better or worse.

(5) The eschatological dimension: Christian existence is one long Advent season.

The second presentation was by **James Buckley** (Loyola College, Baltimore) on the topic "The Holy Spirit and the Church." (See the author's precis elsewhere in this issue.)

On Saturday morning, November 21, the Barth Society program continued with a paper by **Lyle Dabney** (theologian-in-residence at Marvin United Methodist Church in Tyler, Texas) who recently completed a doctoral dissertation at Tübingen under Jürgen Moltmann, *Die Kenosis des Geistes: Kontinuität zwischen Schöpfung und Erlösung im Werk des Heiligen Geistes*. (See the author's precis elsewhere in this issue.)

After Lyle's paper, the remainder of the Saturday morning session was a free-ranging discussion moderated by Walter Lowe (Emory University). Having a second session on Saturday morning was welcomed by many, especially those who were unable to arrive in time for the Friday afternoon meeting.

Various comments and suggestions were made including the following:

- a call for a greater attempt to balance the ages of scholars appearing on the program (i.e. include younger scholars who are at the beginning of their careers as well as more established scholars);
- the need for a critical approach to Barth as well as a favorable approach;
- appreciation for the kind of textual analysis represented by John Webster's paper;
- the desirability of a membership directory of the KBSNA, a kind of "Who's Who in Barth studies";
- a request that presenters provide copies of their papers for those attending.

[continued on next page]

One participant, noting that university professors have been killed in El Salvador, pointed out that we live in the empire, and wondered what Barth would do and what we should do: what resources are there in Barth's theology for our crises?

Possible topics for future consideration were suggested, such as: Barth's theology of ministry; a study of Barth's sermons; Barth's relation to patristics and medieval sources, and how that affects his constructive statement; the Barth-Balthasar dialogue.

There was a consensus to the effect that the program should include both historical/textual Barth studies (Barth interpretation) and issues of current application ("Barth and..."). Or, put another way, that a balanced program would include attention to (a) sources and influences, (b) exposition, and (c) implications.

A participant who identified himself as Roman Catholic spoke of the impact of Barth on his thinking, so that everything he now reads he reads in the light of his earlier reading of Karl Barth.

It was agreed that Walt Lowe, George Hunsinger, and Martin Rumscheidt would be the "troika" responsible for planning next year's program.

Someone commented that the Barth Society has turned a corner, what with 75 in attendance at the Friday afternoon meeting and a mailing list of 250 receiving the Newsletter.

David Willis-Watkins mentioned that Princeton Seminary is publishing a new series of 60-page monographs, *Studies in Reformed Theology and History*. He invited participants to write the seminary and ask to be put on the mailing list for announcements.

### MEMBERSHIP IN THE KARL BARTH SOCIETY

Readers of the Newsletter (and anyone else who is interested) are invited to join the Karl Barth Society of North America .

To become a member of the Barth Society, send your name, address, and annual dues of \$10.00 to:

Professor Russell Palmer  
Dept. of Philosophy and Religion  
University of Nebraska at Omaha  
Omaha, NE 68182-0265

*Members whose dues were paid prior to June 1992 are urged to send in their annual renewal.*

Robert R. Osborn, *The Barmen Declaration as a Paradigm for a Theology of the American Church*. Edwin Mellen Press. 168pp.

The purpose of this book is to clarify the struggle for truth and identity of the American church as the church of Jesus Christ, and to help facilitate a successful outcome, by reflecting on the nature of the church in the light of the Barmen Declaration. The book takes a traditional-linguistic approach to theology, concerned with the phenomenon of the Christian church and what it means for it to be the church.

## A Precis

### A Field of Living Fire: Karl Barth on the Spirit and the Church

James J. Buckley

*Department of Theology  
Loyola College in Maryland*

The argument between Robert Jenson and George Hunsinger over the consistency of Barth's pneumatology is an argument over how broad and deep a catholic strand there is to Barth's evangelical theology. That is, it is an argument over (a) whether the Spirit is other than the Father and Son (Jenson) or "Christ-centered not Spirit centered" (Hunsinger) and (b) whether the church is "an active *mediatrix*" of faith (Jenson) or "receptive not constitutive" (Hunsinger) of its own identity.

However, pursuing this debate requires attending to both what Barth "states" and "shows" about the Spirit and the church. If we turn from the argument *over* Barth's theology to an argument *within* his theology, we can find evidence that Barth's theology establishes a *mutual relationship* between Catholic and Evangelical theology rather than a *rivalry* between the two.

Next, lest this seem unsatisfying irenicism, it can also be shown that the central issue at stake is how pneumatology can situate what it means to be a reformer of (including polemicist against) the Church. Karl Barth's notion of the Spirit as "consoler and critic" of the Church provides some clues at this phase of the argument.

But at this point the primary arguments become, by and large, *outside* Barth's theology. Flannery O'Connor's short story "Revelation" is the original context for the image of a field of living fire, a secular parable of the relationship between Spirit and church. "The Spirit who gives life to the dead" (Romans 8:11) is a living fire "like a refiner's fire -- cleansing rather than consuming" (Ralph Wood).

The Spirit not only universalizes the particularity of Jesus Christ in the church for the world but also enacts a particular *kenosis* showing us how to be a field of living fire that criticizes and consoles itself from and with and toward the risen Christ.

Finally, once we have placed the Spirit as consoler and critic in this relationship to the church *as a whole*, the discussion of the Spirit and the Church must return to the *particular goods and practices* that constitute the life of the Christian community in world-history: baptism and eucharist, ordination and marriage, God's inspiration and our use of Scriptures, the relationship between gifts of the Spirit and our virtues, practices of the remission of sin, and the diverse and conflicting histories that constitute our movement from near to distant neighbors. It is not only as a whole but also in its parts that the church is the field of Holy Spirit's living fire.

THE KARL BARTH SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA

Annual Conference  
June 18-19, 1993  
University of Toronto

**B A R T H   A N D   L U T H E R**

*Friday, June 18*

11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

**"Barth's Encounter with Calvin with Reference to  
Barth's Encounter with Luther"**

Professor William Klempa, McGill University

2:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Seminar: **"The Early Barth's Attitude to Luther's Understanding  
of Law and Gospel, the Theory of the Two Kingdoms and the Sacraments"**

Professor David Yeago, The Lutheran Southern Seminary

Banquet

**"An Ecumenical Reception of Luther"**

Professor Harry McSorley, St. Michael's College, University of Toronto

7:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Professor Robert Osborn of Duke University and Professor Paul McGlasson of  
Eden Seminary will discuss each other's recent books:

The Barmen Confession As A Paradigm For A Theology of the American Church  
and Jesus and Judas: Biblical Exegesis in Barth

*Saturday, June 19*

9:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

Seminar: **"Luther and Barth: Ways of Reading the Bible"**

Professor David Demson, Emmanuel College, University of Toronto

11:15 a.m. - 12:45 p.m.

**"The Grammar of Doing: Human Agency in Luther and Barth"**

Professor John Webster, Wycliffe College, University of Toronto

For information and to register for the Conference and/or accommodation, write:

Accommodations and Registration

Victoria University

140 Charles Street West

Toronto, Ontario

M5S 1K9 CANADA

## Barth's Doctrine of Israel

Katherine Sonderegger, *That Jesus Christ Was Born A Jew: Karl Barth's "Doctrine of Israel."* The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992, pp. viii & 179.

Karl Barth's doctrine of Israel (or, the Jews) has prompted considerable antagonism towards it among participants in Christian-Jewish dialogue and considerable support for it among some contemporary theologians influenced by Barth. Katherine Sonderegger in her recent book has succinctly, yet accurately and comprehensively, described Barth's doctrine of Israel, thereby enabling her readers to orientate themselves among its antagonists and protagonists.

Her description of Barth's doctrine of Israel enables us to understand why it is usually misunderstood. Barth's doctrine of Israel forms part of his doctrine of election, and because the latter is widely misunderstood by both liberal and conservative critics, the same fate befalls his doctrine of Israel.

The doctrine of election in Reformed theology has belonged to soteriology: some individuals are elected to eternal felicity, some to eternal damnation. But Barth understands election quite differently, and it has been insufficiently noted that he moves the doctrine of election out of soteriology and into the doctrine of God.

Election is God's Self-determination. From eternity God the Father determines himself to elect the Son; and from eternity God the Father elects the Son to exist not only as God, but *also* as a creature distinct from God's deity. The Son determines himself from eternity to accept this determination of him by the Father and also obediently to elect a people to be with him. Thus, God's eternal Self-determination is reflected and represented in the creaturely realm in the person of Jesus Christ, but also in the existence of Israel, whom Jesus Christ chooses. Jesus and Israel, then, correspond in the creaturely sphere to God's own inner life and are, thereby, the locus of the revelation of God's Self to the creature.

The doctrine of election stands closer to the doctrine of revelation than to the doctrine of salvation in Barth's theology. When Barth speaks of Israel as the witness to divine judgment, this doesn't mean Jews are damned, it means that Jews as the people Israel are the locus of the revelation of divine judgment.

But why the emphasis on Israel as the witness to divine judgment, while the church is called the witness to divine mercy? Sonderegger insists that this emphasis derives from the fact that the theme (dear to the Lutheran tradition) that is always at work in Barth's thought is justification by grace alone. God elected (or determined) from eternity that he, as the Son, would become flesh and in that flesh would choose a people, this choosing being the very purpose of his creation.

The people of God's choosing turn from being chosen. This is the risk God took in creating this people. God, and God only, can turn this people back to him, by himself

assuming its place and taking the consequence (death) of this disobedience upon himself. God justifies (puts right) in Christ those chosen to correspond to him, even as this people refuses its chosenness. Thus, God's justification of his people is the justification of the ungodly.

Two points need to be marked. (1) How was Israel to correspond to God? (2) How is Israel made to correspond to God? First, even as God chose the Jews, they were determined to choose God. The love of God for them freed them to love him. Second, Israel in fact does not enact this correspondence to God. Is the locus of revelation thus lost? By no means. In their very refusal, in their very lack of creaturely (co)response to God, the Jews are made to continue as the locus of revelation. Still the people of God, their very refusal is made to reveal God's deepest nature.

In condescending mercy and love, God takes on the plight of his enemies in order to overcome their plight and to constitute them anew his friends and children. In this condescending love of God his people are revealed as his enemy, are marked as 'vessels of wrath', 'vessels of dishonour', witnesses of the divine judgment. For the love of God for his people burns hot in the face of their attempt to achieve self-fulfillment on their own, which is what their rejection of Jesus as Messiah and Helper signifies. But Israel is made "the vessel of dishonour" only in function of the deeper revelation of God made known by the people's existence in rejection. Those who receive God's judgment and wrath for their attempt to achieve their own fulfillment do so only that through it they may be put right by the mercy of God. God, by great cost to himself, puts right the ungodly.

Barth was never satisfied with the affirmation of the justification of the ungodly as an abstract statement. Only as the biblical narrative itself depicts God's people as the ungodly set right by God's act of Self-humiliation in Christ is it to be understood. A concrete narrative must be the form of this affirmation. And that is what Scripture provides by attesting Israel as the locus of the revelation of who God is.

And what of the parallel affirmation that the church is the witness to God's mercy? This does not mean that church membership, *eo ipso*, confers mercy. Rather, the genuine church is peopled by those who acknowledge that they are acceptable children of God by virtue of God's mercy alone and by virtue of nothing they have done. Indeed, they are acceptable, if they are Gentiles, only because God has gone through an adoption procedure and taken them into the people Israel, whom he accepts by pure mercy, and not without depriving them, by his wrath, of all presumption of merit.

This is Sonderegger's account of Barth's doctrine of Israel. She notes that in the service of his doctrine of justification by grace alone Barth makes much of the Jewish rejection of Israel's Messiah. The fact of the continuing existence of Jews outside the church Barth sees as serving the purpose of attesting that God's acceptance of his people (their righteousness) does not depend upon his people's acceptance of him, but only upon God's mercy (which is a *righteous* mercy, in that the cost of his

mercy is paid by God). But this means, then, that God still employs Israel, it is still his people, the people of God's Messiah, its members are members of the body of Christ.

So the cost of Barth's doctrine of Israel is high, Sonderegger tells her readers. Barth does not allow Judaism to be a *bona fide*, independent religion in its own right, but rather Jews and Christians are forced upon each other as fellow members of one community. While Barth is clearly not anti-Semitic, he expresses a clear anti-Judaism.

Sonderegger makes clear that Barth is no anti-Semite. Throughout his writings he ridicules the mythology of racial theory. He at all times insists that Christians and the church need the Jews and he continually urges Christian solidarity with Jews. He was a firm supporter from 1948 until his death of the State of Israel, strongly rebuking the anti-Israel attitude of many of his political friends who were with him on the political left.

But Barth espoused an anti-Judaism and Sonderegger develops her major criticisms of Barth in respect to his anti-Judaism. In insisting that Jews and Christians together form the one people of God, Barth is unable to acknowledge Judaism as a religion in its own right. According to Sonderegger, Barth accords to Judaism a serious lack of respect and in the closing pages of her book she offers her alternative.

The book presents a clear and accurate account of Barth's doctrine of Israel not least of all because it places it in the context of his whole work by tracing its development from the early commentaries on *Romans* through the *Church Dogmatics* and through Barth's post-WWII writings. The author takes issue tellingly with Marquardt's account of Barth's doctrine of Israel.

A reader who knows Barth's work may be surprised at a couple of points. In the chapter in which Sonderegger discusses Barth's insistence that Christians maintain solidarity with Jews, she leaves out of consideration one of Barth's major essays written on this topic in the 1930's, *The Church and the Political Problem of Our Day*.

A more substantial surprise occurs in her treatment of Barth's discussion of *das Nichtige*. Sonderegger suggests that Barth's concept of *das Nichtige* finds its basis in the work of his dialectical period. It seems more probable that the basis for this concept is to be found in the long expository sections of *C.D.* II/2, where Barth develops the themes of God's election and rejection of Israel.

Nothingness is, then, revealed in God's electing and rejecting history with Israel and arises as a concept in *C.D.* III/3 when the rejection made known in 'biblical history' is transposed into the context of the Genesis 1 narrative and is, thus, made ingredient to Barth's development of the doctrine of creation. One may disagree with Barth's treatment of *das Nichtige*, but to engage in a critique of it, one must enter a criticism of the exposition offered in *C.D.* II/2. Sonderegger doesn't criticize Barth's understanding of Nothingness, but she does not make sufficiently clear its exegetical basis in Barth's work.

I have recounted only some of the major points Sonderegger elucidates (usually with precision and sophistication) in her book. Anyone who has an interest in these points in Barth's doctrine of Israel and in Christian-Jewish dialogue today will need to read the book in order to appreciate the complexity and richness of her treatment of them.

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*Toronto School of Theology*

## **"Barmen - Then and Now"**

*(A statement by Karl Barth in May 1954, translated by Paul Matheny.)*

"Church and Humanity" has called me "the spiritual initiator of Barmen." The honor is due to those who deserve it! I want to warn you against the further use of this or similar formulas, because one plays into the hands of those for whom, openly or secretly, Barmen is and was a thorn in their eye. In fact, what this formula claims was not true at that time. In the beginning of the Church struggle (1933-34) I participated in my own way, just as many others did in their own ways.

Following the unique preparation of the Barmen Declaration I was, along with others, in a select and then in a broader circle of a group of trained theologians; whereas it was a matter of unique circumstances that the statements that were presented to and approved at Barmen -- except for certain specific supplements and amplifications (which can probably be recognized by analysis of their tone) made before and during the Synod -- were in concept and language the work of my pen.

*"The spiritual initiator of Barmen" was not an individual, but rather the broad, intellectual and spiritual, theological and ecclesiastical, and very diverse community, which in the face of the disorder caused by National Socialism, needed to say publicly what was stated in the sentences of Barmen.*

The speaker of the committee responsible for preparing for the Synod was Hans Asmussen. I myself was just a member of the Synod. I was so much of a peripheral figure that, as has recently been revealed in the files, they almost forgot to invite me. This is my contribution to the topic "Barmen Then."

On the topic "Barmen Now" I would like quickly to ascertain what moved us then -- I emphasize **us** -- and what could still move a community of like-minded people today and today more than ever.

Concerning the first issue: We were concerned then with the determination of certain particular Christian truths with a view towards a particular necessary action, namely resistance and confrontation required in response to the threat of political oppression and alienation created by the "German Christians" then present in all Protestant churches and congregations. Through fresh reflection upon her presuppositions -- inasmuch as through "reformation" -- the church was to be fortified in

faith and joy, and to be called to courageous and confident struggle. Pressed to the wall, she had to "confess" with a particular yes or no, in order not to give in. This confession as such was the significance of Barmen's undertaking.

"Confessional Church"? No: we came certainly from different "Confessional Churches", from different traditional confessions. We did not wish to abandon them. But what we were in Barmen were "confessing" churches -- in a new situation intending to be a confessing church in praxis.

The question to the church of today might be put in this way: does she really have the basis and occasion to break off after the fact from this undertaking, from this new confessing, from "Reformation" instigated by the affirmations of Barmen and return to the hurdles and fences of the Confessions -- perhaps with inclusion of the Barmen Confession? The church was then awoken and underway. Has she once again fallen asleep and become stagnant?

Concerning the second issue: What we wanted in Barmen was a collection of scattered Christian spirits (Lutheran, Reformed, United, positive, liberal, pietistic). Not unification, not uniformity, but an assembly: focused on united strikes, therefore on united strides. No distinction of history and tradition should be blotted out, but "the confession of the one Lord of the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church draws us together", as it is stated in the introduction of the Declaration. We were influenced by Luther and the Heidelberg Catechism. There were outspoken liberals and outspoken pietists, without yielding their particularity they were able to go beyond it to new insights and practical consequences.

A question to the present: does this assembly continue or has a new, dead juxtaposition or even a new division taken its place? What does "Protestant Church in Germany" mean -- is it permanently a "Federation of Confessing Churches" -- if they are not above all an assembly? *Has it subsequently become afraid of its own courage with which it dared to do this in those days?* Is not the crisis of our time calling for assembly, or is the power of God's Word to gather us together of less value today than then?

Or should "the one Lord of the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church" in comparison to the different traditional "Confessional Stances" and other special interests become today in practice an less valued quantity?

Concerning the third issue: As the statements of the Barmen Declaration demonstrate, there was only one reason that we gathered together at that time. Indeed it was certainly one reason -- the one Lord of the Church, Jesus Christ. It was this point about which we, instructed by the Confessions of the century of the Reformation, had to and desired to speak more expressly and precisely. We were asked expressly and precisely to say then -- not only what but also who actually rules in the world and Church, whom we therefore listen to, and whom we trust and obey. It is a noteworthy, but as such an indisputable fact, that the Barmen Synod showed itself exactly in this point, which in the Declaration truly stabs one in the eyes, to be unified and resolute. Or did it just appear to be this way? Did

it already regret it, as it approved the Declaration? Since then I have often asked myself if we, those who acted as the theological trustees then, did not overwhelm the Synod or if the Synod with its agreement did not assume too much.

What is certain is that afterwards and up until and including the current "Protestant Church in Germany" one has at times behaved as if, in this central point, something like a theological peculiarity was at work, as if one could and must "recognize also other events and powers, forms and truths than God's revelation" in addition to the one Word of God. How is it otherwise possible that so much homesickness for Rome (not to speak of other flesh-pots) could spread even in the circles of the former "confessing" churches? A question for the present: Is it not so that at that time of trial and crisis we first began to understand that "Jesus Christ, as he is witnessed to in the Holy Scriptures" is the one Word of God?

Is it not so that we today would have every reason to look forward and proceed exactly on the basis of this point.

Would not we have our hands full both inwardly and outwardly, in theology and church as in our efforts in the world, to grasp this theoretically and practically now first properly and much better, more radically, more joyously and seriously. To grasp what then became visible to us as the saving truth: "You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies", what we then factually believed, recognized and understood? Why, on the basis of which important reason, are we not doing this?

Among all these issues I do not forget this: more is needed today than a forced remembrance of Barmen in order to bring the deep unrest and rich calm, that brought it to act and speak daringly then, once again to the church.

KARL BARTH

May 1954

## Next in series of Lutheran Barth conferences set for June 1994

The Institute for Mission in the U.S.A. of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is planning its sixth biennial conference on the theology of Karl Barth to be held June 20-22, 1994, at Luther Northwestern Theological Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota.

Wayne Stumme, Director of the Institute, stated in a letter that "my efforts in organizing and sponsoring these conferences directly reflect my conviction that **the theology of Karl Barth remains the theology of the future for all who take seriously the relation of theological work to the mission challenges which the church is facing**" (emphasis added).

Information about the 1994 event will be available from Dr. Stumme at Trinity Lutheran Seminary, 2199 East Main Street, Columbus, Ohio 43209.

## A Precipis

# The Kenosis of the Spirit: Continuity Between Creation and Redemption

D. Lyle Dabney

Based on a dissertation under Jürgen Moltmann (to be published by Neukirchener Verlag in 1994), this paper suggests that the relationship between creation and redemption can best be addressed from the standpoint of pneumatology.

(1) Whereas theologies of the first article posit a direct continuum between creation and redemption, and theologies of the second article see an utter contradiction between the two, this paper investigates the question from the standpoint of the third article of the creed. The relation between creation and redemption is determined by the relation of the resurrected to the crucified Jesus Christ: one of final continuity through real discontinuity, brought about by the "kenosis of the Spirit."

(2) In developing this metaphor, the point of departure is Moltmann's use of the metaphor of the "kenosis of God" in *The Crucified God*, where it serves as a central image for what he terms the "God-event" of the cross. There the trinitarian life of God is thrown open for all to see.

The key to this interpretation Moltmann found in the death cry of the crucified Christ: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" In that cry the basic categories of the trinitarian kenosis are laid out: the Father sacrifices or gives up the Son to the cross, the Son suffers abandonment by the Father, and emerging from this event between Father and Son is the Spirit.

The problem with Moltmann's account is that he develops it only in terms of the Father and the Son. The Spirit, who appears only subsequent to the cross, is largely left out of this description of the "God-event" of the divine kenosis. But if one is to speak of the "kenosis of the Spirit," one must offer an account of the role of the Holy Spirit in the death and resurrection of Christ, a *pneumatologia crucis* which corresponds to and complements Moltmann's *theologia crucis*. This will also address the relation between creation and redemption, for the "history of God" told in the death and resurrection of the Son is, as Moltmann has shown, nothing less than the "history of the world."

The New Testament portrays the Spirit as active at the cross from both sides: as the one who leads Christ into suffering and sacrifice, and as the one who raises him from the dead. Against the background of Ezekiel 37, in which the Spirit of God was portrayed as the eschatological *Spiritus Vivificans* whom God would breathe anew upon the dry bones of his people, the early church confessed that it is by the power of God's Spirit that Jesus Christ is risen from the dead (Rom 1:3-4, 1 Tim 3:16; 1 Pet 3:18). To those references must be added the various texts in which the resurrection is attributed by Paul to the "power" or "glory" of God, terms which are widely recognized as circumlocutions for the Spirit.

But God's Spirit is also the Spirit of self-sacrifice. For it is this same *life-giving* Spirit who raised Jesus Christ from the grave who first led him into a *life-giving* ministry of suffering and sacrifice and death. Thus the oldest surviving Christian sermon declares that Jesus Christ offered himself up to God "through the eternal Spirit" (Heb 9:14). It is as he humbles himself to identify

with humanity in its sin that the descent of the dove marks Jesus out as the Christ and God hails him as Son (Mk 1:9-11). It is as the one defined by the Spirit that Jesus is "driven out" into the wilderness to be tempted, and then re-emerges to proclaim the nearness of the kingdom. And finally, it is as he is confronted in Gethsemane with the spectre of the cross and is "deeply grieved, even to death" that Jesus speaks the words that for the early church were the work of the Holy Spirit, "Abba Father," and can thus continue with "not my will but your will be done." It is, then, as the Christ, the one defined by the Spirit of God, that Jesus freely takes up the suffering of the cross. That is what differentiates Jesus from his disciples, who sleep while he prays, who flee from underlings while he stands before authorities, and who deny him with an oath before servants even as he confesses that he is the Christ before rulers. If Jesus is defined by the "willing Spirit," they are defined by the "weak flesh" (14:38). It is as the one defined by this "willing Spirit" that Jesus goes to meet his fate on Golgotha.

In his portrayal of Jesus' trial and crucifixion, Mark constantly emphasizes that the condemnation and death of Jesus was the condemnation and death of the rejected and crucified Messiah. It was this one, defined by the life-giving Spirit, who came "to give his life a ransom for many." The Spirit of God is the *Spiritus Vivificans*, the life-giving Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead, having first led him into a life-giving ministry of suffering and self-sacrifice. As such, the Spirit is also the one who works continuity of life in resurrection through the discontinuity of death on the cross. Thus, Paul argues in 1 Cor 15 for the resurrection and transformation of this physical existence based on the example of Jesus Christ. Just as Jesus of Nazareth was raised from the dead, transformed but not "other," so will all creation be raised to newness of life by the Spirit of God, in continuity of life through the discontinuity of death.

With that account of the Holy Spirit in the death and resurrection of Jesus, the question of the kenosis of the Spirit can now be addressed.

For the Father and the Son the death cry of Jesus on the cross meant surrender of the Son and the experience of abandonment by the Father (Moltmann). But what does the cross mean for the Spirit?

The key to understanding the significance of the cross for the Spirit is found in the words with which Jesus begins his cry: "My God, my God". For the first and only time in Mark (indeed, the only time in the gospel tradition) Jesus is portrayed as addressing his prayer not to his "Father" but to his "God".

The implications of that change in terminology are far-reaching. In Mark, Jesus dies not simply as *the abandoned Son of God*, but as *the one who in his abandonment experienced the utter negation of himself as the Son of God*; he was "disowned" and "fatherless," indeed, "a fatherless child" whose only words were a desperate cry from the depths. The profundity of his kenosis is underlined when the Roman centurion, echoing the words with which the Father hailed the Son at his baptism and transfiguration, confesses: "Truly this man was God's Son."

At the same time, this text also reveals the profundity of the kenosis of the Spirit. The sonship of Jesus Christ is rooted in his relationship to the Spirit. It is to the one upon whom the Spirit descends that the Father says: "You are my beloved Son." It is by the grace of the "willing Spirit" that in his hour of testing, Jesus can address his prayer to "Abba Father" and "willingly" drink of the

cup set before him and so fulfill the "will" of the Father. Sonship and Spirit stand together. The Spirit of God is, in Paul's phrase, "the Spirit of the Son" (Gal 4:6).

What can it mean for this "Spirit of the Son" that the death of Jesus on the cross means the undoing, the coming to grief, the negating not only of "the Son" but of "sonship" itself? It can only represent the profoundest frustration and nullification of the work of the Spirit. For in that "fatherless" cry of Jesus, all the life and mission and work of the Spirit of God is set at nought -- even as it comes to fulfillment. In that cry, all the "grief" (Is 63:10; Eph 4:30) and "outrage" (Heb 10:29) ever experienced by the Spirit at the hands of the creature comes to a climax in which every "word of blasphemy" spoken against the Spirit (Mk 3:29) and every "quenching" of the Spirit's work (1 Thess 5:19) comes to expression. The Spirit who plumbs "everything, even the depths of God" (1 Cor 2:10), has plumbed even the depths of death in God, and in that death all the life and work of God's Spirit comes to grief. On the cross, the *negation of the Son* means the *ab-negation of the Spirit*.

The death of Jesus Christ on the cross represents, therefore, something other for the Spirit than for the Father or the Son. For the Father and the Son the cross means absence: the Father's loss of his beloved Son, the Son's experience of abandonment by the one whom he had addressed as "Abba Father." But the Spirit suffers neither such a "loss" nor such an "abandonment." What the Spirit experiences is a function not of *absence*, but of *presence*. The Spirit of the Cross is *the presence of God with the Son in the absence of the Father*. Thus, whereas the cry of Jesus reveals the yawning chasm of loss and desolation that opens to separate Father and Son, no such chasm exists between the Crucified One and the

*Spiritus Crucis*. It is the kenotic work of the Spirit of life to plunge himself into death, to "empty himself" into the abyss of death and raise the one who died on the cross to new life.

Three conclusions follow from the kenosis of the Spirit.

1. *The continuity between creation and redemption is rooted in the continuity in the life of God*. If the Spirit brings about continuity in the "history of God" through the discontinuity of the death of the Son, then it must also be said that the Spirit brings about continuity in the "history of the world."

2. *We must learn to think through continuity in the history of the world in a manner corresponding to that continuity in the history of God*. As that continuity is only in and through profound discontinuity, we must think both together. That means that, *contra* theologies of the second article, we must really speak of continuity, and, at the same time, *contra* theologies of the first article, we must speak of that continuity only in light of real discontinuity.

3. *We must learn the language of the Holy Spirit*. If we are ever to move beyond theologies of the first article which play off creation against redemption and theologies of the second article which simply reverse that order, it will only be as we develop a truly inclusive theology of the third article; a theology which offers a comprehensive eschatological perspective which allows each of the first two articles its proper expression.

That was the "dream" of which Karl Barth spoke in his last years as he speculated about a theology of the Holy Spirit which could finally resolve the conflict between Schleiermacher's theology of continuum and his own theology of contradiction. It is that dream that sets before us the task theology faces yet today.

*Karl Barth Society Newsletter*  
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