

**From Corruption to Glory:
The Son's Redemptive Assumption of Fallen Humanity
in Dogmatic Dialogue with T. F. Torrance**

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Abstract

For much of the Western theological tradition, divine-human reconciliation has been marred with a form of dualism between God's saving work and the humanity of Jesus Christ, claims T.F. Torrance, a manifestation of what he dubbed the "Latin Heresy". Here we examine Torrance's attempt to recontextualise reconciliation within the constitution of the incarnate Son, to recover the soteriological principle of the Eastern Fathers that what is "unassumed is unhealed", and thus move away from external, forensic or juridical categories of atonement by threading Christ's assumption of fallen human nature through the very heart of his doctrine of the incarnation. Where contemporary debate of such a notion has struggled is in ambiguity of terms - some clarity must be brought to defining "fallenness", particularly in relation to the Classical-Reformed categories of original guilt and corruption. The state of Christ's humanity also renders several dogmatic questions surrounding, namely, the integrity of His suffering and temptation; the temporal consistency of incarnational atonement being instantaneous *and* continuous; the consistency in application of the non-assumptus to human "person" as well as "nature"; the success of the non-assumptus in preventing the instrumentality of Christ's humanity; and the role of the Spirit in the incarnation. Beyond this, contentious historical work has left both "fallenness" and "unfallenness" theologians divided in interpretation of the same sources, with both Eastern and Western Fathers, in places, being made subservient to later theological structures and vocabulary, and the conceptual schism between the two exacerbated. This too, we seek to address. Emancipated from these constrictions, and perhaps with some common ground found, the fallenness debate should be able to progress more constructively.

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Abbreviations

- Adv. Nestorium* Cyril of Alexandria, *Five Tomes Against Nestorius* (tr. P. E. Pusey; Oxford: James Parker & Co, 1881).
- Agon.* Augustine, 'The Christian Combat' (*FC* 2, ed. R. J. Deferrari, tr. R. P. Russell; 2nd edn.; Washington: CUAP, 1950) 315-356.
- An.* Tertullian, *De Anima* (*ANF* 3, ed. A. Roberts and J. Donaldson, tr. P. Holmes; New York: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1885) 181-235.
- ANF* P. Schaff, J. Donaldson and A. Roberts (eds.), *The Ante-Nicene Fathers: The Writings of the Fathers Down to AD 325*, 10 Volumes (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1995-2004).
- ApP* Irenaeus, *Demonstration of the Apostolic Preaching: A Theological Commentary and Translation* (ed. I. M. MacKenzie, tr. J. A. Robinson; Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002).
- Carn.* Tertullian, *De Carne Christi* (*Tertullian's Treatise on the Incarnation*, ed. & tr. E. Evans; Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 1956).
- CD* K. Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, 4 volumes (ed. & tr. G. W. Bromley and T. F. Torrance; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1957-1981).
- Civ. Dei.* Augustine, 'St. Augustin's City of God' (*NFPF(1)* 4, ed. P. Schaff, tr. M. Dods; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979) 1-511.
- Conf.* *The Confessions of St. Augustine* (*FC* 21, ed. L. Schopp, tr. V. J. Bourke; Washington: CUAP, 1953).
- CUAP* Catholic University of America Press
- CUP* Cambridge University Press
- Ep.* Epistle(s)
- EQ* Evangelical Quarterly
- FC* *The Fathers of the Church*, 127 volumes (Washington: CUAP, 1947-2013).
- Fid. et. Sym.* Augustine, 'Faith and the Creed' (*On Christian Belief*, ed. B. Ramsey, tr. M. G. Campbell; New York: New City Press, 2005) 151-176.
- Genesi.* Augustine, 'On Genesis against the Manichees' (*FC* 84, ed. T. P. Halton, tr. R. J. Teske; Washington: CUAP, 1990) 45-141.
- Haer.* Irenaeus, 'Against Heresies' (*ANF* 1, ed. J. Donaldson and A. Roberts, tr. A. Roberts and W. Rambaut; Peabody: Hendrickson, 1995) 309-367.
- IJST* International Journal of Systematic Theology

- Io. Ev. Tr.* Augustine, *Tractates of the Gospel of John* (FC 78 [Tractate 1-10], 79 [Tractate 11-27], 88 [Tractate 28-54], 90 [Tractate 55-111], ed. T. P. Halton, tr. J. W. Rettig; Washington: CUAP, 1988, 1988, 1993, 1994 respectively).
- IVP* InterVarsity Press
- Joannis* Cyril of Alexandria, *Ancient Christian Texts: Commentary on John*, 2 volumes (ed. J. C. Elowsky, tr. D. Maxwell; Downers Grove: IVP, 2015).
- Marc.* Tertullian, *Adversus Marcionem* (tr. E. Evans; Oxford: OUP, 1972).
- Meritis.* Augustine, 'On the Merits and Remission of Sins, and on the Baptism of Infants' (*NPNF(1)* 5, ed. P. Schaff, tr. P. Holmes; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980) 15-78.
- NFPF(1)* P. Schaff (ed.), *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, Series 1, 14 volumes (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979).
- NFPF(2)* P. Schaff (ed.), *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, Series 2, 14 volumes (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1961).
- Or.* Orationes.
- OS* Boethius, *The Theological Tractates* (tr. H. F. Stewart; London: William Heinemann, 1918).
- OUP* Oxford University Press
- Quant.* Augustine, 'The Magnitude of the Soul' (FC 4, ed. H. Dressler, tr. J. J. McMahon; Washington: CUAP, 1947) 59-149.
- SJT* Scottish Journal of Theology
- SpTI* T. F. Torrance, *Space, Time and Incarnation* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1969).
- SpTR* T. F. Torrance, *Space, Time and Resurrection* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1976).
- Summa* T. Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* (tr. Dominicans, English Province; London: Burns & Oates, c1947-c1948).
- Trin.* Augustine, *The Trinity* (FC 45, ed. H. Dressler, tr. S. McKenna; Washington: CUAP, 1963).
- Ver. Rel.* Augustine, 'True Religion' (*On Christian Belief*, ed. B. Ramsey, tr. E. Hill; New York: New City Press, 2005) 15-106.

All quotations of Scripture are taken from the English Standard Version of the Holy Bible.
All individual references to "Torrance" are to T. F. Torrance, unless otherwise stated.

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“Man of sorrows!” what a name

For the Son of God who came

Ruined sinners to reclaim!

Hallelujah, what a Saviour!

...

Guilty, vile, and helpless we,

Spotless Lamb of God was He;

Full atonement! can it be?

Hallelujah, what a Saviour!¹

Introduction

Alike and unlike us. Suffering yet immutable, dying yet immortal, carpenter yet Creator. Such are the widely accepted mysteries of God taking to Himself the human nature He created in the incarnation of the Son. However, “fallen yet spotless” remains a point of contentious ambiguity. Edward Irving was deposed from the Church of Scotland for such a claim,² Karl Barth adopted the notion but thought of himself departing from the Patristic witness,³ while T. F. Torrance regarded this to be the ‘great soteriological principle of the early church’.⁴

The non-assumptus—Latin shorthand for Gregory Nazianzen’s maxim, ‘the unassumed is unhealed’⁵—is understood by Torrance to mean that the Son assumed a *fallen* human nature, tainted with the defects of postlapsarian humanity. Though He was without sin, and

¹ P. B. Bliss, ‘Man of Sorrows’ (1875).

² B. L. Lee, ‘Christ’s Sinful Flesh’: *Edward Irving’s Christological Theology Within the Context of His Life and Times* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013) 112-155; D. W. Dorries, *Edward Irving’s Incarnational Christology* (Fairfax: Xulon Press, 2002) 297-467; G. W. P. McFarlane, *Christ and the Spirit: The Doctrine of the Incarnation According to Edward Irving* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 1996) 142-143.

³ K. Barth, *CD I/2*, 153-154.

⁴ T. F. Torrance, ‘The Legacy of Karl Barth (1886-1968)’, *SJT* 39 (1986), 289-308, 306; *Karl Barth: Biblical and Evangelical Theologian* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1990) 179.

⁵ Gregory Nazianzen, *Ep.* 101.5. All citations of Gregory’s *Ep.* from *On God and Christ: The Five Theological Orations and Two Letters to Cledonius* (ed. J. Behr, tr. F. Williams and L. R. Wickham; Crestwood: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 2002).

thereby unlike us, He was like us ‘in every respect’ in nature (Heb. 2:17), taking ‘our actual human existence laden with sin and guilt, our humanity diseased in mind and soul in its estrangement or alienation from the Creator’.⁶

As shall be demonstrated, much is made of this claim, with advocates and critics alike staking the very integrity of the gospel on whether or not the Son assumed postlapsarian humanity, alongside various contradictory readings of Eastern and Western Fathers alike.⁷ The intention of this work is, ultimately, to constructively progress this turbulent debate.⁸

The thesis begins in chapter one with an appreciative appraisal of T. F. Torrance in his contextualisation of atonement to Christ’s humanity,⁹ making the Son’s assumption of fallen humanity a soteriological concern. It shall be argued that redemption is achieved “once and for all” at the virgin birth and, concurrently, throughout the incarnation in the Son’s “continuous union” with fallen nature. This redemption is then grounded in

⁶ T. F. Torrance, *The Mediation of Christ* (Colorado Springs: Helmers & Howard, 1992) 39. Emphases of Christ’s fallenness like this became commonplace for Torrance, present even in his earlier work; see *The Doctrine of Jesus Christ: The Auburn Lectures 1938/39* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 2002) 121; ‘Predestination in Christ’, *EQ* 13 (1941), 108-141, 133; ‘The Atonement and the Oneness of the Church’, *SJT* 7 (1954), 245-269, 247; ‘What is the Church?’, *Ecumenical Review* II (1958), 6-21, 13. The non-assumptus developed in significance throughout Torrance’s career, particularly in the extent of his claims that Christ assumed original sin, but works from throughout his life in favour of Christ’s fallen nature can still be cited with good conscience.

⁷ There is a wealth of material beyond this study. For Patristic engagement affirming that Christ assumed a fallen human nature, see H. Johnson, *The Humanity of the Saviour: A Biblical and Historical Study of the Human Nature of Christ in Relation to Original Sin, with Special Reference to Its Soteriological Significance* (London: Epworth, 1962) 129-177; J. J. Nantomah, ‘Jesus the God-Man: The Doctrine of the Incarnation in the Light of the Teaching of the Church Fathers and its Relevance for a Twentieth Century African Context’ (PhD Thesis, University of Aberdeen, 1982) 259-337; T. Weinandy, *In the Likeness of Sinful Flesh: An Essay on the Humanity of Christ* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1993) 21-72; ‘Cyril and the Mystery of the Incarnation’ in T. Weinandy and D. A. Keating (eds.), *The Theology of St. Cyril of Alexandria: A Critical Appreciation* (London: T&T Clark, 2003) 23-54; *Athanasius: A Theological Introduction* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2007) 31-36, 61-64; Dorries, *Christology*, 143-296. For more critical appraisals, see W. D. Rankin, ‘Carnal Union with Christ in the Theology of T. F. Torrance’ (PhD Thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1997) 146-297; E. Hatzidakis, *Jesus: Fallen? The Human Nature of Christ Examined from an Eastern Orthodox Perspective* (Clearwater: Orthodox Witness, 2013) esp. 194-211, 353-363. J. E. Van Kuiken provides a well-balanced perspective: *Christ’s Humanity in Current and Ancient Controversy: Fallen or Not?* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017) 91-154.

⁸ This work is intentionally limited to dogmatic dialogue. For suggestions of areas for biblical study to further the debate, see appendices 1 and 2.

⁹ There are several overviews of Torrance’s work significant to this debate; see, for example, P. D. Molnar, *Thomas F. Torrance: Theologian of the Trinity* (London: Routledge, 2009); E. Colyer, *How to Read T. F. Torrance* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2001). Of particular note, however, is Kevin Chiarot’s critical, though well-reasoned, at-length treatment of Torrance on the non-assumptus: *The Unassumed is the Unhealed: The Humanity of Christ in the Christology of T. F. Torrance* (Eugene: Pickwick, 2013).

Torrance's restatement of common Christological foundations in the homoousion, hypostatic union, and an/enhypostasia; is actualised in Christ's vicarious humanity; and fulfilled in His death and resurrection.

In chapter two, the contemporary criticisms levelled at the fallenness view are explored. The intention here is to address the conceptual ambiguity that has marred the debate, giving clarity in definition to "fallenness" in relation to the Classical-Reformed categories of original guilt and corruption, and the distinction of "fallenness" and "sin" as properties of "nature" and "person". The thesis then examines the integrity of Christ's temptations and sufferings if His humanity is not fallen; the consistency of Torrance's application of "the unassumed is unhealed"; the threat of instrumentalism against his own attempts to depart from it; and the role of the Spirit in Torrance's schema.

Finally, the last chapter turns to the role of Christ's humanity in redemption in the historical corpus, examining the genesis and conclusive perspectives of the Eastern and Western Fathers, and the legitimacy of Torrance's historical reading. From this Patristic foundation, some common ground for the contemporary debate shall be sought.

Chapter 1: T. F. Torrance and the Non-Assumptus

1. Soteriological Context

It is well-noted that one of the defining features of Torrance's theology is the unity between incarnation and atonement.¹⁰ The context for the Son's assumption of fallen humanity, thereby, is soteriological. The matters of the redemptive nature of divine-human union, the initial extent of this redemption at the virgin birth, and the place of the non-assumptus within the building blocks of Torrance's Christology in the homoousion, the hypostatic union and the anhypostatic-enhypostatic couplet shall now be discussed.

1.1 Redemptive Union and the "Latin Heresy"

That the Son's assumption of fallen humanity is a soteriological concern arises from the contextualisation of atonement to the constitution of the incarnate Son. For Torrance, the touch of divinity on fallenness is essentially medicinal; the incarnation is itself an 'atoning and sanctifying union' where sinful flesh is 'sanctified and hallowed' simply by the Son assuming it,¹¹ and humanity and God are reconciled within Himself.¹² Atonement is actualised when humanity is mediated to God within the Son's own person.¹³ Thus, for Torrance, atonement is inherently incarnational, and incarnation is fundamentally atoning.¹⁴

Torrance argues that Latin theology has largely neglected the place of Christ's humanity within atonement and thereby His redemptive assumption of fallen nature, a manifestation

¹⁰ Molnar, *Theologian*, 137-186; Colyer, *Torrance*, 84-96.

¹¹ T. F. Torrance, *Incarnation: The Person and Life of Christ* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2008) 63.

¹² T. F. Torrance, *The Trinitarian Faith: Evangelical Theology of the Ancient Catholic Church* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1988) 155.

¹³ T. F. Torrance, *Theology in Reconciliation: Essays Towards Evangelical and Catholic Unity in East and West* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1975) 229f; *Incarnation*, 198f.

¹⁴ Torrance, *Faith*, 159. "Incarnational atonement" is thus a popular term for this contextualisation of atonement to the Son's humanity.

of what Torrance dubbed the “Latin Heresy”.¹⁵ Post-Arian controversy, in a reactionary attempt to maintain the integrity of Christ’s divinity,¹⁶ developed in Latin thought a dualism between the Son’s person and work. Atonement became simply a forensic or juridical transaction, an ‘external transference of penalty’,¹⁷ whereby the Son’s assumption of humanity became more instrumental than essentially redemptive. His human nature became merely an implement purposed with reaching the cross to satisfy a penalty or pay a ransom, rather than the active centre of redemption,¹⁸ and for such ends was considered ‘humanity in its perfect original state’.¹⁹ Atonement, in this sense, became what Christ *did* more than who Christ *is*, externalised from Christ’s humanity as the redemptive quality of divine-human union was forgotten.²⁰

1.2 What is Unhealed if Unassumed?

The soteriological concern is that the separation of the Son’s work from His redemptive assumption of fallen nature jeopardises both the redemption of human fallenness and the accessibility of salvation for common humanity sharing that fallen state. The unassumed is unhealed since, without the intrinsically healing union, we remain ‘untouched’ by redemption.²¹

Torrance details both ontological and epistemological implications of this. Ontologically, if the Son did not assume fallen humanity, redemption does not extend to ‘the ontological

¹⁵ See T. F. Torrance, ‘Karl Barth and the Latin Heresy’, *SJT* 39 (1986), 461-482, 476-79; ‘The Atonement. The Singularity of Christ and the Finality of the Cross: The Atonement and the Moral Order’ in N. M. de S. Cameron (ed.), *Universalism and the Doctrine of Hell* (Exeter: Paternoster, 225-256) 238; *Mediation*, 40. We will later consider the position of the Eastern and Western Fathers, examining the legitimacy of Torrance’s claims of dualism and the place of internalised atonement.

¹⁶ Torrance, *Reconciliation*, 185-204.

¹⁷ Torrance, ‘Heresy’, 476.

¹⁸ Torrance, *Mediation*, 81; ‘Incarnation and Atonement: Theosis and Henosis’, *Society of Ordained Scientists Bulletin* 7 (1992), 8-20, 12-13; *God and Rationality* (London: OUP, 1971) 63; *Incarnation*, 199.

¹⁹ Torrance, ‘Heresy’, 476; cf. *Mediation*, 40.

²⁰ For Christ’s humanity being integral, not instrumental, in atonement, see Torrance, *Theologian*, 178-179; *Incarnation*, 126, 212; *Faith*, 150; *Mediation*, 81; *Atonement*, 182.

²¹ Torrance, *Incarnation*, 62; cf. ‘Singularity’, 237-38; *Incarnation*, 201; *Conflict and Agreement in the Church, Volume 1: Order and Disorder* (Oxford: OUP, 1959) 175-78; *Theologian*, 104.

depths of human being' and leaves humanity at enmity with God in the 'underlying structures of human existence'.²² The substance of human nature would remain corrupt and insurgent. Epistemologically, Torrance regards the root of original and actual sin to be 'the dark depths of the mind',²³ so if Christ did not assume fallen humanity then not only would human modes of thought and our knowledge of both God and creation remain corrupt, but the operative element of sinful agency would go unchecked.

Ultimately, neglecting the non-assumptus disqualifies Christ as the substitutionary representative of fallen humanity, making redemption irrelevant for those ontologically and epistemologically alien to Himself. How could Christ represent those of a fundamentally different nature? If our Saviour wrought redemption within a state different to our own, Torrance asks, '[W]hat could we have to do with him?'²⁴ Such questions set the stakes for Torrance and anchor the question of Christ's fallenness within its proper soteriological context.

2. "Once and For All" Union

In contextualising atonement within Christ's humanity, redemption, for Torrance, spans the entirety of the incarnation. If atonement is isolated to judiciary satisfaction at the cross, then the sole significance of Christ's humanity pre-Calvary is preparation for that singular moment. Did Christ live merely to die? "No", Torrance writes; 'the whole of Christ's life and ministry were involved in the work of reconciliation as well as His death'.²⁵

There are, however, distinct dialectic elements within this holistic atonement. Torrance references both the 'once and for all union of God and man'²⁶ and 'the continuous union in

²² Torrance, *Mediation*, 62.

²³ Torrance, *Theologian*, 104. We will see that Torrance most closely follows Gregory Nazianzen here.

²⁴ Torrance, *Incarnation*, 62.

²⁵ Torrance, 'Oneness', 252. Torrance does not neglect the resurrection here, as shall be seen; death and resurrection are two parts of one event.

²⁶ Torrance, *Incarnation*, 87-104. Torrance's exclusivist nomenclature is relatively anachronistic to the contemporary reader.

the historical life and obedience of Jesus'.²⁷ Chiarot questions how the redemption that occurs in such union—being both “once and for all” and continuous—is not contradictory,²⁸ as the incarnation itself refers to both the 'unique event when the Word entered time and joined human existence' and 'the whole human life and work of Jesus, from his birth at Bethlehem to his resurrection from the dead'.²⁹ Still, he recognises that one can argue that the Son sanctifies fallen humanity both 'in the very act of assumption and all through his holy life lived in it from beginning to end'.³⁰ Redemption is “once and for all” since, even at the earliest moments of His temporal life, the Son has united *all* humanity to Himself, and has done so irrevocably.³¹

2.1 Virgin Birth: Distinction Within the Whole

For Torrance, the virgin birth is the first distinct moment of incarnational atonement. Rather than asking biological questions that might render biological answers, Torrance contends that the significance of the virgin birth is entirely Christological; that is, rather than speaking predominantly to the biological transmission of sin, the event reveals what Christ does to human nature from within it.³² Here, the incarnation takes 'meaningful form' in redemptive terms, revealing that 'here in the midst of our nature and humanity God is recreating humanity'.³³

The soteriological significance of the virgin birth as the beginning of redemption is seen in its correlation to the resurrection as the completion of redemption. There takes place, at

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 105-160.

²⁸ Chiarot, *Unassumed*, 100-102. This will be addressed fully later.

²⁹ Torrance, *Incarnation*, 67, here describing the Son's *becoming* of humanity (*egeneto sarx*) in John 1:14.

³⁰ T. F. Torrance, *Theology in Reconstruction* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 1996) 155.

³¹ T. F. Torrance, *The School of Faith: The Catechisms of The Reformed Church* (London: James Clarke & Co, 1959) cxi-cxvi. Despite the universal extent of God's election and the Son's redemptive consubstantiality with fallen humanity, Torrance consistently refutes universalism ('Universalism or Election?', *SJT* 2 [1949], 310-318; 'Heresy', 481-482). Cf. Paul Molnar's appraisal of Torrance on the polarised faults of universalism and limited atonement: 'Thomas F. Torrance and the Problem of Universalism', *SJT* 68 (2015), 164-186.

³² Torrance, *Incarnation*, 95.

³³ *Ibid.*

the virgin birth, a veiling of the mystery of the redemptive union between fallen humanity and God in Christ beneath His flesh. This mystery of redemptive union is then carried through the captivity of fallen existence into liberation of new life 'through our estranged estate under bondage into the freedom and triumph of the resurrection'.³⁴ The unity of resurrection and virgin birth validates the two of them, as the unveiling in the resurrection of what was veiled at the virgin birth points us towards the mystery of the redemption that was achieved between those two points:

The empty tomb points to the revelation of the secret of Christ and as such is the authentication of the virgin birth; it is the unveiling of what was veiled, the resurrection out of our mortality of what was inserted into it and recreated within it. But such a resurrection of true man and true God points back to the virgin birth of Jesus as a union of true God and true man.³⁵

2.2 Virgin Birth: Soteriological Significance

Torrance expounds the soteriological significance of the virgin birth, further revealing the centrality of the non-assumptus to the once and for all union.

Firstly, the virgin birth reveals the integrity of Christ's humanity and therein the relevance of His redemptive work within it for those sharing fallen nature. As the Son goes through the process of physical birth, the reality of His humanity becomes concrete. He was 'really born of Mary, born through all the embryonic processes of the womb as other human beings'.³⁶ Contra docetic Christologies, the virgin birth reveals Christ to be truly of our own flesh and blood.³⁷ By participating in the act of human birth in such a way, Christ

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 96.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 97.

³⁶ T. F. Torrance, 'The Doctrine of the Virgin Birth', *Scottish Bulletin of Evangelical Theology* 12 (1994), 8-25, 18.

³⁷ Torrance, *Jesus Christ*, 116.

can thus bestow upon humanity pneumatological participation in the parentage of God.

Torrance writes, '[B]ecause of his own coming into existence of a woman, as a real man', humanity can proclaim: '[W]hen Christ was born I was born a son of God, for I partake of Christ in his Spirit of sonship'.³⁸

Secondly, the virgin birth reveals the integrity of Christ's divine origin. Contra Ebionite Christology, Christ's birth is a solely monergistic act of God. There was no prior foetus for Christ to take control of, nor any human agency directing the eternal Son's incarnation. The precise nature of the virgin birth entails God willing human inclusion but denies humanity as the causal actor. For Torrance, 'man is fully involved, but he is the predicate, not the subject, not the lord of the event'.³⁹ The virgin birth is a kenotic act where the Son empties '*himself*, his very Self, out of a form in which we could not behold God into an incarnate form'.⁴⁰ The Son's redemptive union with fallen humanity, thereby, is caused exclusively by divine initiative. Fallen humanity is incapable of reaching God; we cannot empty God out of His transcendence. Kenosis is God's *self*-emptying. The redemption initiated at the virgin birth is a 'one directional' movement from God to humanity,⁴¹ a truly 'supernatural event...a matter of pure grace',⁴² unconditioned by 'the causal-historical process of nature or of the world'.⁴³

Thirdly, the virgin birth is a recreation out of the old creation. In Christ's conception within Mary, the matter of the first creation is taken in its fallenness, and in unbroken continuity with that first creation there takes place a recreation within the human nature.

³⁸ Torrance, *Incarnation*, 93. The non-assumptus is made explicit in Torrance's reference to Christ's work in the place of humanity under the law: 'Because Christ came into existence under the law, he can redeem those that are under the law' (*ibid.*, 93).

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 99. To Torrance, the failing of Docetism was its theological foundation of an excessively abstract God, which inevitably concluded in the elimination of Christ's true humanity. Ebionitism, on the other hand, failed in its Christology being entirely inductive of Jewish tradition, resulting in an extreme idealisation of humanity; see T. F. Torrance, *Theological Science* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1969) 45-46.

⁴⁰ Torrance, *Jesus Christ*, 110-111. Torrance's spatial understanding of *kenosis* ensures no qualitative change occurs for the Son in the self-emptying of His incarnation.

⁴¹ Torrance, *Incarnation*, 99.

⁴² Torrance, *Incarnation*, 99.

⁴³ Cf. Torrance, *Jesus Christ*, 118.

This was, Torrance describes, 'not a *creatio ex nihilo*, but a *creatio ex virgine*, presupposing the first creation and beginning the new creation'.⁴⁴ The Son does not assume a new flesh, or even prelapsarian flesh, but enters into the continuity of human fallenness in order to establish the matter of new creation 'in the midst of and out of the old'.⁴⁵ At the virgin birth we can be assured that the material of old creation is not left unredeemed, but 'that Christ really comes to us, to our human flesh and assumes it out of our fallen condition in order to redeem and sanctify it'.⁴⁶

Fourthly, though the Son aligns Himself with the continuity of fallenness, the virgin birth reveals that sinful human autonomy is set aside, therein facilitating the continuity of fallen humanity with God. Where sinfulness should be inevitably actualised from the state of corruption that the Son assumes and has been in unbroken continuity for common humanity, He discards that trend by bringing His holiness to bear upon the flesh He assumes in the virgin birth. Though Christ was born into our condition, 'far from acquiescing in its sin, [he] resists it, sanctifying what sin had corrupted'.⁴⁷ For Torrance, this continuity of sin is broken by the literal setting aside of Joseph as Jesus' father. Fatherhood 'epitomises the autonomy and sovereignty of sinful man',⁴⁸ so where Christ is born not by the "will of man" but the will of God (John 1:13), the sovereignty of the father is set aside to make room for the sovereignty of God in Christ's birth.⁴⁹ Therefore, though Christ is continuous with human fallenness, He is discontinuous with sin, as the human autonomy that submits to the corrupt propensities of our state is displaced by the perfect

⁴⁴ Torrance, *Incarnation*, 100.

⁴⁵ Torrance, *Jesus Christ*, 119.

⁴⁶ Torrance, *Incarnation*, 100.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ One might think this setting aside simply extends to ontic sinfulness, as in the immediacy of birth an infant simply has no opportunity to sin. However, even at the moment of Christ's birth Torrance upholds this setting aside of sin, as the natural conclusion of fallenness extends even to Christ's *act*, not just His *being*. We must see 'sinful acts as excluded in the birth of Jesus Christ... remembering the nature of sin, as the act of human assertion over against God is entirely excluded' (Torrance, *Jesus Christ*, 119).

will of God in the virgin birth.⁵⁰ Christ being born by the will of God, however, enables the subsequent continuity of fallen humanity with God in our spiritual rebirth. At salvation, Torrance writes, ‘there takes place in us the birth of Jesus, or rather, we are in a remarkable way given to share through grace in his birth... Just as he was born from above of the Holy Spirit, so we are born from above of the Holy Spirit through sharing in his birth’.⁵¹

Here the non-assumptus is what, for Torrance, makes the virgin birth soteriologically significant. Had the Son not assumed fallen nature, common humanity could not have been considered under parentage of the Father, as Christ would not have partaken in the same flesh and blood as His fallen mother. Fallen humanity would have been left helpless in our incapability to reach God, and the new would not have been a recreation of the old. Had He not aligned Himself with fallen humanity in our history of sin then the continuity would remain unbroken.

3. Continuous Union: Building Blocks of the Incarnation

Simultaneous to the “once and for all” union, Torrance details a “continuous” union of the Son with fallen human nature by which redemption is actualised, not just at the virgin birth but throughout the entire incarnation. Torrance grounds this by reformulating common foundations of Christology—namely, the homoousion, the hypostatic union, and the

⁵⁰ Here, younger Torrance stated that Christ’s flesh was ‘created out of fallen humanity, but without the will of fallen humanity’, and goes on to say the same of His person/personality (*ibid.*, 122 [no human will], 124-125 [no human person/personality]). Rankin perceives Torrance endangers himself of Apollinarian denial that Christ had *any* human will or personality, only divine (Rankin, ‘Carnal Union’, 103-109). Alternatively, both Baker and Radcliff interpret Torrance to deny a fallen will to Christ without entirely rejecting Christ’s assumption of human will (M. Baker, ‘The Place of St. Irenaeus of Lyons in Historical and Dogmatic Theology According to Thomas F. Torrance’, *Participatio* 2 (2010), 3-43, 23-24; J. R Radcliff, *Thomas F. Torrance and the Church Fathers: A Reformed, Evangelical, and Ecumenical Reconstruction of the Patristic Tradition* [Eugene: Pickwick, 2014] 97, 107). However, what is missed is that this immediate context of the virgin birth simply suggests that Christ’s flesh was not conceived by the initiative of fallen human will or persons, not that He was born without them; see Chiarot, *Unassumed*, 230; Van Kuiken, *Humanity*, 36.

⁵¹ Torrance, *Incarnation*, 101; cf. 91.

anhypostasia-enhypostasia couplet—serving to further contextualise atonement internally to Christ’s humanity.

3.1 *The Homoousion*

When the Council of Nicea undertook the task of conceptualising the Trinitarian economy of temporal self-revelation in relation to the transcendent interiority of the immanent divine life, the ‘cardinal issue’ at stake, says Torrance, was ‘the unbroken relation in being and agency between Jesus Christ and God the Father’—⁵² the *homoousios*. The *homoousion* articulated that Jesus of Nazareth is absolutely consubstantial with God the Father and is thereby identified as ‘the unique content of God’s saving self-revelation and self-communication to mankind’.⁵³ It is on this absolute oneness of ‘Being and Act’ between Christ and the Father that the integrity of God’s ‘revealing and saving acts in Christ’ depend,⁵⁴ making the *homoousion*, to Torrance, an essential tenet of the Christian faith.⁵⁵ Torrance recognises ontological and epistemological significance of the *homoousion*, which further express the centrality of Christ’s assumption of fallen humanity for incarnational atonement.

3.1.1 *Oneness of God, Christ and Fallen Humanity*

In the *homoousion* the ontological stakes, for Torrance, are whether or not the immanent Trinitarian life becomes in any way transparent to fallen humanity by the Son bringing the one divine substance shared to visibly dwell within the fallen human state. Without the *homoousion* the content of divine self-revelation would be empty; that is, if Christ is not

⁵² Torrance, *The Christian Doctrine of God* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1996) 93; cf. *Faith*, 121-122.

⁵³ Torrance, *God*, 93.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ Though not explicit in biblical witness, Nicea penetrated to the ‘interior logic of the apostolic witness’ in the *homoousion* (Torrance, *Reconstruction*, 40); cf. *Reality and Evangelical Theology* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1982) 111-113; *Mediation*, 53-54; *God*, ix-x; ‘The Evangelical Significance of the *Homoousion*: Sermon on John 5:17’, *Abba Salama* 5 (1974), 165-168.

consubstantial with the Father we cannot not say God is concretely *with* us in our fallenness. For Torrance, Christ is not 'Emmanuel' (Matt. 1:23) unless there is absolute unity in being and act between the economic and immanent Trinitarian life.⁵⁶ Torrance questions:

What kind of God would we have, then, if Jesus Christ were not the *self-revelation* or *self-communication* of God, if God were not inherently and eternally in his own being what the Gospel tells us he is in Jesus Christ?...It would surely mean that there is no ontological, and therefore no epistemological, connection between the love of Jesus and the love of God.⁵⁷

Against this concern, the *homoousion* secures Christ as the fullness of God within fallen humanity in self-revelation to that fallen creation. There is 'no God behind the back of Christ', as what God is economically He is the same immanently in Himself.⁵⁸ Torrance writes, '[T]here is a complete fidelity and reliability between what God is in Jesus Christ toward us and what he is eternally in his unchangeable being...what God is toward us in Jesus he is inherently and eternally'.⁵⁹

This oneness of being and act between Christ and God is what Torrance called the 'evangelical significance' of the *homoousion*.⁶⁰ When Christ is at work within our fallen humanity in His ministry of teaching, in signs and wonders, in His concretely perfect union

⁵⁶ This heavily echoes Karl Rahner's famous statement: 'The economic Trinity *is* the immanent Trinity, and the immanent Trinity *is* the economic Trinity' (*The Trinity* [tr. J. Donceel; New York: Herder and Herder, 1970] 22). Torrance, following Barth, conditionally affirms Rahner's rule, as long as expressing the unity of economic and immanent does not cloud the necessary distinction between the two. Their interrelation is a matter of correspondence; the economic is secondary and dependent on the primary and constitutive immanent Trinitarian life. The economic cannot therefore be *freely* read back into the immanent, but it is grounded in it. To collapse the economic completely into the immanent would be comparable to collapsing the temporal completely back into the eternal. See G. Hunsinger, *Evangelical, Catholic, and Reformed: Doctrinal Essays on Barth and Related Themes* (Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans, 2015) 21-22, 27-28.

⁵⁷ Torrance, *Faith*, 134.

⁵⁸ Torrance, *God*, 243.

⁵⁹ Torrance, *God*, 243; *Faith*, 135.

⁶⁰ Torrance, *Faith*, 141; 'Evangelical Significance', 167.

with the Father, we see God Himself acting within our fallen state. The acts of Jesus within our fallenness are authenticated by this divine ontology; 'it is in virtue of his Deity that his saving work as man has its validity'.⁶¹

The ontological significance of the *homoousion*, for Torrance, extends beyond Christ's consubstantiality with God to Christ's absolute consubstantiality with humanity in His constitution as the incarnate mediator. By the *homoousion*, it is Christ *as a fallen human* of whom we talk of having absolute consubstantiality with God; the Son's sharing in the substance of divinity cannot be abstracted from His sharing in the substance of fallen humanity.⁶² Taking into account the soteriological context from which the *homoousion* was articulated in the Council of Nicea,⁶³ Torrance recognises Christ's deity cannot be proclaimed in abstraction from His redemptive assumption of fallen humanity.⁶⁴ Just as salvation would be moot if Christ was not 'true God from true God' and thereby lacked the exclusively divine prerogative to save, if Christ was not an authentically fallen human then 'salvation does not touch our human existence and condition'.⁶⁵ Therefore, the *homoousion* required these two points of contact, 'both ends of the *homoousion*, the divine and the human, had to be secured'.⁶⁶

As such, where one aspect of the *homoousion* authenticates Christ's being and act as God, the other authenticates His being and act as a human being. In terms of revelation,

⁶¹ Torrance, *Mediation*, 54-55; cf. *Faith*, 141; 'Evangelical Significance', 166; *Christian*, 91.

⁶² Torrance, *Faith*, 135-136.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 146-147; T. F. Torrance, *Space, Time and Incarnation* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1969), 3; *Divine Meaning: Studies in Patristic Hermeneutics* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1995) 344.

⁶⁴ Torrance, *Christian*, 94; *Faith*, 8, 146-149.

⁶⁵ Torrance, *Faith*, 149. This human end of the *homoousion* is a matter of grace over ontic necessity. Where the Son is consubstantial with the Father in a manner inherent to the Trinitarian life, Christ is consubstantial with humanity by choice. As with all God's acts of election this 'choice or decision...guarantees to us the freedom of God. His sovereignty, His omnipotence is not one that acts arbitrarily, nor by necessity, but by personal decision' ('Predestination', 117).

⁶⁶ Torrance, *Faith*, 146. This is not to confuse the *homoousion* with the hypostatic union. Where the *homoousion* grounds the authenticity of Christ's two natures (as shall be discussed), the hypostatic union grounds their unity. As Torrance states, '[T]he two natures of Christ himself on the horizontal level, must be interpreted in light of the vertical or cross-level reference in the *homoousion*' (*The Ground and Grammar of Theology: Consonance Between Theology and Science* [Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1980] 172).

where fallen humanity fails to respond positively as the recipient of divine revelation, Christ, though very God, is able to provide an authentically human response in consubstantiality with fallen nature. Revelation, though entirely divinely initiated as God's *self-revelation*, includes within it a 'fully human response as part of its achievement for us'.⁶⁷ In redemption, Christ's work is not, as with the "Latin Heresy", a work of God *on or to* our instrumental humanity, but, as Torrance often said, 'an act of God *as man*'.⁶⁸

Bringing these two poles together, we see the ultimate ontological significance of the *homoousion* is that Christ is not a "third party" mediator between God and estranged humanity, but, in dual consubstantiality with the estranged parties, *is* divine-human mediation within His incarnate constitution. Christ represents God to humanity and humanity to God, not simply *on behalf* of both sides, but *as both sides*.⁶⁹ It is upon this foundation that atonement as continuous union is built. God and fallen humanity are reconciled throughout Christ's entire life, as Christ, representing both sides of the conflict, took divine-human enmity into His own flesh and 'bore it until the very end' where atonement was completed at the cross.⁷⁰

3.1.2 Growing in Wisdom

The epistemological significance of the *homoousion* concerns, again, authenticity, of the knowledge of God that the Son brings to creation. Consubstantial with the Godhead, knowledge of God enters into our fallen state with the incarnation of the Son, making Jesus 'the one place in space and time where we may really know the Father'.⁷¹ This

⁶⁷ Torrance, *Reconstruction*, 131-132; cf. *Rationality*, 145; *Science*, 50.

⁶⁸ Torrance, *God*, 40-41; *Mediation*, 56; *Incarnation*, 195. It shall be demonstrated that in Christ's vicarious humanity, this authenticity of His human being and act has implications for justification: not only is it objectively realised in Christ's authentic divine action, but subjectively realised by Christ's response as an authentically fallen human; cf. Torrance, 'Justification: Its Radical Nature and Place in Reformed Doctrine and Life', *SJT* 13 (1960), 225-246, 233.

⁶⁹ Torrance, *Incarnation*, 111; cf. *Conflict*, 1:243.

⁷⁰ Torrance, 'Oneness', 251; *Incarnation*, 110-112; *Mediation*, 82; *Conflict*, 1:244-245. Bearing in mind the simultaneity of atonement, it shall later be shown that the cross is the climax of redemption.

⁷¹ Torrance, *Ground*, 40.

knowledge is not imparted second-hand to Christ as a prophet or teacher external to God; as one who, in divine consubstantiality, shares in the intimate communion of knowledge interpenetrative within the Godhead, He brings first-hand knowledge of the divine life into the midst of fallen humanity.⁷²

However, in consubstantiality with fallen humanity, Christ also shares the depths of human ignorance, where knowledge of God is lacking or corrupted. Maintaining the soteriological context of the homoousion, Torrance details the Son's continuous kenotic economy, wherein He empties Himself out of the place of divine wisdom into our place of ignorance, and vicariously achieves within the fallen state the attainment of knowledge of God. Had Christ's ignorance not been genuine by lacking fallenness, this condescension is emptied of redemptive reality. In epistemological exchange, Christ genuinely shares 'our human ignorance, so that we might share his divine wisdom'.⁷³

For Torrance, Christ's vicarious attainment of knowledge of God for common humanity rests on the notion of *prokope*, meaning progress by the removal of obstacles, used in the Lukan account of the infant Christ's growth in wisdom (Luke 2:52). This is, to Torrance, an internalised struggle against fallenness; having assumed fallen ignorance, Christ 'cut his way forward' against it towards knowledge of God.⁷⁴ Consubstantial with the wayward mind of humanity, He bends it into epistemic communion with the Father.

As Christ grows in wisdom while consubstantial with fallen humanity, the path is carved for common humanity to follow. He sanctifies the route the fallen conscience must travel to arrive at knowledge of God, providing 'in his own obedient sonship within our nature the *Way* whereby we are carried up to knowledge of God the Father.'⁷⁵ Consubstantial with 'human modes' of thought and speech, Christ has appropriated knowledge of God for

⁷² Torrance, *Meaning*, 248.

⁷³ Torrance, *Faith*, 187.

⁷⁴ Torrance, *Reconstruction*, 38; cf. *Incarnation*, 64, 106.

⁷⁵ Torrance, *Reconstruction*, 38; cf. *Reconciliation*, 240; *Meaning*, 230.

those in solidary nature, and thereby 'perfected in the humanity which he took from us man's knowing of God and speaking of him'.⁷⁶

But why, for Torrance, is it necessary that epistemological redemption occur within fallen modes of thought and speech? To know a being transcendentally beyond what humanity could naturally perceive, such knowledge must rest 'upon the reality and grace of the Object known'.⁷⁷ As such, we can only conceive of God within the modes He has created for the sake of making Himself known. If the content of our thought and speech is to be properly of and towards God, Torrance says, 'it can only be on the ground of his interaction with the world He has created and within the relation that He has established between it and Himself'.⁷⁸ Despite God's transcendence, it is thus from God's activity *within* the created structures of space and time that knowledge of Him must be wrought, as this 'continuum of relations' are given 'in and with created existence and as the bearers of its immanent order'.⁷⁹

However, if knowledge of God is to be of any substance there must be a unity of divine revelatory activity from a place of transcendence and these modes of thought and speech within which such activity is to be perceived. Our talk of God must 'point beyond the spatial and temporal limits of the contingent world in a relation of transcendental reference, yet not in such a way that they are detached from the contingent world out of which that reference is made'.⁸⁰ These two points must intersect, for if our language of God is abstracted from either of those points, we either lose the content of our speech, or we lose the frame of reference from within which we *can* speak.

⁷⁶ Torrance, *Meaning*, 250-252; *Karl Barth: An Introduction to His Early Theology (1910-1931)* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1962) 104-105; *Faith*, 187. Pneumatologically, the epistemic *prokope* of the believer by the Spirit is not a separate work within a different humanity, but a pneumatic participation in the *prokope* of Christ achieved within our same modes; 'we have a true and faithful knowledge of God when through union with Christ by the power of the Spirit we receive the mind that was remade and renewed in him' (Torrance, *Meaning*, 250).

⁷⁷ Torrance, *SpTI*, 54.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 55.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 61.

⁸⁰ Torrance, *SpTI*, 56.

As such, the incarnation establishes the intersection of God's self-revelation and the modes of thought and speech within which we receive it, unified in Christ by His consubstantiality with both. It is in this dual consubstantiality that the incarnation is 'the great axis in God's relation with the world of space and time, apart from which our understanding of God and the world can only lose meaning'.⁸¹

The *homoousion*, in these points of ontological and epistemological significance, ultimately serves as a foundation for Christ's redemptive work in the continuous union, without which His being and act as both God and fallen human would lack grounding.

3.2 The Hypostatic Union

The hypostatic union—the unity of the Son's two natures within His *hypostasis*—is significant for the redemption of continuous union, being the test for Torrance's aforementioned claims that Christ's very assumption of fallen substance is essentially redemptive. The linchpin of an atonement contextualised to Christ's humanity, in the restorative relation of divinity to humanity, is their unity within the Son's theandric person.⁸² For Torrance, hypostatic union and this restorative relation must be 'held together as the obverse of one another',⁸³ as atoning union is actualised by the hypostatic union bringing divinity into restorative contact with humanity. Therein, the hypostatic union substantiates Torrance's refutation of dualism between Christ's person and work in atonement. He asserts, '[S]ince Jesus Christ is himself God and man in one Person, the atoning

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 68; Torrance, *Meaning*, 251.

⁸² The hypostatic union here has implications for Christ's sinlessness. As the union of divinity to fallen humanity is a redemptive one, Christ creates the reality of sinlessness within this nature in a way never previously accomplished. In this sense, '[i]n the concrete likeness of the flesh of sin, he is unlike the sinner' (Torrance, *Atonement*, 63). The Church's union with Christ is also differentiated from the union of divinity and fallen human nature within the Son's hypostasis; though the Church is constituted by Christ's very act of 'self-consecration', our restoration upon union with Christ echoing the restoration of Christ's fallenness in union with divinity, the Church remains a sinful entity in a sanctifying process until the eschaton (*ibid.*, 371). The matter of Christ's sinlessness will be addressed fully later.

⁸³ T. F. Torrance, *Scottish Theology: From John Knox to John McLeod Campbell* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1996) 15; *Faith*, 181.

mediation and redemption which he wrought for us, fall *within* his own being and life as the one Mediator between God and man'.⁸⁴ It shall be seen that Torrance's reformulation of the understanding of hypostatic union common to Chalcedonian Christology developed the material content of dyophysitical interrelations within Christ's person.

3.2.1 *Dynamic Restatement: The Mystery of Christ*

Despite its significant value, insufficient credence was given by Chalcedonian Christology to the inseparability of incarnation and atonement in the redemptive office of Christ's humanity, and thereby His fallenness was neglected.⁸⁵ Approaching Chalcedon, the influence of the "Latin Heresy" had come to the fore, making widespread the assumption that Christ's humanity was either prelapsarian, or at least hamartologically neutral (not identical to Adam's initial state but simply untouched by the fall). In either case, Christ's humanity is distinctly unlike ours.⁸⁶

The judiciary and instrumental focus of the "Latin heresy" led, Torrance contends, to a *static* approach to the hypostatic union—one that fails to move beyond Christ's initial moment of assumption, and neglects Christ's ongoing redemption of fallenness wrought by the union between God and humanity within Himself throughout His entire temporal existence. Simply, Torrance calls for a *dynamic* formulation of the hypostatic union,⁸⁷ one that contextualises atonement within the continuous union of Christ's divine and fallen human natures.⁸⁸

Torrance restates the hypostatic union as the tri-faceted "mystery of Christ". In other words, the unity of God and humanity in Christ is not simply the interrelation of two natures

⁸⁴ Torrance, *Faith*, 155; see *Mediation*, 56, 63, 66; 'The Divine Vocation and Destiny of Israel' in D. W. Torrance (ed.), *The Witness of the Jews to God* (Edinburgh: Handsel, 1982) 85-104, 100; *Reconciliation*, 229; 'Legacy', 305-306.

⁸⁵ Torrance, *Incarnation*, 183.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 201; Torrance, *Theologian*, 103-4; 'Legacy', 306; *Conflict*, 1:240.

⁸⁷ Torrance, *Incarnation*, 201; *Conflict*, 1:243.

⁸⁸ Torrance, *Incarnation*, 208.

(*mustērion*) but is the setting forth of this union into the fallen condition (*prothesis*) and the drawing of fallen humanity into participative communion with God (*koinōnia*).⁸⁹ Each term of these elements holds distinct significance for the hypostatic union.

Mustērion primarily refers to God's unity with humanity within Christ's person. It is the mysteries of the kingdom of God that are revealed to have their content in Christ, the great 'I Am' in revelatory union with the flesh of the Nazarene, the transcendent holiness of God united to the fallen flesh of humanity.⁹⁰

Prothesis, in turn, firstly refers to the eternal election of God not to be without humanity. We can trace backwards from the incarnation to the place in eternity from which God elected to be unified with us within the person of His Son.⁹¹ As such, we can recognise that the loving reconciliation found in the hypostatic union between God and humanity in Christ is a love entirely consistent throughout the eternal life of God.⁹² However, *prothesis* is also the 'setting forth' of this decision into the midst of fallen humanity.⁹³ Christ's assumption of fallen nature, here, becomes a moment of revelatory redemption—God's decision to be harmoniously united with His estranged creation now actualised within fallen humanity.⁹⁴

Finally, *koinōnia* is, primarily, the pneumatological participation of the believer into the union of God and humanity within Christ.⁹⁵ For Torrance, divine-human reconciliation is complete within the unity of Christ's person: no further reconciliation is necessary. Yet, *koinōnia* is the believer's participation in the finished work.⁹⁶ Subsequently, yet

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 164; T. F. Torrance, *Conflict and Agreement in the Church, Volume 2: The Ministry and the Sacraments of the Gospel* (Oxford: OUP, 1960) 82.

⁹⁰ Torrance, *Incarnation*, 166. Still here Torrance affirms the inseparability of *mustērion* from *prothesis* and *koinōnia*, as the mystery of God in Christ can only be seen in relation to the giving of kingdom mysteries to the disciples and the advancement of such in apostolic teaching at the foundation of the church (*ibid.*, 167-168).

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 169.

⁹² Torrance, *Incarnation*, 174.

⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁹⁴ Torrance, *Incarnation*, 169-171; Torrance, *Conflict*, 2:89.

⁹⁵ Torrance, *Incarnation*, 171-172; *Conflict*, 2:88-90.

⁹⁶ Torrance, *Incarnation*, 171.

inseparably, *koinōnia* entails the fellowship of fellow participants in the mystery of Christ. Thus, the setting forth (*prothesis*) of the divine-human union (*mustērion*) has social implications; ‘it acts critically and creatively in the midst of our life and society’.⁹⁷ As the hypostatic union within the incarnate Christ works atonement throughout His entire temporal existence, it becomes in its setting forth the initial act of creating ecclesial community.

The “koinōnial” aspect of this mystery of Christ holds both epistemological and ontological implications for any atonement, which occurs since the mystery of unity between God and humanity is set forth into our fallen nature.

Firstly, the union of God and humanity is inserted into our knowledge. Citing Matthew 11:25-27, Torrance contends that the “koinōnial” aspect of the divine-human union within Christ is the participation of the believer in the inter-Trinitarian self-knowledge.⁹⁸ This is predominantly outworked through Christ’s teaching office, as the knowledge of divine-human union flows from the mouth of the Son to penetrate the sinful ignorance of humanity. As teacher, Christ spoke against human ignorance to create a community of those positively respondent to this vocal revelation of divine-human unity.⁹⁹

Secondly, as the union of God and humanity in Christ is set forth into our being as creatures estranged from their creator, the actualisation of that union in the face of sin is, in a very real way, atonement:

The inserting of the Oneness of God and Man into the deepest depths of man’s existence in his awful estrangement from God, and the enactment of it in the midst of

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 172.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 172f.

⁹⁹ Torrance, *Conflict*, 2:90; *Incarnation*, 173. The insertion of the mystery of this union causes two-way division, in which humanity respond either as children, truly receptive of this divine revelation, or remain ignorant in supposed human “wisdom”. Israel, in part, exemplify this in their ‘reaction of resentment which culminated at the cross’ (*ibid.*). For Israel’s place in incarnational atonement as the ‘pre-history of the incarnation’, see Colyer, *Torrance*, 61-70; Chiarot, *Unassumed*, 23-86.

sin in spite of all that sin can do against it, is atonement. In a profound sense atonement is the insertion of the hypostatic union into the very being of our estranged and fallen humanity.¹⁰⁰

This insertion of the hypostatic union into our estranged being, though consistent throughout Christ's life from the moment of his birth, is most explicit in His death. Reconciliation is wrought by the hypostatic union undergoing the strains of fallenness, even death itself, and remaining unbroken. Even when placed under the mortal punishment of divine judgement, the bond of God and humanity within Christ's person is maintained, where Judge and judged are reconciled to each other.¹⁰¹

3.2.2 Dynamic Restatement: Uniting the "Two Ends" of the Homoousion

Torrance's dynamic restatement of the hypostatic union continues, in the actualisation of the revelatory and redemptive significance of the dual consubstantiality of the *homoousion*. Where the *homoousion* authenticates Christ as the content of both divine and fallen human being and act, the elements of such authentication remain abstract from each other without these "two ends" being brought together in the Son's theandric person. Torrance writes, 'the humanity of Christ has no revealing or saving significance for us apart from his deity, and his deity has not revealing or saving significance apart from his humanity'.¹⁰² What, then, is this revealing and saving significance?

As stated in the *homoousion*, for divine revelation to be comprehensible to humanity, it must be expressed 'in the language and life of man',¹⁰³ that is, grounded in Christ's fallen

¹⁰⁰ Torrance, *Conflict*, 2:90; *Incarnation*, 173-174; *Mediation*, 65.

¹⁰¹ Torrance, *Atonement*, 149. In this manner, the resurrection itself 'means that this union did not give way but held under the strain imposed not only by the forces that sought to divide Jesus from God, but the strain imposed through the infliction of the righteous judgement of the Father upon our rebellious humanity which Christ had made his own' (*ibid.*, 216).

¹⁰² Torrance, *Incarnation*, 191.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 185; Torrance, *Jesus Christ*, 133-134.

humanity. Concurrently, Christ is the content of divine self-revelation as He is Himself God, 'for only through God may we know God'.¹⁰⁴ However, what constitutes the incarnation as the axis of divine revelation and creaturely receptivity wherein the words of Jesus are the words of God is not the Son's dual consubstantiality, but the union of these two concrete substances in the 'hypostatic relation between his creaturely language and God's own godly language'.¹⁰⁵

Reconciliation, in turn, requires Christ's authentic representation of fallen humanity, 'for only as one with us would God be savingly at work within our human existence'.¹⁰⁶ Concurrently, reconciliation must be grounded in Christ's divine prerogative to save; if Christ were merely a sinless man and not God in action then He would be 'annihilated in judgement - the cross would prove a fiasco'.¹⁰⁷ Yet, it is within the unity of this dual consubstantiality within Christ's theandric person that reconciliation is actualised. Atonement is wrought not just in Christ's offering 'a perfect sacrifice to God' as fallen humanity, nor even that God has 'descended into bondage' for our emancipation, but that working 'from the side of God as God, *and* from the side of man as man' the Son has established a 'real and final union between God and man'.¹⁰⁸ Torrance writes,

The unassumed is the unhealed, but in the hypostatic union God the Son has sinlessly assumed our flesh of sin into oneness with himself...and so has worked the hypostatic union right through our alienation into the resurrection where we have the new humanity in perfect union with God.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁴ Torrance, *Faith*, 114.

¹⁰⁵ Torrance, *Incarnation*, 193.

¹⁰⁶ Torrance, *Faith*, 114; cf. *Doctrine*, 135-137.

¹⁰⁷ Torrance, *Incarnation*, 195.

¹⁰⁸ Torrance, *Incarnation*, 195.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*; cf. Torrance, *Mediation*, 65f.

The juridical categories of atonement in judgement and expiation of guilt are still present here for Torrance as achievements of Christ within the union. The expiation of guilt is not, however, the *telos* of atonement. If the 'ultimate achievement' of reconciliation is the union of God and fallen humanity, divine-human 'at-onement', then as this unity is 'already being worked out between estranged man and God' internally to the Son's own theandric person, the hypostatic union is thus 'the mainstay of the doctrine of atoning reconciliation'.¹¹⁰

3.2.3 Dynamic Restatement: Dyophysitical Interrelations

Torrance's dynamic restatement of the hypostatic union continues with the interrelation of Christ's united natures. Taking several of the key Chalcedonian adverbs, the hypostatic union is to 'undergo no confusion, no change, no division, no separation' (*inconfuse, immutabiliter, indivise, inseparabiliter*).¹¹¹ Each is restated to contextualise atonement in Christ's humanity in His redemptive assumption of fallen nature.

Torrance first details the distinctiveness of both Christ's divine and human natures. On *inconfuse* ("without confusion"), within the unity of Christ's theandric person, internal self-distinction is retained as His human nature is not lost in divinity and divinity is not tainted by humanity. Restorative dyophysitical interrelations do not necessarily require one nature be swallowed by the other. However, as the humanity that Christ assumes is indeed a fallen humanity, *inconfuse* must be dynamically restated as the divine nature of Christ remaining untainted in its unity with the fallenness of humanity, while at the same time sanctifying and transforming that which it is united to. Torrance states, '[I]n freely uniting himself to our fallen nature, and in savingly taking its sin and corruption upon himself in

¹¹⁰ Torrance, *Incarnation*, 196.

¹¹¹ N. P. Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils 1* (Washington: Georgetown University Press, 1990) 86.

order to work out our salvation, the divine nature of Christ suffered no change, but remained truly and fully divine'.¹¹²

On *immutabiliter* (“without change”), Torrance applies the non-assumptus to the suffering of human fallenness; that is, suffering itself is redeemed by the Son’s very assumption of it. Christ internalises the tortuous reality of fallenness, thereby healing the pain and temptation of this state, sanctifying it within Himself.¹¹³ In dyophysitical unity suffering is never external to the Son’s hypostasis, becoming in His internal consistency an authentic experience for God Himself.¹¹⁴ In full force of the *communicatio idiomatum*, Torrance proclaims, ‘God crucified! That is the startling truth of the gospel’.¹¹⁵ Here the dialectic between the Son’s impassibility and His suffering becomes apparent. In redemptively assuming suffering, the Son’s constancy is never overwhelmed. Rather, in atoning exchange, fallen humanity comes to share in divine immutability as the Son shares in our passion, wherein He ‘masters and transmutes it within the embrace of his own immutable peace and serenity’.¹¹⁶ Torrance writes,

[Christ bore] our passion, our hurt, our violence, our condition under divine judgement, even [our] utter dereliction, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?,” but in such a profoundly vicarious way that in the heart of it all, he brought his eternal *serenity* or *ἀπεθεια* to bear redemptively upon our passion.¹¹⁷

Torrance next details the unbreakable unity of Christ’s two natures. On *indivise* (“without division”) and *inseparabiliter* (“without separation”), Torrance restates the inseparability and inextricability of Christ’s two natures to contextualise atonement to the Christ’s

¹¹² Torrance, *Incarnation*, 208.

¹¹³ Torrance, *Faith*, 184.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 185.

¹¹⁵ Torrance, *Christian*, 247.

¹¹⁶ Torrance, *Faith*, 185-186.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 185.

humanity. It is not prelapsarian nor neutral humanity but fallen nature in Christ cannot be divided from His divinity (*indivise*), and it is from the continuous redemptive union across the *entirety* of His temporal existence that Christ's divine nature cannot be separated from His humanity (*inseparabiliter*). Since these redemptive acts belong to the elements of the Son's very constitution in incarnational atonement (that is, they are acts united within His own person), to place distance between any one point of His divine and human life would be to place distance within the Son's own eternal self:

The act of the Son in humbling himself to take upon himself our humanity in the likeness of the flesh of sin and in the form of a servant, without of course sinning himself, and the act of perfect obedience of the Son to the Father in the whole course of his life in human nature, his whole participation in the life of God, are not two independent acts or events separated from one another. In all their distinctiveness, they are fully and finally and irrevocably united in being the acts of the one person of the incarnate Son of God.¹¹⁸

The hypostatic union, as with the *homoousion*, serves to actualise the atonement of the Son's continuous redemptive union with fallen humanity. Where the authenticity of Christ as the content of revelation and reconciliation is secured in the *homoousion*, the hypostatic union renders its actualisation in the interrelations of divinity and humanity in Christ, providing the mechanism by which humanity might be continuously redeemed throughout his entire temporal existence. It is this actualisation of redemption in dyophysitical interrelation that refutes any dualism between Christ's person and work, that atonement becomes *who* Christ is, not only *what* Christ has done.

¹¹⁸ Torrance, *Incarnation*, 208.

3.3 An/Enhypostasia

The anhypostatic-ehypostatic couplet defines Torrance's understanding of exactly what has, and has not, been assumed by the Son, and is therefore key to the non-assumptus.

Anhypostasia, defined by Torrance, is the negative articulation that Christ's humanity has no existence outside of the Son's hypostasis; it does not exist 'in and for itself—hence *an-hypostasis* ("not person," *i.e.* no separate person)¹¹⁹. Jesus had no existence as a human person prior to the Son's incarnation, and would not have existed apart from it.¹²⁰ Moreover, no persons existed within Jesus externally or independent of the *hypostasis* of the eternal Son. Torrance contends, '[If] there had been a human person to whom a divine person was added, there would have been an independent centre of personal being in Jesus over against the person of the Son of God'.¹²¹ *Anhypostasia* thus entails the Son's assumption of generic fallen substance, 'the *general* humanity of Jesus',¹²² His universal solidarity with common humanity. As it is humanity with no personhood apart from the Son, *anhypostasia* can refer to humanity distinct from His person.

On the other hand, *ehypostasia*, defined by Torrance, is the positive articulation that Christ's human nature is given existence exclusively in the Son's hypostasis; that is, He is a 'real human person *in* the person of the Son'.¹²³ The Son *personalises* human nature, giving the human person 'reality in the Person of the Son of God become man'.¹²⁴ As such, Christ is considered a genuine human person with full human capacities in every respect, yet this human personhood is grounded exclusively in the *hypostasis* of God the Son.¹²⁵ *Enhypostasia* instantiates the personal individuality of the Son's humanity, not in the generic anhypostatic sense of universal solidarity with common humanity, but rather

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 84.

¹²⁰ Torrance, *Theologian*, 199.

¹²¹ Torrance, *Incarnation*, 229.

¹²² Torrance, *Incarnation*, 230f.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 84; cf. Torrance, *Reconciliation*, 166-167; 'Singularity', 230.

¹²⁴ Torrance, *Faith*, 230; *Incarnation*, 228-229.

¹²⁵ Torrance, *Theologian*, 199; *Incarnation*, 105; *Ground*, 117-118.

the '*particular* humanity of the one man Jesus, whose person is not other than the person of the Son'.¹²⁶

It is imperative, for Torrance, that the anhypostatic-enhypostatic couplet remain inseparable, in their respective correlation to both Christ's assumption of fallen humanity, and His life of perfect obedience.¹²⁷ The couplet nuances the hypostatic union, with *anhypostasia* ensuring the relation of divinity to humanity in Christ envelops the entire collective of human fallenness, and *enhyposstasia* entailing the Son's personal wrestling of the fallen human nature into perfect obedience and communion with the Father. They are directly correlative, Torrance writes, to both 'the great divine act of grace in the incarnation, and...the dynamic personal union carried through the whole life of Christ',¹²⁸ respectively. As such, the *anhypostasia* and *enhyposstasia* are inseparable, as both ends of the couplet are directly dependent on, and are conditioned by, the inseparable unity of the Son's *hypostasis*.

Having defined our terms, this thesis now addresses the soteriological significance of the anhypostatic-enhypostatic couplet in relation to revelation and reconciliation, Christ's sinlessness, and the ontologically generic and epistemologically personal union of God and fallen humanity within Christ.

3.3.1 Soteriological Significance of the Anhypostatic-Enhypostatic Couplet

The anhypostatic-enhypostatic couplet, firstly, details both the generic and personal actualisation of revelation and reconciliation within fallen humanity.

Torrance details both anhypostatic and enhypostatic elements of revelation. Revelation, as it is anhypostatic, entails divine self-communication to *all* humanity in Christ's universal solidarity with common human nature. Yet, revelation, as it is enhypostatic, also entails

¹²⁶ Torrance, *Incarnation*, 230; *Conflict* 1:242-43.

¹²⁷ Torrance, *Incarnation*, 105, 228-229; *Reconstruction*, 131.

¹²⁸ Torrance, *Incarnation*, 84.

within it the perfect human response to itself actualised in Christ's personal vicarious obedience.¹²⁹

Regarding reconciliation, the anhypostatic-ehypostatic couplet necessitates that atonement be understood as both a genuine act of humanity, yet also a pure act of God. If atonement were achieved through *anhypostasia* in abstraction from *ehypostasia*, it would lack any concrete point of *personal* ontic contact to the exclusion of the Son's individual instantiation of human involvement. This is neglected in the manifestation of the "Latin Heresy" in exclusively ransom, judiciary or satisfactory atonement, where God acts over and above those He seeks to redeem, conquering sin in cosmic warfare or satisfying a judiciary or honour-debt far beyond the incorporation of humanity in the actual redemptive event.¹³⁰ On the other hand, if atonement were achieved through *ehypostasia* in abstraction from *anhypostasia*, then it would not be a pure act of God but a Pelagian act of salvific human assistance.¹³¹ *Anhypostasia* secures the full inclusion of humanity in reconciliation as Christ acts as a fallen human, while *ehypostasia* secures the authenticity of Christ as the personal act of the Son of God to reconcile fallen humanity to Himself.

Secondly, the anhypostatic-ehypostatic couplet secures Christ's sinlessness within the depths of human fallenness. Where *anhypostasia* affirms Christ's universal solidarity with human fallenness, yet denies Christ's assumption of an individual human person, Christ can be genuinely counted amongst Adam's postlapsarian progeny, yet at no point be a sinful *person*. In anhypostatic union, Torrance writes, the Son 'set aside that which divides us men from one another, our independent centres of personality...to assume that which unites us with one another, the possession of the same or common human nature'.¹³²

¹²⁹ Torrance, *Reconstruction*, 131.

¹³⁰ Torrance, *Conflict*, 1:243; *Atonement*, 122.

¹³¹ Torrance, *Conflict*, 1:243; *Atonement*, 76-77; 'Oneness', 250; *Reconciliation*, 172.

¹³² Torrance, *Incarnation*, 231.

Concurrently, *enhypostasia* articulates that as Christ lives in *personal* perfect communion with the Father, the person of the eternal Son disrupts the continuity of sinful persons in estrangement from God. Aligning Himself with the unbroken line of fallenness, the Son enters the same context in which other persons would sin, in personal ‘solidarity in terms of the interaction of persons within our human and social life’,¹³³ yet remains obedient where other persons fail to be so.

Uniting the couplet secures Christ’s full inclusion in the postlapsarian continuity of common human nature and the personal breaking of that sinfulness in His victorious condemnation of sin from within the flesh he assumed:

The doctrine of *anhypostasia* and *enhypostasia* (put together as one concept) helps us also to understand or express how God the Son was made in the likeness of our flesh of our flesh of sin, and yet was not himself a sinner; how he became one with us in the continuity of our Adamic and fallen existence in such a way as to make contact with us in the very roots of our sinning being, and yet did not himself repeat our “original sin” but vanquished it, and broke its continuity within our human nature. He assumed our corrupt and estranged humanity, but in such a way as at the same time to heal and sanctify in himself what he assumed.¹³⁴

Thirdly, the anhypostatic-enhypostatic couplet is the ontologically generic and epistemologically personal union of God and fallen humanity within Christ.¹³⁵ The inseparability of the couplet itself extends to the Son's ontic and noetic union with fallen humanity, as each correlate to *anhypostasia* and *enhypostasia* respectively.

¹³³ *Ibid.*

¹³⁴ Torrance, *Incarnation*, 231-232. Younger Torrance denied that original sin was assumed by the Son, as this was an aspect of Adamic personhood that the Son set aside in anhypostatic assumption (*Doctrine*, 120). This shall be explored later, but in Torrance’s mature theology, as here, original sin was assumed to be redeemed.

¹³⁵ Referring back to the terms of hypostatic union, the anhypostatic-enhypostatic couplet develops our understanding of the insertion of the hypostatic union into both our being and mind.

Anhypostasia, in this ontologically generic union, entails the union between God and humanity in the depths of common fallen being. The necessity of ontic union has been recurrently stated, so the inseparability of *anhypostasia* from *enhypostasia* may be recognised here, since if there were *only anhypostasia*—if there were only ontic union—there would be *only* redemption of human ontology. In the logic of the non-assumptus, a redemptive assumption of only one aspect of humanity would leave all other aspects unredeemed.¹³⁶

Enhypostasia, in this epistemologically personal union, entails a noetic bond—evidenced in Christ’s temporal obedience—between God and humanity in the depths of fallen ignorance, included and predicated in the ontic union of God and humanity within Christ. It is such that reconciliation ‘was carried through [Christ’s] conscious personal relations as well as his union in being with God’.¹³⁷ Consequential to this noetic union, Christ’s vicarious *personal* positive response to God achieves within fallen humanity the paradigm for doing so, thus enabling our *personal* positive response.¹³⁸ Again, this is inseparable from *anhypostasia*, since if there were *only* the *enhypostasia*—if there were only noetic union—the good news of Christ would simply be ‘the clearing up of a misunderstanding’ in neglect of the redemptive assumption of human being.¹³⁹

The *enhypostatic-anhypostatic* couplet, alongside the *homoousion* and the *hypostatic* union, ultimately, constitute the foundation for the Son’s continuous redemptive union with fallen humanity, wherein atonement is wrought throughout the entirety of the incarnation. While each notion in itself shows Torrance’s implicit and explicit use of the non-assumptus throughout contextualisation of atonement to Christ’s humanity, their further soteriological

¹³⁶ Torrance, *Incarnation*, 231. If only a union of being is required, redemption would be complete in the initial assumption of flesh; see *ibid.*, 163.

¹³⁷ T. F. Torrance, *Atonement: The Person and Work of Christ* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2009) 162. Materially, this is “carried through” by means of the aforementioned *prokope*.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.* In the terms of the *koinōnia* of the hypostatic union, the insertion of noetic union into fallen humanity entails the inclusion of the believer into Christ’s personal knowledge of the Father, and subsequently the fellowship of fellow participants.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, 161.

significance is their grounding of Christ's redemptive obedience in vicarious humanity and the cross as the culmination of the continuous redemptive union.

4. Continuous Union: Actualisation in Vicarious Humanity

This thesis has detailed Torrance's restatement of the common Christological foundations, serving to ground Christ's continuous redemptive union of God and fallen humanity. To see this redemption actualised, however, Torrance's doctrine of Christ's vicarious humanity is now discussed, detailing the soteriological significance of Christ's perfect obedience with the same fallen state in which others would sin. In Christ, sin is condemned in the flesh where it would commonly arise, creating a paradigm of communion with the Father within which common humanity may participate.¹⁴⁰

4.1 Defining "Vicarious" Humanity

For Christ's humanity to be "vicarious", it must be viewed within the context of the Son's intervention in the expected response of humanity to divine revelation. As stated, revelation is not simply the outgoing Word from God, but the divine provision of human

¹⁴⁰ The focus here is on the basic notion of Christ's vicarious obedience. However, this is developed into distinct nuances of redemption for each element of Christ's atoning life and work. For vicarious faith see T. F. Torrance, 'One Aspect of the Biblical Conception of Faith', *The Expository Times* 68 (1957), 111-114; *Mediation*, 82-84; *Incarnation*, 125f; *Rationality*, 154; *Science*, 188-190; *Preaching Christ Today: The Gospel and Scientific Thinking* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994) 31-32; *Conflict*, 2:78-82. For baptism: *Conflict*, 2:108f, 165f; *Reconciliation*, 84-85; *Faith*, 293. For Spirit reception: *Reconstruction*, 246-247; *Incarnation*, 135-136; *Faith*, 61f. For repentance: *Atonement*, 69-70; *Mediation*, 95-97; *Royal Priesthood: A Theology of Ordained Ministry* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1993) 12-14. For conversion: *Mediation*, 84-86. For evangelism: *Mediation*, 92-94. For doxology: *Mediation*, 87-88; *Reconciliation*, 139-214. Heavily influenced by Torrance, much of Christian Kettler's work is dedicated to developing the theological and pastoral significance of this notion; see C. D. Kettler, *The Vicarious Humanity of Christ and the Reality of Salvation* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 1991); *The God Who Believes: Faith, Doubt, and the Vicarious Humanity of Christ* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 2005); *The God Who Rejoices: Joy, Despair, and the Vicarious Humanity of Christ* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 2010).

response where we fail to positively respond.¹⁴¹ Christ's humanity is considered "vicarious" by Torrance, as, in providing this response, the Son acts on behalf of fallen humanity in 'every aspect' of our interactions with God from within the same fallen state, 'such as trusting and obeying, understanding and knowing, loving and worshipping'.¹⁴² The Son's assumption of fallen humanity is central to this, as it is from within our same fallen humanity that the Son holistically acts in every instance of response to divine revelation and responds positively where we fail to do so, thereby bringing our fallen humanity into a communion with God which has been unattainable since Adam. On our behalf and for our redemption, '[He] shared all our experiences, overcoming our disobedience through his obedience and sanctifying every stage of human life, and thereby vivified and restored our humanity to communion with God'.¹⁴³

Questions arise here as to the exclusion of genuine human involvement in this definition of "vicarious". Donald Macleod criticises Torrance's ambiguity as to whether Christ acting on our behalf is a matter of substitution, representation, or simply solidarity with human actions, as it is used in all three of these senses in different areas of his theology.¹⁴⁴ Macleod contends that, despite popular opinion, Torrance surely must intend "vicarious" to mean solidarity, since for Christ to give a vicarious response to divine revelation in either

¹⁴¹ Torrance, *Rationality*, 145. One might ask exactly *how* the significance of the Son's temporal existence extends beyond His spatio-temporal boundaries in providing a human response to revelation sufficient for all humankind. Torrance recognises the necessity of rejecting the Lutheran concept of *finitum capax infiniti* — contra the Reformed refutation, *finitum non capax infiniti*— which naturally concluded in the contention of eighteenth and nineteenth century liberalism that human beings hold an inherent capacity to respond positively to God, in which Christ becomes merely 'a special and exemplary instance of man's own capacity for the divine' (*SpTI*, 41). Against this, the Reformed tradition utilised the concept derogatorily dubbed by the Lutherans as the "*extra Calvinisticum*" — that the Son does not abandon His transcendence despite His incarnational self-limitation to temporospatiality, nor does He abandon his physicality when departing the temporal sphere in His ascension—to expand the significance of Christ's humanity as a response to divine revelation beyond any spatiotemporal place or period (*ibid.*, 31-32). In short, in the *extra Calvinisticum*, the significance of Christ's humanity in providing a positive human response to God may extend beyond His spatiotemporal boundaries and be efficacious for common humanity across the ages who cannot provide such a response themselves.

¹⁴² Torrance, *Rationality*, 145.

¹⁴³ Torrance, *Faith*, 167, cf. *Mediation*, 92; *Rationality*, 143.

¹⁴⁴ D. Macleod, *Jesus is Lord: Christology Yesterday and Today* (Fearn: Mentor, 2000) 133.

an exclusively substitutionary or representative manner would be to deny *our* genuine involvement in acts of response; Christ would act *instead* of us, not just with us.¹⁴⁵

However, to read Torrance's definition of "vicarious" merely as Christ's solidarity with us, so to resolve an apparent impasse of human exclusion in substitution and representation, does not quite grasp Torrance's intentions to present substitution and representation as the obverse of each other. Habets rightly points out that Torrance surely intends to unite these two poles, that Christ be both our substitute *and* representative.¹⁴⁶ As Lee comments, if we isolate Christ's work of representation then Christ is simply a moralistic example of human behaviour before God, 'this would mean that Jesus is only our leader representing our act of response to God'.¹⁴⁷ Correspondingly, if we isolate Christ's work of substitution then we fall into the trappings of the Latin Heresy as 'his response would be "an empty transaction over our heads" with no ontological relation with us'.¹⁴⁸ Torrance contends that we must embrace the concept of substitution in defining the "vicariousness" of Christ's humanity but on the condition that we recognise that it is with Christ as representative of our fallen nature that such substitution occurs—that it is '*as man* that Jesus Christ takes our place'.¹⁴⁹

Indeed, this is the significance of the *homoousion*: as Christ is absolutely secure in both divine and human nature, in the incarnation God acts *from the side of humanity*. So too in the anhypostatic-enhypostatic couplet, in the Son's enhypostatic assumption of fallen human nature, atonement may remain a pure act of God while still including within it the Son's genuinely personal agency as a human individual. In this sense, the Son providing our positive response to divine revelation is not to define "vicariousness" as substitution to

¹⁴⁵ See K. W. Lee, *Living in Union With Christ: The Practical Theology of Thomas F. Torrance* (New York: Lang, 2003) 159-177 for relevant discussion on substitution and cooperation in vicarious humanity.

¹⁴⁶ M. Habets, *Theosis in the Theology of Thomas Torrance* (London: Routledge, 2016) 79.

¹⁴⁷ Lee, *Union*, 163.

¹⁴⁸ Lee, *Union*, 163, citing Torrance, *Mediation*, 79-98.

¹⁴⁹ Torrance, *Mediation*, 81.

the *exclusion* or instrumentalisation of humanity, where He acts over and above our heads, but the Son substituting for us as representative of our same fallen human nature. The “vicariousness” of Christ’s life the substitution of regular human response to revelation with a divinely provided *human* response, as the Son represents us as one genuinely consubstantial with fallen humanity.

4.2 Active and Passive Obedience

For Torrance, the non-assumptus truly comes to the fore within vicarious humanity in the Reformed formula of the active and passive obedience of Christ. By active obedience, Torrance contends that Christ ‘took our place in all our human activity before God the Father’.¹⁵⁰ In each instance within which sin would regularly arise for any other fallen human, the Son actively obeys the Father in each of these moments: ‘From the very beginning to the very end, he maintained a perfect filial relation to the Father in which he yielded to him a life of utter love and faithfulness’.¹⁵¹ In this, the Son sets the paradigmatic precedent for the perfect reception of divine revelation within fallen humanity; it is, Torrance writes, His ‘appropriation of the Father’s word and will in our name and on our behalf’.¹⁵²

By passive obedience, Torrance means that Christ ‘submitted to the divine judgement on us’.¹⁵³ In this, the Son willingly takes on our fallen humanity, knowing it to be cursed to bear the wrath of the Father, graciously bowing to the Father’s judgement of our sin from the state within which it arose though He had not committed it Himself, to bear the curse ‘in our name and on our behalf’.¹⁵⁴

¹⁵⁰ T. F. Torrance, ‘The Distinctive Character of the Reformed Tradition’ in C. D. Kettler and T. H. Speidell (eds.), *Incarnational Ministry: The Presence of Christ in Church, Society, and Family* (Colorado Springs: Helmers & Howard, 1990) 9.

¹⁵¹ Torrance, *Reconstruction*, 154; cf. *Incarnation*, 80.

¹⁵² Torrance, *Reconstruction*, 154; cf. *Incarnation*, 80.

¹⁵³ Torrance, ‘Character’, 9.

¹⁵⁴ Torrance, *Reconstruction*, 154; cf. *Incarnation*, 80.

There is a necessary coherence of passive and active obedience in which atonement is expanded beyond the isolated event of the cross. The cross is the climactic end of passive obedience in which Christ accepts the judgement of human sin for Himself, while Christ's active obedience is the positive conquering of sin in everyday action throughout His perfect temporal existence, creating a paradigm of righteousness within which we share. In the unity of the two, 'justification means not simply the non-imputation of our sins through the pardon of Christ, but positive sharing in his divine-human righteousness'.¹⁵⁵

The soteriological efficacy of active and passive obedience rests on the Son's assumption of fallen human nature. Without the Son's unity of divinity and fallen humanity within himself, there is no ontological framework for salvation; active obedience would lack the necessary point of contact to the fallen state to condemn the sin that arises within it and we would be left with simply the passive acceptance of judgement. Without the non-assumptus, Torrance writes, 'the active and passive obedience fall apart...[and] we are unable to understand justification in Christ as anything more than a merely external forensic non-imputation of sin'.¹⁵⁶

It is the active and passive obedience of Christ that actualises the redemption of the Son's continuous union with fallen nature. However, it is in the distinction yet inseparability of continuous union with the once and for all union that actual and original sin are redeemed by each, respectively. In the continuous union, through His active and passive obedience, the Son continuously accepts the Father's judgement on His own fallenness and actively brings holiness to bear upon instances of sin that would arise from the fallen state, thereby conquering sin as it occurs *in actuality*. In the "once and for all" union, as the Son's divine holiness sanctifies human fallenness in his initial union with it, *original* sin is redeemed:

¹⁵⁵ Torrance, *Reconstruction*, 155; cf. *Incarnation*, 81.

¹⁵⁶ Torrance, *Incarnation*, 82; cf. *Reconstruction*, 156.

If we are to think of the active and passive obedience of Christ as dealing with our actual sin and its penalty, we are to think of the Incarnational union of the Holy Son with our unholy nature as dealing with our original sin, or sanctifying our human nature, through bringing it into a healing and sanctifying union with his own holy nature.¹⁵⁷

4.3 Condemnation of Sin in the Flesh

The concept of the Son's vicarious obedience is developed in Paul's phrase to the Romans, that the Son "condemns sin in the flesh" (Romans 8:3). To Torrance, it is only when the Son's active obedience to the Father and passive submission to divine judgement is placed in the context of the Son's assumption of fallen human nature that this condemnation of sin in the flesh can be said to occur.¹⁵⁸ When the Son comes to us in 'the likeness of sinful flesh' (Rom. 8:3), this is not just a likeness of identity or a docetic appearance of sinful flesh, but a 'concrete likeness of sinful flesh';¹⁵⁹ the Son *actually* bears our sin by assuming our same nature.

The crucial difference, however, between our "sinful flesh" and Christ's "sinful flesh" is what is *done* in the flesh. Though completely identical with us in fallenness, still Christ differs from us in the perfection of His active obedience. In the most crucial of distinctions between us and the Son, where we sin in our flesh, Christ condemns sin in His:

[H]e was completely unlike us in that by taking our fallen human nature upon himself, he condemned sin in it; he overcame its temptations, resisted its downward drag in alienation from God, and converted it back in himself to obedience toward God, thus sanctifying it... In

¹⁵⁷ Torrance, *Reconstruction*, 156; *Incarnation*, 82.

¹⁵⁸ Torrance, *Incarnation*, 63. He here cites Romans 8:3. The passive and active obedience 'fall apart', when removed from the context of the Son's union with fallen nature (Torrance, *Reconstruction*, 156).

¹⁵⁹ Torrance, *Incarnation*, 63. Chiarot does highlight that Torrance is in the minority of interpreters here (*Unassumed*, 169).

all this the Son is wholly like us, in that he became what we are, but also wholly unlike us, in that he resisted our sin, and lived in entire and perfect obedience to the Father.¹⁶⁰

The condemnation of sin in the flesh by active obedience in this manner is inseparable from Christ bearing the judgement of God in passive obedience. Torrance, as with Athanasius, seeks to properly emphasise that Christ bore the judgement intrinsic to being made sin, became genuinely accursed for our sake, that the Son ‘bore upon himself and in himself for our sakes “the whole inheritance of judgement that lay against us”’.¹⁶¹ However, under the Father’s judgement, where we would be found guilty in the sin that occurs in our flesh, Christ is found innocent as He lives within that same flesh in perfection, bringing holiness to bear upon fallen humanity. The Son bears this curse ‘in such a way that instead of being overcome by evil he overcame it, instead of sinning in the flesh he condemned sin in the flesh through his self-sanctification on our behalf’.¹⁶²

Beyond this, the condemnation of actual sin within the Son’s flesh by vicarious obedience extends to the transformation of the fallen human will into conformity with the Father’s. The Son grasps the human will which, by our rebellion ‘we had alienated from the Father in disobedience and sin’, and through perfect obedience from within that will He ‘bent our human nature in himself into obedience to the Father’.¹⁶³ This condemnation of sin by vicarious obedience is emotively depicted by Torrance as a battle in the flesh that all humans face, yet only Christ won. The agony of such a battle is seen most explicitly in Gethsemane. Painfully, yet victoriously, the Son conquers the waywardness of the human will to say “Not my will, but yours”.¹⁶⁴ Recalling the notion of *prokope*, Torrance contends that Jesus learnt obedience perfectly, but did so in weakness and tears.¹⁶⁵ Christ ‘beat his

¹⁶⁰ Torrance, *Incarnation*, 205; cf. *Incarnation*, 62, 73; *Faith*, 161.

¹⁶¹ Torrance, *Reconciliation*, 153; cf. *Mediation*, 41.

¹⁶² Torrance, *Reconciliation*, 153; cf. *Mediation*, 41.

¹⁶³ Torrance, *Reconstruction*, 126, 157.

¹⁶⁴ See Torrance, *Mediation*, 79-80.

¹⁶⁵ Torrance, *Incarnation*, 64; *Reconstruction*, 132.

way forward by blows',¹⁶⁶ striking out a way from within fallen nature towards the Father.¹⁶⁷ In this agonising process, Christ learnt obedience through the trials of suffering and temptation.¹⁶⁸ However, despite internalising the pain of human alienation, the Son wrestles the fallen will into conformity with the Father's will. Torrance writes, '[H]e bent the will of man in perfect submission to the will of God, bowing under the divine judgement against our unrighteousness, and offered a perfect obedience to the Father, that we might be redeemed and reconciled to him'.¹⁶⁹

Torrance's contextualisation of atonement to Christ's humanity rests on the Son's vicarious life and work within our fallenness. His vicarious humanity must be viewed within the context of divine revelation that requires positive response from fallen humanity. In our inability to provide such response, Christ answers for us from within our same fallenness, not to human exclusion but in unified substitution of our failures and representation of our actual nature. He passively accepts the Father's judgement in our place, actively condemning sin in every instance that it tempts to arise in the fallen humanity He assumes, thereby sanctifying fallenness on our behalf throughout His continuous union with our nature.

5. The Cross & Resurrection

The cross has long been the focal point of atonement, and the centre of ransom, penal substitution, or satisfaction. Torrance, in contextualising atonement to Christ's humanity, and expanding redemption to the entirety of the incarnation, does not seek to detract from that centrality. In the Son's continuous union with fallen humanity, the crucifixion and

¹⁶⁶ Torrance, *Incarnation*, 64, 106.

¹⁶⁷ Torrance, *Reconstruction*, 38.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 132.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

resurrection are the fulfilment of atonement—they are the climax of His temporal work.¹⁷⁰ The significance of Christ's humanity being fallen for incarnational atonement at the cross and resurrection is now discussed.

5.1 *Crescendo of the Non-Assumptus*

The place of the cross within the non-assumptus is the crescendo of what has been building throughout the Son's temporal existence. Indeed, our fallen nature is redeemed *once and for all* as the Son assumes it at the virgin birth, and our fallen nature is redeemed *continuously* in union with the Son as He condemns sin in the flesh through a life of perfect obedience. That said, it is not until the Son extends His healing touch into the darkest part of our fallenness that this redemptive union is complete. The non-assumptus only truly comes to fruition at the cross where the Son assumes the final aspect of our fallenness, our very Godforsakenness in death. At the cross, no element of human fallenness is left unassumed. Obversely, the resurrection serves as a sign that Christ's temporal work of assumption is complete. As nothing has been left unassumed, the resurrected Christ is a picture of humanity living in pure redemption, humanity for whom the humiliation of fallenness has been exhausted as it has been bound to Christ, and all that remains is pure exaltation:

That assumption of our fearful and lost condition reaches its supreme point in the cross where the Son freely assumes our damnation and final judgement, freely assumes our Godforsakenness in the *Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani* of death on the cross under judgement. And

¹⁷⁰ Though Christ's death and resurrection may be referenced distinctly, for Torrance they are theologically inseparable. The crucifixion and the empty tomb are not two events occurring one after another but are the obverse of each other—the New Testament does not present us with 'a message of Good Friday and then with a message of Easter'; rather Christ's humiliation and exaltation are entirely intertwined. As two sides of the same event, the crucifixion is validated and made sense of by the resurrection; 'we really discern the act of God in the crucifixion of Christ when we penetrate through to the other side of it, and see it not only in its dark and terrible side, but also in its light and glorious side' (Torrance, *SpTR*, 47-49; *Atonement*, 210-212). Thus, when talking of the crucifixion as the climax of Christ's work, this thesis is not referencing an event separate to the resurrection; nor when talking of the resurrection as the climax of Christ's work is it referencing an event separate to the crucifixion—it is talking of two aspects of the same climactic event.

so he achieves our assumption into oneness with himself, and because that assumption is maintained even in the hell into which the Son descended, it achieves its end in the resurrection of man out of hell and the exaltation of man in Christ to the right hand of God.¹⁷¹

As the climactic peak of the non-assumptus, the cross is both a revelatory and validating act of the soteriological significance of the Son's work within our fallen humanity throughout the rest of the incarnation. If the cross is the perspective from the end of the road, from here we see where and how steps have been taken to reach this point. The Son's condemnation of sin in the flesh 'takes places supremely on the cross, but the cross reveals what was taking place all the time in the incarnate life of the Son'.¹⁷²

The cross, in turn, is the climax of the Son's work of reconciliation, in mediating fallen humanity and God into divine-human communion. Here, the cross brings together the personal resistance of fallen humanity against God, and the personal resistance of God to sin. There is a genuine enmity from God towards humanity in the judgement of sin; in fact, 'sin gains part of its character as sin from the divine resistance to it'.¹⁷³ Christ bears this divine enmity on our behalf. However, In assuming the ultimate instance of human fallenness in our death, Christ internalises within Himself the full force of human rebellion against God.¹⁷⁴ Though this mutual divine-human enmity is present throughout the incarnation in God's disdain towards sin and human rebellion to God, this relationship is most strained at the moment of the cross, where 'the discontinuity between humanity and God was...widened to an abysmal depth'.¹⁷⁵ Thus, again, it is from the perspective of the cross that the significance of the non-assumptus within divine-human reconciliation is

¹⁷¹ Torrance, *Atonement*, 150.

¹⁷² Torrance, *Incarnation*, 112.

¹⁷³ Torrance, *Atonement*, 110.

¹⁷⁴ That this rebellion permeates our very humanity makes the cross an excruciating event, as our rebellious nature is itself crucified (Torrance, *Jesus Christ*, 161-163).

¹⁷⁵ Torrance, *Atonement*, 111; *Doctrine*, 158.

seen; as fallen humanity is truly forsaken by the God against whom it rebels, it is clear how necessary it has been for Christ to assume this rebellious flesh and reconcile our enmity with God on our behalf. Torrance contends,

[The] New Testament speaks of the flesh of Jesus as the concrete form of our human nature marked by Adam's fall, the human nature which seen from the cross is at enmity with God and needs to be reconciled to God...that is the amazing act of gracious condescension... that God the Son should assume our flesh...enter the situation where the Psalmist cried, *Eli, Eli, lama sabacthani...*¹⁷⁶

Hence, the resolution of this mutual resistance is the focal point of the cross, as this 'essential and root personal relation' of divine-human enmity must be reconciled.¹⁷⁷

Humanity must be redeemed in the depths of their fallen being so to be reconciled to God in this 'onto-personal' relation,¹⁷⁸ wherein this enmity can be settled.¹⁷⁹

The place of Christ's death and resurrection in this reconciliation is the *telos* of the Son's work throughout the incarnation, to lift humanity from personal resistance to God—that is, away from being isolated in sin that God is Himself resistant to—and into personal divine-human communion. At the cross, 'sin's isolation of humanity is effectively overcome...because here we are set on a new and acutely personal relationship to God, that is, reconciled to God in Jesus Christ'.¹⁸⁰ The resurrection, obversely, is in itself that life in Christ as second Adam—life not lived in mutual enmity with God as with the first Adam, but in true divine-human communion without the relational restriction of sin. For Torrance, 'Christ is the living atonement, atonement in its glorious achievement not only in

¹⁷⁶ Torrance, *Incarnation*, 61.

¹⁷⁷ Torrance, *Atonement*, 158.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 159.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 153.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 166.

overcoming the separation of sin...but in consummating union and communion with God in such a way that the divine life overflows freely through him into mankind'.¹⁸¹

5.2 Resolving Enmity: Death and Resurrection on Theological Foundations

If the climax of the non-assumptus is Christ's death and resurrection, in which He fully lays hold of divine-human enmity to fulfil His mediatorial office, then the question must be asked: What constitutes the material content of this reconciliation? This resolution in Christ's death and resurrection can be best understood in terms of our common Christological foundations that undergird the reconciliatory work of the incarnation as a whole.

5.2.1 Enhypostatic and Anhypostatic Reconciliation

In resolving divine-human enmity, Christ gives voice to both sides of the relationship; He is 'propitiation acutely personalised' on behalf of both God and humanity.¹⁸² He does not do so as a third party; in the Son's anhypostatic union with fallen humanity, the cross is a genuine work of God as the eternal Son Himself takes our death for His own. Yet, in enhypostatic union, it is also a genuine work of humanity as Christ does not go to the cross docetically, nor simply on behalf of humanity, but as a *fallen person*. The cross is a divine initiative translated into the genuinely human agency of the fallen man Jesus.¹⁸³ The resurrection, in turn, is also both a divine and human act. In anhypostatic union, the resurrection is a pure act of God raising helpless fallen humanity out of the grave. Yet, in enhypostatic assumption, God is operative within human nature, meaning it is divine initiative 'translated into the perfection of a human act which is made to issue freely and

¹⁸¹ Torrance, *SpTR*, 55; *Atonement*, 217.

¹⁸² Torrance, *Atonement*, 69. Even at the cross, Christ is the question asked of humanity by God in the provision of divine revelation and also the provision of positive human response (*Reconstruction*, 117-127).

¹⁸³ Torrance, *Atonement*, 76-77, 121-122, 151.

fully out of human nature, in which man is made to stand up before God as his beloved Son in whom he is well pleased'.¹⁸⁴

5.2.2 *Incarnational Reconciliation*

Divine-human enmity is resolved within the context of the incarnate Son's constitution in the *homoousion* and hypostatic union. It must be remembered that reconciliation is not merely a legal transaction of penalty, nor a transferral of guilt and subsequent forgiveness, but even in the death and resurrection of Christ there is an incarnational atonement within the constitution of the divine-human mediator. In the *homoousion* and hypostatic union a unique framework is provided within which fallen humanity can be both Godforsaken in death at the crucifixion and resurrected in union with the very life of God, all within Son's theandric person. The cross and resurrection are the fulfilment of the Son's internalised work:

He condescended in great humiliation to unite himself with us in our weakness...in such a way as to resurrect in himself our human nature in union and communion with the Father. The resurrection is to be regarded not only as the completion of that saving work but as belonging to *the ontological structure of the mediator himself* who stood in the gap of the *Eli, Eli, lama sabacthani* and bridged it in his own personal existence and supplied for all men the living way from death to life.¹⁸⁵

Though the "two ends" of the Son's consubstantiality are concretely united within His one *hypostasis* throughout the entirety of the incarnation, this is most fully seen on the cross; that 'on the cross, the oneness of God and man in Christ is inserted into the midst of our being, into the midst of our sinful existence and history'.¹⁸⁶ Further still, at the cross this

¹⁸⁴ Torrance, *SpTR*, 56; *Atonement*, 218.

¹⁸⁵ Torrance, *SpTR*, 49-50; *Atonement*, 212.

¹⁸⁶ Torrance, *Incarnation*, 246.

union is inserted into the darkest moment of our sinful existence and history, where the divine-human bond in Christ is placed under the attack ‘by the forces that sought to divide Jesus from God’ in sin, in the broadest division of divine-human discontinuity in mutual enmity.¹⁸⁷ Concurrently, at the cross this union is strained by the judgement of the Father in absolute condemnation of sin in the Godforsakenness of the Son within our fallen state.¹⁸⁸ However, on the other side of this twofold tension, the resurrection reveals that the hypostatic union has withstood this struggle; that is, Christ has borne the entirety of the divine “no” to sin, and in His resurrection has attained on our behalf the divine “yes” to us in the divine ‘affirmation of Jesus as Son of Man and all that he has done for us in our nature’.¹⁸⁹

5.2.3 *Passive and Active Reconciliation*

This mutual enmity is also reconciled as Christ’s death and resurrection fulfil Christ’s passive and active obedience. In passive obedience, Christ willingly accepts the Father’s ultimate act of judgement; as fallen humanity is deserving of death, the Son bears the final consequence of the humanity in which He has come to share. In active obedience, the Son chooses to follow even the most difficult command of the Father even to death on a cross, in so doing turning back the fallen human will into conformity and fulfilment of the Father’s will for us.¹⁹⁰ The resurrection, in turn, is Christ’s passive obedience in relying exclusively on the Father to commission the Spirit to raise Him from the grave; despite being very God He refuses to raise Himself, instead restricting Himself to the helplessness of our fallen condition.¹⁹¹ In active obedience, the resurrection is the sign that death had no hold on the one who had condemned sin within our fallen nature to

¹⁸⁷ Torrance, *SpTR*, 54; *Atonement*, 216.

¹⁸⁸ Torrance, *SpTR*, 54; *Atonement*, 216.

¹⁸⁹ Torrance, *SpTR*, 52; *Atonement*, 214-215.

¹⁹⁰ Torrance, *Atonement*, 154; *Incarnation*, 111.

¹⁹¹ Torrance, *SpTR*, 50-52; *Atonement*, 214.

such an extent that, when he took the death worthy of such fallenness, fallen humanity was so redeemed that no sin was found to keep him in the grave.¹⁹²

6. Summary

This chapter has served to detail Torrance's framework for contextualising atonement to Christ's humanity, the significance of doing so for the unassumed is unhealed, and the soteriological role of the Son's assumption of fallen human nature. It has been demonstrated that Christ's fallenness is not an abstract assertion but is properly set within a soteriological context, where, against the instrumental role of Christ's humanity in the "Latin Heresy", fallen humanity is assumed to be healed internally in an essentially redemptive divine-human bond. In such incarnational atonement, fallen humanity is thus redeemed in the Son's "once and for all" union with our nature at the virgin birth, and concurrently throughout the incarnation in His continuous union. This contextualisation of atonement to Christ's humanity is grounded in Torrance's restatement of the common Christological foundations of the homoousion, hypostatic union and anhypostatic-enhypostatic couplet, therein actualised in Christ's vicarious life of perfect obedience, and fulfilled at His death and resurrection. The next chapter explores some common criticisms and defences of the Son's assumption of fallen humanity in the contemporary debate.

¹⁹² Torrance, *SpTR*, 53; *Atonement*, 216.

Chapter 2: Criticisms & Defences of the Son's Assumption of Fallen Human Nature

Much of what has hindered discussion of whether Christ assumed a fallen human nature is a basic ambiguity in terms. Torrance has fallen foul of this, with Chiarot not unfairly criticising his 'lack of a crisp definition of "fallen human nature"'.¹⁹³ While such ambiguity stands, this makes any affirmation of one side or the other a fruitless exercise. Kelly Kapic writes,

[The] issues at hand are less clear than sometimes acknowledged, requiring more than simply an affirmation of whether the Son assumes a *fallen* or *unfallen* nature. Given the lack of clear and agreed definitions, claiming one position or the other does not actually convey much of theological substance.¹⁹⁴

Beyond this ambiguity, there are several other dogmatic concerns in Christ assuming a fallen human nature that must be addressed. In this chapter, these concerns will be addressed, and by doing so clear terminology will be established to resolve this ambiguity, in the hope of progressing much of what is constructive of Torrance's framework while perhaps leaving behind some level of ambiguity.

1. Defining Fallenness

All orthodox Christianity would maintain that Christ is utterly sinless, but, what is less clear of proponents of Christ being fallen, is what this fallenness actually entails. To define fallenness with clarity, the following must be established: (i) whether fallenness is

¹⁹³ Chiarot, *Unassumed*, 199.

¹⁹⁴ K. M. Kapic, 'The Son's Assumption of a Human Nature: A Call for Clarity', *IJST* 3 (2001), 154-166, 163-164.

an essential or contingent property of human nature, and, (ii) whether fallenness can be defined apart from sinfulness.¹⁹⁵

1.1 Essential and Contingent Anthropological Properties

Crisp recognises that, traditionally, humanity has been said to hold essential and contingent properties. Contingent properties may change while the definition of a human being remains the same. For example, one may lose an arm, and remain the same person.¹⁹⁶ As, in Adam, there has been one individual existing prior to fallenness without the very constitution of his humanity being compromised;¹⁹⁷ fallenness is merely a contingent rather than constitutive or essential property.¹⁹⁸ As with Anselm, 'neither corruptibility or incorruptibility...belongs to the integrity of human nature'.¹⁹⁹

McFarland accepts this premise, that postlapsarian humanity is damaged, but damage is consequential not constitutive of that nature. Thus, contra Torrance, it is not necessarily a *requirement* that these contingent properties or effects be assumed in order to be redeemed.²⁰⁰ However, it is possible, McFarland suggests, that the Son assume contingent fallenness, not by necessity, but by free choice. As Aquinas contends that God saw it fitting rather than necessary to save by means of Christ's Passion,²⁰¹ could the same not be said for extending atonement to the Son's redemptive union with fallen humanity?²⁰² That fallenness is a contingent property does not disqualify it from such

¹⁹⁵ O. D. Crisp, *Divinity and Humanity* (Cambridge: CUP, 2007), 114. Kacic also contends that 'To speak of fallen man is to speak of man the sinner...To try and separate these two can be perceived as artificial, leading only to further debate' (Kacic, 'Assumption', 163). This does not necessarily mean that Christ's assumption fallenness is completely inconceivable, but this conceptual unity requires us to speak of His redemption of *sin* whenever we talk of His redemption of *fallenness*.

¹⁹⁶ Crisp, *Divinity*, 94.

¹⁹⁷ R. L. Stamps, "*Thy Will Be Done*": A Dogmatic Defence of Dyothelitism in Light of Recent Monothelite Proposals (PhD Thesis, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2014) 169.

¹⁹⁸ Crisp, *Divinity*, 95.

¹⁹⁹ Anselm, *Cur Deus Homo*, 2.11 (tr. S. N. Deane; Fort Worth: RDMc Publishing, 2005).

²⁰⁰ I. A. McFarland, 'Fallen or Unfallen? Christ's Human Nature and the Ontology of Human Sinfulness', *IJST* 10 (2008), 399-415, 406.

²⁰¹ Aquinas, *Summa.*, 3.1.2, 3.46.1-4.

²⁰² McFarland, 'Fallen', 407.

assumption; rather, it is included in the free decision of God in His self-definition as Redeemer.

1.2 Defining Fallenness Apart From Sin: Original Corruption

In defining fallenness apart from sin, though fallenness advocates deny Christ committed *actual* sin, what is less clear is Christ's assumption of original sin.²⁰³ Taking the Classical-Reformed distinction within original sin between original guilt and original corruption,²⁰⁴ Crisp recognises that this distinction is largely used when defining fallenness to qualify Christ being fallen while remaining sinless; that is, that Christ may hold 'a propensity or proneness to actual sin, [which] is not the same as actual sin'.²⁰⁵ The Son assumes our corruption, but does not accrue guilt for personal transgression.²⁰⁶ However, for Crisp, Christ assuming fallenness—even with this distinction of guilt and corruption—is untenable.

Speaking hypothetically, Crisp provides two options of fallenness as either a 'strong original corruption' where Christ will *inevitably* sin (*non posse non peccare*) 'unless prevented from doing so by divine intervention', which Crisp perceives to contradict that

²⁰³ As cited, Torrance rejected Christ's assumption of original sin in his earlier work only to claim the opposite in his mature theology. Macleod perceives of Edward Irving that original sin is a central tenet to his definition of fallenness, that his mechanism of atonement 'requires that original sin be ascribed to Christ; for original sin is a vice of fallen human nature; and the doctrine that our Lord's human nature was fallen means, if it means anything, that it was tainted with original sin' (D. Macleod, *The Person of Christ* [Leicester: IVP, 1998], 228-229). Much to the further ambiguity of terms in this debate, common orthodoxy lacks any consensus in defining original sin; see R. Sturch, *The Word and the Christ: An Essay in Analytic Christology* (Oxford: OUP, 1991) 262.

²⁰⁴ Here some nuances must be recognised of fallenness theologians. Torrance, answering the "Latin Heresy", more commonly cites Eastern Fathers, for whom the fall was 'not at all a juridical matter' (J. Romanides, *The Ancestral Sin* [Ridgewood: Zephyr, 2008] 112; cf. G. Bray, 'Original Sin in Patristic Thought', *Churchman* 108 [1994], 37-47). The need to defend the fallenness view in juridical categories is certainly less significant for the Orthodox and those following the Eastern Fathers; see C. N. Tsirpanlis, *Introduction to Eastern Patristic Thought and Orthodox Theology* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1991) 52; J. Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology: Historical Trends and Doctrinal Themes* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1974) 133. Guilt, however, should still be addressed, unless one would disregard the West entirely; Torrance still includes some element of inherited guilt and other significant fallenness theologians such as Barth still articulate atonement in forensic categories; see Torrance, 'Heresy', 477; B. L. McCormack, 'For Us and Our Salvation: Incarnation and Atonement in the Reformed Tradition', *Studies in Reformed Theology and History* 1, (1993), 281-316, 307; Barth CD IV/1, 274.

²⁰⁵ Crisp, *Divinity*, 97.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 106.

Christ's sinlessness is intrinsic to His humanity (Heb. 4:15).²⁰⁷ Alternatively, fallenness is a 'weak original corruption', in which Christ may only *potentially* sin (*posse non peccare*), yet is prevented from doing so by either His own divinity or pneumatological intervention.²⁰⁸

However, for Crisp, even this weak corruption would render the Son sinful. Even the mere propensity to sin is morally reprehensible to God, a genuine 'deformity of soul', and for the Son to unite Himself to such without marring Himself in sin would be 'metaphysically impossible'.²⁰⁹ Stamps asks, '[H]ow could a human being in this state not be condemnable in the eyes of a holy God?'²¹⁰ The Westminster Confession declares that even our corruption must be 'pardoned' in Christ, as 'both itself, and all the motions thereof, are truly and properly sin'.²¹¹

To Crisp, since this corruption alone is sufficient for our condemnation, even without actual sin or original guilt, the only way in which fallenness advocates can proceed is to abandon Chalcedonian Christology, so that corruption is attributed to some Nestorian second subject, not the Son Himself.²¹² Bearing this corruption, the Son could not be impeccable as historical orthodoxy would have it and His divinity would be tainted by sin.²¹³

This said, even if Christ could be originally corrupt while sinless, any conceptual separation of original corruption from original guilt and actual sin can never be more than hypothetical. Much of Reformed Scholasticism has asserted that Adam's guilt is imputed to his descendants as a result of his sin; as a matter of cause and effect, sinfulness and

²⁰⁷ Crisp, *Divinity*, 95–96, 109–110.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 111, cf. 96; O. D. Crisp, *God Incarnate: Explorations in Christology* (London: T&T Clark, 2009) 122–136.

²⁰⁹ Crisp, *Divinity*, 112. For an extended treatment, see *ibid.*, 109–16.

²¹⁰ Stamps, *Will*, 170.

²¹¹ Westminster Assembly of Divines, *Westminster Confession of Faith*, 6.5 (London: Longman & Company, 1863).

²¹² Crisp, *Divinity*, 113–114; Stamps, *Will*, 170; Chiarot, *Unassumed*, 162, 220.

²¹³ Stamps, *Will*, 170.

corruption cannot be separated.²¹⁴ As such, Crisp denies that fallenness may be considered apart from sinfulness, as this is not how fallenness has been ‘traditionally understood’.²¹⁵

The imputation of guilt, however, is not without its logical or moral issues. It is these that shall now be explored, before addressing these criticisms more extensively.

1.3 Defining Fallenness Apart From Sin: The Logical Conundrum of Guilt

For much of Classical theology, original guilt was transferred biologically from Adam to his progeny, whereas the Reformed tradition brought the distinction of imputation from Adam to each individual.²¹⁶ In either sense, logical and moral questions arise as to exactly how and why this guilt is to be transferred, questions answered with ambiguity in the tradition. Just as in Reformed theology, the mediation or imputation of guilt has been presented by Hodge as simply the obligation to satisfy punishment (*reatus poenae*),²¹⁷ whereas Murray contends that such *reatus* must be consequential of (and grounded in) prior personal ‘involvement in the *culpa* of Adam’s transgression’.²¹⁸

Logically, it is problematic to ascribe guilt to someone who has not committed a crime. The *punishment* of a crime may be borne by a substitute, but the substitute can never be said to have been guilty of committing a crime. Wainright asserts,

[L]iability must be distinguished from guilt. Although it is sometimes reasonable to hold a person liable for the deeds of another, our legal and moral practice provides no situation in which a person can reasonably be judged guilty of another’s offence...Thus, even though

²¹⁴ Crisp, *Divinity*, 99-104, 107-108; cf. Kapic, ‘Assumption’, 160-163.

²¹⁵ Crisp, *Divinity*, 93.

²¹⁶ L. S. Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1993) 315.

²¹⁷ C. Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970) 194, cf. 149-256.

²¹⁸ J. Murray, *The Imputation of Adam’s Sin* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1959) 84.

liability can be transferred from one person to another, guilt cannot. Adam's posterity cannot be guilty of Adam's fault unless Adam's act is somehow literally their own.²¹⁹

Edwards, confronted with this problem of alien guilt, described it as '[t]hat Great Objection against the Imputation of Adam's Sin to his Posterity considered, that such imputation is unjust and unreasonable, inasmuch as Adam and his Posterity are not one and the same'.²²⁰ Against such an objection, Edwards sought to resolve these issues of imputation by way of our solidarity with Adam.

Firstly, even though a sinner may be distinct from Adam as the root of sin, they are still held accountable to the same 'law of nature' for which God has created both. Just as a fully-grown tree is distinct yet one with the sprout from which it grew, there is development yet continuity between Adam and his progeny, by which we are considered distinct yet one in guilt.²²¹

Secondly, guilt is transferrable to Adam's progeny by our personal 'participation in Adam's first sin'.²²² Our propensity for sin in inherited corruption of nature cannot be isolated from any actual sin that follows, thus our bearing Adam's guilt is not simply the inheritance of our nature but the consequence of our 'consent and concurrence' of his sin in our own sinful acts.²²³ There is a 'co-existence' between Adam's corruption and our own, where, with Adam, our sin is antecedent and 'the charge of guilt *consequent*'.²²⁴ The imputation of original guilt is earned through our primal participation in Adam's sin.

This, however, still leaves the intrinsic moral status of fallen nature ambiguous. Though Edwards insists that the imputation of guilt through our sharing in the same substance of Adam is inseparable from imputation by our personal consent to his sin, there is certainly

²¹⁹ W. Wainright, 'Original Sin', in T. V. Morris (ed.), *Philosophy and the Christian Faith* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1988) 31-60, 47.

²²⁰ J. Edwards, *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, vol. 1 (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1974) 220.

²²¹ *Ibid.*, 222.

²²² *Ibid.*, 221.

²²³ *Ibid.*

²²⁴ Edwards, *Works*, 221.

a logical distinction here, a distinction generally utilised to substantiate sinful acts—that actual sin is the inevitable consequence of corrupt nature. This may be true of our common humanity, that a corrupt nature inevitably actualises consent to Adam’s first sin, but such distinction (all the while maintaining inseparability) of being and act begs the question: Would one still be rendered guilty if that actualisation were not so inevitable, as Torrance suggests, by the Son’s anhypostatic solidarity with Adamic corruption and concurrent enhypostatic setting aside of sinful centres of personality? If our corrupt nature is only considered morally reprehensible when considered in union with our concurrence of Adam’s sin, would it not be possible that Christ may assume our corrupt nature, and yet, *without* such concurrence, be without guilt? More work must be done to consider how (or whether) guilt is attributed to Christ’s nature in such a way.

1.4 Defining Fallenness Apart From Sin: Attributes of Nature and Person

Defining fallenness apart from sinfulness is certainly a significant conceptual hurdle for Christ assuming a fallen human nature. Of particular note is (i) the apparent intrinsic moral reprehensibility of corruption that constitutes most working definitions of fallenness, which requires fallenness to be attributed to a Nestorian second subject, and (ii) the logical conundrum of the transferral of guilt. We shall seek to resolve these issues, and more broadly bring further clarity to “fallen human nature”, by defining “nature” and “person”, and how fallenness and sin relate to such categories.

1.4.1 Defining Nature and Person

The distinction between nature and person is, again, historically ambiguous.²²⁵ “Nature”, or *ousia*, has generally been described as a “concrete” or an “abstract”.²²⁶ The concrete nature is described by Plantinga as ‘a creature with will and intellect’.²²⁷ Crisp contends that the Son assumes this ‘concrete particular’ in either two or three parts distinct from His own divine nature, ‘perhaps a human body, but, traditionally, a human body and human soul distinct from the Word’.²²⁸ Conversely, an abstract human nature is ‘a property...necessary and sufficient for being a human being’.²²⁹ A set of attributes or qualities conceptually abstracted from a specific individual holding these properties.

In either sense, this variety signifies a (generally Western) dualism that Torrance was persistently critical of, dividing nature unnecessarily.²³⁰ Following Athanasius and Cyril of Alexandria, he was keen to ensure that the Alexandrian *physis* (in distinction to the Antiochene *natura*) be understood as the whole *reality* of human substance. For Cyril, Christ had ‘one nature’; that is, the divine-human union within His theandric person constituted one singularity rather than a ‘schizoid being’ of two separate realities.²³¹ For

²²⁵ That Chalcedon proclaims Christ’s one person and two natures, while failing to clearly define these terms, is perhaps its greatest grievance; cf. O. D. Crisp, *Christology, Ancient and Modern: Explorations in Constructive Dogmatics* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2013) 27.

²²⁶ Against the influence of naturalism on defining nature, Alan Torrance highlights the naturalists’ failure, in exclusively defining nature by direct experience of the natural order, to explain positive morality and the lack of explanatory power in the broader philosophical framework. With theistic evolutionists’ rebuttals to naturalism having continued with phenomenological emphases, the categories to distinguish between humanity as an object of positive divine will and dysfunctional (fallen) beings have been found wanting. He rightly appeals to a Christological, and thereby eschatological approach, which defines human nature solely by relation to the purposes of the Creator within the order of initial creation and ongoing (moving towards final) restoration. See A. J. Torrance, ‘Is There a Distinctive Human Nature? Approaching the Question From a Christian Epistemic Base’, *Zygon: Journal of Religion and Science* 47 (2012), 903-917.

²²⁷ A. Plantinga, ‘On Heresy’, *Faith and Philosophy* 16 (1999), 182-193, 184.

²²⁸ Crisp, *Divinity*, 41.

²²⁹ Plantinga, ‘Heresy’, 183, cf. Crisp, *Divinity*, 41.

²³⁰ Torrance, *Ground*, 127; E. Gergis, ‘T. F. Torrance and the Christological Realism of the Coptic Orthodox Church of Alexandria’ in M. Baker and T. Speidell (eds.), *T. F. Torrance and Eastern Orthodoxy: Theology in Reconciliation* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 2015) 267-285, 271-272.

²³¹ Torrance, *Ground*, 61. This unitary definition of “nature”, encompassing divinity and humanity as a singular reality in the unity of Christ’s theandric person, was continued by John Philoponos in the *Arbiter*, and greatly influenced Torrance (Gergis, ‘Torrance’, 276ff); cf. U. M. Lang, *John Philoponos and the Controversies over Chalcedon in the Sixth Century: A Study and Translation of the Arbiter* (Leuven: Peeters, 2001) 48.

Athanasius, Torrance claims *physis* to be essentially synonymous with *aletheia*, so to speak of an object's nature is to speak of the true reality of it.²³² In his own words,

[T]o know and understand something involves a way of thinking strictly in accordance with what it actually is, that is, in accordance with its nature...and thus in accordance with what it really is, or in accordance with its reality...and allow its nature...or reality...to determine for us how we are to think and speak appropriately of it'.²³³

Nature is still referred to with some element of substantialism, as a material that the Son can "take on" into union with Himself, but what is taken on? Rather than a concrete individual or a set of properties, Christ aligns Himself with the true reality of humanity.²³⁴

"Person", when initially employed in Patristic discourse to clarify the Trinity and the incarnation, was somewhat distorted between philosophical and theological usage.²³⁵ The Classical understanding of person was largely shaped by Boethius as 'the individual substance of a rational nature'.²³⁶ The concept developed most significantly through naturalist-epistemology with Descartes, through Locke to Hume, as an agent possessing (i) continuous consciousness and (ii) the capacity to develop and act upon perceptions of

²³² Torrance, *Meaning*, 211.

²³³ Torrance, *Frame*, 100. The nature of an object holds its own inherent rationality and thus must determine its own manner of examination (Torrance, *Rationality*, 89). No pre-determined rational structure may be imposed onto a particular object without marring our knowledge of it (Torrance, *Science*, 71-72).

²³⁴ Torrance's teacher, H. R. Mackintosh, explicitly denied substantialist understandings of "nature", instead describing divinity and humanity as 'two aspects of a single concrete life' (*The Doctrine of the Person of Jesus Christ* [Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1913] 295); cf. *ibid.*, 213-215, 288-303.

²³⁵ See J. Marenbon, *Boethius* (Oxford: OUP, 2003) 71; T. Williams and J. Bengtsson, 'Personalism', Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy website (<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/personalism/>; accessed 1st July 2018).

²³⁶ Boethius, *OS*, 5.3; cf. Marenbon, *Boethius*, 71. Augustine recognised that the Greeks used the term "essence" to denote *ousia* and "substance" for *hypostasis* and so described the Trinity as 'one essence, three substances'. Given the common Latin synonymy of substance with essence, however, Augustine utilised "person" in place, to say 'one essence or substance and three persons' (*Trin.*, 5. 8.9-9.10). Despite significant developments since the fifth century, many parallels have been maintained in the twenty-first century; see G. O'Collins, *Incarnation* (London: Continuum, 2002) 73. Although "substance" has also varied in philosophical and theological usage, this Augustinian synonymy of substance with essence has been employed elsewhere in this thesis to refer to the human nature as a material assumed by Christ.

the world.²³⁷ However, defining personhood by such 'performance criterion' can be problematic,²³⁸ with relationality-centred models forming the largest sustained theological criticism in the latter half of last century for defining the individual in isolation from its dynamic relation to other existents.²³⁹ However, personhood cannot be constituted entirely by relationality,²⁴⁰ as some level of pre-relational ontology must explain 'what it is about persons that enable them to have such relationships which no other thing is able to

²³⁷ C. Taylor, 'The Concept of a Person', *Philosophical Papers* 1 (1985), 97-114.

²³⁸ Taylor, 'Concept', 98-102. Socio-ethically, defining personhood qualitatively by the autonomy of performance leads to the exclusion of those incapable of matching the criteria; the mentally disabled, for example. See S. Patterson, 'Disability and the Theology of 4-D Personhood' in A. Picard and M. Habets (eds.), *Theology and the Experience of Disability: Interdisciplinary Perspectives From Voices Down Under* (London: Routledge, 2016) 9-20; I. A. McFarland, 'Personhood and the Problem of the Other', *SJT* 54 (2009), 204-220.

²³⁹ A. J. Torrance, 'What is a Person?' in M. Jeeves (ed.), *From Cells to Souls* (Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2004) 199-222, 199-211. Zizioulas has taken this to perhaps its furthest extent, claiming that 'the substance of God, "God", has no ontological content, no true being, apart from communion', and that 'it is communion which makes beings "be"; nothing exists without it, not even God' (J. D. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion: Studies in Personhood and the Church* [Crestwood: St Vladimir's Theological Seminary Press, 1985] 17). Notable within the extended corpus is Zizioulas, *Being*, 27-122; 'Human Capacity and Human Incapacity: A Theological Exploration of Personhood', *SJT* 28 (1975), 401-447; *Communion and Otherness: Further Studies in Personhood and the Church* (London: T&T Clark, 2006) 99-177; J. Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God: The Doctrine of God* (London: SCM, 1981) 148-150; C. Gunton, *The One, The Three and the Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity* (Cambridge: CUP, 1993) 214-231; 'Trinity, Ontology and Anthropology' in C. Schwöbel and C. Gunton (eds.), *Persons: Divine and Human* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1991) 47-64; A. J. Torrance, *Persons in Communion: Trinitarian Participation and Human Description* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1996) 213-306; S. J. Grenz, *The Social God and the Relational Self* (London: John Knox, 2001) 23-57.

²⁴⁰ Though the accounts cited of this relational-personhood have significant value, the Social-Trinitarianism from which many of them are birthed has come under fire of late, with doubts as to the legitimacy of Patristic engagement; namely, that the triplicity of divine personhood is the primordial ontology of the Godhead, not an extension of a singular divine substance. It should therefore be considered the primary constitutive factor of the Trinity itself and, subsequently, the starting point of Trinitarian theology. Such 'divine community' or an 'ontology of persons in relationship' has been said to be 'a simple departure from...the unified witness of the entire theological tradition' (S. R. Holmes, *The Quest For The Trinity* [Downers Grove: IVP, 2012], 195). Cf. S. Coakley, "'Persons" in the "Social" Doctrine of the Trinity: A Critique of Current Analytic Discussion' in S. T. Davis, D. Kendall, and G. O'Collins (eds.), *The Trinity: An Interdisciplinary Symposium on the Doctrine of the Trinity* (Oxford: OUP, 1999) 123-44; K. Kilby, 'Perichoresis and Projection: Problems with Social Doctrines of the Trinity', *New Blackfriars* 81 (2000), 432-445; L. Turcescu, "'Person" vs "Individual" and other Modern Misreadings of Gregory of Nyssa', *Modern Theology* 18 (2002), 527-539; M. C., Rea, 'Relative Identity and the Doctrine of the Trinity', *Philosophia Christi* 5 (2003), 431-445. Moreover, whether person-language can be used to describe the intra-Trinitarian life with such certainty has also been called into question. Though, as mentioned, Augustine employed the term person, he only did so to maintain the basic unity and distinction of the Godhead to combat heresy; see L. Ayres, *Augustine and the Trinity* (Cambridge: CUP, 2010) 217-221; *Nicaea and Its Legacy: An Approach to Fourth-Century Trinitarian Theology* (Oxford: OUP, 2004) 357-358. One cannot extend too far beyond "person" as the best offering from our poverty of human language for divine triplicity, employed 'not in order to give a complete explanation by means of it but in order that we might not be obliged to remain silent' (Augustine, *Trin.*, 5.9.10).

have'.²⁴¹ Philosophical emphases on personhood have shifted towards definitions of “subjects”, individuals with personal agency, free operation encompassing attributes such as morality, rationality and relationality.²⁴² This is not far from the Eastern definition of *hypostasis* influential to much of Torrance’s work. For Gregory of Nyssa, where *ousia* essentially operates as a common noun describing generic human nature,²⁴³ *hypostasis* is the proper noun denoting the individual within that commonality. However, this is not to place our twenty-first century understanding onto Gregory, where the proper noun describes the individual *simpliciter*, but rather the qualities and attributes that set the individual apart from others sharing the common nature.²⁴⁴ Although there may be some overlap of qualities between individuals, some level of uniqueness is inevitable in the nuances of each person, so ‘the definition by which each is known will no longer tally in all particulars with the definition of another’.²⁴⁵ Thus Gregory writes, ‘[This] is the *hypostasis*: not the indefinite notion of the substance, which finds no instantiation because of the commonality of what is signified, but that conception which through the

²⁴¹ A. Loke, ‘On the An-Enhypostasia Distinction and Three-Part Concrete-Nature Christology: The Divine Preconscious Model’, *Journal of Analytic Theology* 2 (2014), 101-116, 105.

²⁴² Williams and Bengtsson, ‘Personalism’. For some, it is precisely this “free will” of agency, operative through attributes, that is constitutive of personhood; see H. G. Frankfurt, ‘Freedom of the Will and the Concept of a Person’, *The Journal of Philosophy* 68 (1971), 5-20, 5-7. The socio-ethical implications are resolved here, as one is an agent by holding the mere potential to operate these traits, thus status as a person is not withheld to those who lack the capacity to match a specific criterion (G. J. DeWeese, ‘One Person, Two Natures: Two Metaphysical Models of the Incarnation’ in F. Sanders and K. Issler [eds.], *Jesus in Trinitarian Perspective* [Nashville: B&H Academic, 2007] 114-155, 139-140.

²⁴³ ‘The commonality of what is signified extends alike to all ranked under the same name, and requires some further distinction if we are to understand not “man” in general, but Peter or John’ (Gregory of Nyssa, *Ep. 35* in A. M. Silvas, *Gregory of Nyssa: The Letters, Introduction, Commentary and Translation* [Leiden: Brill, 2007] 247-259, 2a).

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 2c.

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

manifest individualities gives stability and circumscription in a certain object to the common and uncircumscribed'.²⁴⁶

Torrance forms this instantiation of the individual more broadly, where the common *ousia* is “personalised” within individual *hypostasis*. Nature is given life by person, the true reality of humanity animated by the individual agent. Torrance defines this by what Christ has achieved with our humanity, where Christ is ‘personalising person’.²⁴⁷ In the case of fallen humanity, our nature has been depersonalised—that is, disconnected—in ‘estrangement from the personalising source of our being’.²⁴⁸ Taking this humanity into union with Himself, Christ personalises this depersonalised nature within His own *hypostasis* where our *hypostases* have failed to do so, not in a way that human persons are overwhelmed or overcome, but healed and restored in relationship to His own person.²⁴⁹

²⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 3b. Behr summarises this nuance—that for Gregory, ‘[a] term such as “man” can be applied to many objects and, therefore, denotes the common nature that they share. But the common element is an abstraction, indicating something general, an “indefinite concept.” This common element, the nature or the essence does not exist by itself; it is not a thing (πρᾶγμα), an entity, that actually exists. Nature or essence only subsists in particular entities denoted by particular names. Thus, the common element needs to be further delimited if it is to be “given-standing” as a subsisting being, if, that is, we are to understand not simply “man in general,” but specifically Peter or Paul. A term such as “man” indicates what kind of being something is, the *ousia*, while a particular name denotes a concrete, specific object (“thing,” πρᾶγμα), the *ousia* subsisting in a particular manner, delimited and denoted by the *hypostasis*. The term *hypostasis*, therefore, for Gregory, refers not so much to the particular entity itself (for which, at least in the created realm, he uses πρᾶγμα), but the particularizing properties by which it is made known’ (J. Behr, *The Formation of Christian Theology: Volume 2, The Nicene Faith, Part 2: One of the Holy Trinity* [Crestwell: St Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 2004] 467). Πρᾶγμα (pragma) is commonly understood to denote a created object, a “thing”.

²⁴⁷ Torrance, *Mediation*, 67. In this element of defining fallenness, Western and Eastern theology can be differentiated into two strands, each loosely attributed to Augustine and Maximus the Confessor. The Augustinian strand contends that prelapsarian humanity held a natural orientation towards God, which was simply lost at the fall. For those following Maximus, this positive propensity remains even in postlapsarian humanity, but each individual *hypostasis* is disconnected from such, or in Torrance’s term “depersonalised”, thus loses the capacity to naturally choose God. See R. King, ‘Assumption, Union and Sanctification: Some Clarifying Distinctions’, *IJST* 19 (2017), 53-72, 55. For more on these two strands, see I. A. McFarland, *In Adam’s Fall: A Meditation on the Christian Doctrine of Original Sin* (Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010) 61-140; “‘Naturally and by Grace’: Maximus the Confessor on the Operation of the Will’, *SJT* 58 (2005), 410-433; P. Blowers, ‘Maximus the Confessor and John of Damascus on Gnostic Will (γνώμη) in Christ: Clarity and Ambiguity’, *Union Seminary Quarterly Review* 63 (2012), 44-50.

²⁴⁸ Torrance, *Mediation*, 68-69.

²⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 68; Torrance, *Trinitarian*, 230; ‘The First-Born of All Creation’, *Life and Work* (1976), 12-14, 14; ‘The Goodness and Dignity of Man in the Christian Tradition’, *Modern Theology* 4 (1988), 309-322, 318; ‘The Soul and Person in Theological Perspective’ in S. R. Sutherland (ed.), *Religion, Reason and the Self: Essays in Honour of Hywel D. Lewis* (Cardiff: Cardiff University Press, 1989) 103-118, 116; ‘Predestination’, 117, 123-125; *Christian Theology and Scientific Culture* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 1980) 70-71.

1.4.2 Fallen Natures, Sinful Persons

These categories of nature and person will provide a useful framework within which to define fallenness apart from sinfulness, as each relates to fallenness and sinfulness respectively.

Concerning the place of the will within human nature, Ian McFarland differentiates the renewal of physical damage to nature (tiredness, hunger etc.) through bodily resurrection with the redemption of the will, which occurs solely in the deification of its mode of operation; that is, its restoration to operating within divine-human relationship. To McFarland, this difference highlights the will as the peculiar element of human nature that renders within it an element of ‘indeterminacy’,²⁵⁰ not in that we have the capacity to determine our own natures in the power of personal willing—the will exercises our desires, and humanity cannot determine its desires—but that ‘[the will] identifies the fact that we live out of our nature as agents’.²⁵¹ In other words, a human being is a *who* as opposed to merely a *what*—“nature” is indeterminate in the sense that in isolation from “person” it is proven insufficient to fully define humanity. The will, though a created part of *what* we are, makes manifest that *who* we are as personal agents is integral to the determination of human being.²⁵² Thus, as we will to sin, we manifest in our personal agency *who* we are—that is, sinners.

Sin, therefore, cannot be attributed to nature. Through the will, it is made manifest within our nature that sin is an operation of agency, thus responsibility for it must lie in this *hypostasis*, and its redemption in the restoration (that accompanies bodily resurrection) of divine-human relationship. McFarland writes,

²⁵⁰ McFarland, 'Fallen', 410.

²⁵¹ *Ibid.*

²⁵² This *who/what* distinction is borrowed from S. Jones, ‘What’s Wrong With Us?’ in W. C. Placher (ed.), *Essentials of Christian Theology* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003) 141-157, 149.

[T]he reason that human beings sin is that their desires are perverse. But when it comes to explaining *why* those desires are perverse, the only answer that can be given is, “because we are sinners”...the will is the feature of my nature that, as the place where my status as an agent is revealed, discloses a limit to my ability to account for my being solely in terms of my *whatness*.²⁵³

It could be that original sin accounts for *why* our desires are perverse, that our human nature is tainted with hereditary guilt and corruption. However, as with Edwards, even hereditary sin entails personal concurrence by the individual agent. Thus, both original and actual sin are attributed to *hypostasis*. Positively stated, our sinful identity as agents (we are “sinners”) renders desires that are subsequently actualised within human nature in our willing. Negatively stated, since the will is incapable as a category of indeterminate nature to change or control those desires rendered in *hypostasis*, nature cannot hold ultimate responsibility for sin if it is not the primary cause of determination, despite any damage or consequence of sin it might well hold.²⁵⁴ In this sense, fallenness and sinfulness are as ‘incommensurable’ as nature and *hypostasis* (as respective categories of each),²⁵⁵ yet remain interrelated through the manifestation of *hypostasis* within nature through the will. McFarland writes,

[Because] the will’s fallenness—even though formally a matter of nature—is experienced by the individual human being *hypostatically* as one’s own sin rather than as damage that exists apart from or independently of the individual’s own agency, in this case the fallenness of nature correlates with the sinfulness of hypostasis.²⁵⁶

²⁵³ McFarland, 'Fallen', 411.

²⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 413.

²⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

Applying this to Christ's humanity, it is entirely possible for Christ to be sinless while still assuming our fallen human nature. While we sin because our hypostatic identity is that of "sinner", which is then made manifest within human nature through our will, Christ's hypostatic identity is that of the second Trinitarian person, perfect in divinity, which is then made manifest within human nature through His will as sinlessness.²⁵⁷ Meyendorff takes a similar line, stating that 'He—being God—could not commit sin, a personal act, which only a created hypostasis can commit'.²⁵⁸ If Christ's will is damaged in need of redemption, its deification, in this sense, would be to describe the manifestation of *who* He is as the eternal Son within *what* He is, incarnate in fallen humanity. Christ, in assuming our damaged humanity, is ontologically identical to us in nature, yet crucially different in the operation of *hypostasis* within that fallen nature. Where our nature and *hypostasis* are entirely inseparable—*who* we are has always been bound to *what* we are as human beings—Christ's *hypostasis* pre-exists His human nature.²⁵⁹ Therefore, for us, Crisp's statement that fallenness logically follows sinfulness is correct; we are fallen because we are sinners and have sinned. Sin, both original and actual, is made manifest in our nature as our sinful agency operates through the will. Yet, for Christ, He has graciously elected to assume a fallen humanity from the position of pre-existent sinless *hypostasis*, and therefore even within our damaged state, He is not held to the same

²⁵⁷ This is similar to Aquinas' notion of Christ's sinlessness, without the Aristotelian biology. Christ's sinlessness is grounded in His divine *hypostasis*, regardless of whether His Father is human; this 'is not a biological but an ontological fact' (J. Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity* [New York: Sudbury Press, 1968] 208).

²⁵⁸ J. Meyendorff, 'Christ's Humanity: The Paschal Mystery', *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 1 (1987), 5-40, 24.

²⁵⁹ Writing against Irving, Marcus Dods rejects such a notion, contending that, as nature only ever exists as the nature of a particular person, if Christ's nature is fallen then His person is fallen. See M. Dods, *On the Incarnation of the Eternal Word* (London: R. B. Seeley & W. Burnside, 1831) ch7. Dods is correct that nature is only instantiated within person, but it would be problematic to say either (i) that fallen nature is constitutive of personal fallenness because the Son's *hypostasis* pre-exists His human nature, or (ii) that only a fallen person can only instantiate a fallen nature, when God assuming humanity already precedents a person assuming nature differentiated from their own substance, fallen or not.

inevitability of sin being made manifest in nature. Edwards' primal concurrence with Adam's sin never occurs; rather, it is divine perfection that is manifest.²⁶⁰

1.5 Resolving Ambiguity of Fallen Human Nature

The implications of the above answer Crisp's criticisms of the intrinsic morally reprehensibility of corrupt human nature and the logical conundrum of the transferral of guilt.

Firstly, rather than fallen human nature being seen to be so intrinsically morally reprehensible that the Son is incapable of assuming it unless through some Nestorian second subject, the attribution of sin to *hypostasis* shows nature, despite its damage, to be intrinsically good. Barth, echoing this in an earlier statement, contends that even damaged nature, proving our creatureliness before Creator, only exists as God continues to sustain it, so its mere existence testifies to God's dedication to divine-human relationship and is thereby of unchangeable value.²⁶¹ Christ's assumption of fallen nature is thereby clearly not a matter of God's disgust at our damage, but a reinforcement of God's love towards His creature and the intrinsic goodness of Creator-creature relations; 'no aspect of our nature stands in the way of or in any way mitigates God's love; on the contrary, every such aspect is during the course of our existence a constantly renewed testimony to that love'.²⁶²

Secondly, attributing sin to person renders a more ontological hamartiology, vindicating nature of being generative of guilt. McFarland contends that sin is certainly (i) separation from God, (ii) unnatural to our being, and (iii) something in which we personally participate and are thus morally responsible for. However, sin, in the Augustinian sense, is fundamentally ontological, not moral. Sin stretches beyond our very agency—an ontic

²⁶⁰ McFarland, 'Fallen', 412.

²⁶¹ Barth, *CD IV/1*, 492ff.

²⁶² McFarland, 'Fallen', 414.

state *from within which* one acts in a morally negative way, ‘the ground of all our acts apart from the transforming power of grace’.²⁶³ Thus, as this ontic state of sinfulness is ‘logically prior’ to personal agency, our judiciary culpability extends beyond the morality of individual acts.²⁶⁴ This removes the logical conundrum of how guilt, rather than just penalty, may be transferred to an innocent party. If guilt is an ontological matter, the larger question transcends this of the cause of this ontological state of sin. Why are we sinners? Here, McFarland appeals to mystery. Though our identity as sinful hypostases is made manifest within human nature through the will, when seeking the cause of such an identity, while still denying that God has made us in such a state, ‘there is simply no answer...a function of who I am that finally resists explanation’.²⁶⁵ What can be known is that this sinful identity is met with divine mercy, and such mercy is grounded in something far less mysterious: God’s love (which, even if undeserved, is certainly revealed). Christ assuming our fallen nature actualises this love, and in turn, even amidst the mystery of sin’s causation, both ‘reveals and qualifies’ our identity as sinful hypostases.²⁶⁶

Thirdly, elaborating on McFarland, even if human corruption were to be intrinsically morally reprehensible, it must be remembered that human nature is entirely alien to divine nature. That the Son assumes a state alien to Himself is an act of sheer grace, it is not His to bear until He elects to bear it. Thus, if the Son is to become morally reprehensible before the Father, it is a choice of divine freedom.²⁶⁷ Crisp, in declaring the Son “morally reprehensible” for assuming damage alien to Himself, has articulated the very essence of what the Son elects to achieve and is the very content of our good news. As corruption is

²⁶³ McFarland, 'Fallen', 414.

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 415.

²⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁷ Against Anselm’s contention that it would be inherently inappropriate for God to forgive without retribution, Barth contends that, as sin is constituted as that which God freely chooses to reject, and the scale of our subsequent debt is constituted entirely by God’s free judgement, then our means and manner of acquittal must also be entirely constituted by God’s free choice of grace (*CD IV/1*, 486-490). If God elects to expiate our corruption by assumption, that is His prerogative.

alien to Christ, it is right that we should be uncomfortable describing the Son as morally reprehensible. Yet, to truly articulate the sheer grace in Christ assuming our state, we must say with Luther that, though Christ had no sin of his own, He is ‘the greatest transgressor, murderer, adulterer, thief, blasphemer that ever was or ever could be on earth’.²⁶⁸ In terms of guilt, Christ is not guilty of His own volition in assuming this corruption, as He elects to assume alien guilt. Edwards is correct in describing the guilt of Adam’s common progeny, where the corruption of common humanity inevitably leads to sin, by which we primally concur to Adam’s sin and thus share his guilt. However, where Christ breaks this inevitable concurrence, any guilt He assumes is not His own. He is truly one who knew no sin, but became sin (2 Cor. 5:21).

Fourthly, Crisp’s contention that this moral reprehensibility of corruption requires that the Son assume it with a degree of separation through some secondary Nestorian subject surely must extend to the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in fallen humanity. One could argue that, at the indwelling of the Spirit, the fallen nature is so sanctified that it is acceptable for divine-human communion, but this is exactly what fallenness advocates claim to occur in the Son’s assumption. Alternatively, it could be said that the Spirit is not bound to humanity in the same way as the Son—certainly, the Spirit does not hold two natures as Christ does—and as such can be united to fallenness without bearing any moral responsibility for our humanity. However, Christ’s promise of the Spirit certainly seems to be of something more than an external revelation, rather, one that is hidden to the world yet revealed to believers precisely through such an internalised bond (Jn. 14:17). How would such internal union be possible if divine nature could be so tainted and marred by any meaningful intimacy with our corruption? Such a sweeping generalisation is simply untenable.

²⁶⁸ M. Luther, *The Epistle to the Galatians* (tr. T. Graebner; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1949) 114-115.

Finally, Crisp's contention that the Son can only assume corruption through some Nestorian second subject, though intended to preserve the sanctity of divinity, does more harm than good to such a cause. By neglecting the essentially redemptive quality of divinity, Crisp presents a divinity neutered and powerless against corruption, a God who —should He condescend to take the fullness of our fallen condition— is overwhelmed by human corruption, a divinity tainted from below. Torrance, conversely, presents a God triumphant over corruption, divinity not *capable* of being corrupted, leaving sin that seeks to destroy sanctified at a mere touch.

In these defences, hopefully, some progress has been made in reaching a clearer definition of fallen human nature. A brief and summative definition of Christ's assumption of fallen human nature that encapsulates the core components of this discourse so far would entail the perfect *hypostasis* of the Son instantiating in taking our nature the full reality of humanity marred with original corruption and the damage of postlapsarian humanity. In this corruption, He is judged as a genuinely fallen being. However, as this state is in itself entirely alien to the Son's *hypostasis*, assumed vicariously to be redeemed within Himself, He is considered spotless and blameless as the perfection of His person is made manifest within His fallen nature, wherein guilt is never accrued by primal concurrence with Adam nor by actual sin. This can be carried forwards into Torrance's framework of atonement contextualised to Christ's humanity. With clearer definitions established, further conceptual contestations can now be addressed.

2. Integrity of Suffering & Temptation

One central concern of the Son *not* assuming fallen human nature is for the integrity of His sufferings and solidarity with common humanity had He not internalised the weaknesses of fallen nature (Heb. 2:18).²⁶⁹

²⁶⁹ Dods denies that Christ was ever purposed to be a moral exemplar in the sense of resisting weaknesses internal to His humanity in exactly the same manner as we do (*Incarnation*, 380-382).

2.1 Symptoms Without Sickness

Crisp contends that Christ would not necessarily have to be fallen to share the infirmities of common humanity, but could treat the effects of fallenness without assuming the cause.²⁷⁰ Just as if the symptoms of measles are recreated in a patient, without ever infecting them with the actual bacteria—they may have spots or a fever, but never have the illness, in the same sense—Christ may age, get tired, be sad, hold all of the symptoms of our fallenness, without assuming the nature that produces them. It is in this sense, Crisp writes, that ‘Christ takes on the infirmities of a fallen human nature, but did not take on the condition of fallenness’.²⁷¹ When we ask what we could have to do with a Saviour whose humanity is different to our own, Christ’s solidarity with our symptoms without their cause is sufficient. Stamps, similarly, contends that Christ may have the fully authentic ‘*fallen experience*’, simply by virtue of living within fallen creation.²⁷² He is our sympathetic High Priest (Heb. 4:15) simply by entering the fallen realm of our struggles without making His own nature complicit in it.

King, developing this, suggests that the Son is unfallen, but has *powers* of fallenness operative in His humanity that require sanctification. The two aspects of our fallenness that require redemption are (i) our restoration from rebellion to Edenic communion with God and (ii) our internal propensity to sin.²⁷³ These, to King, can be sanctified within Christ’s humanity without the assumption of fallenness.

Firstly, though it would be morally reprehensible for Christ to break communion with God,²⁷⁴ Christ must be tempted to do so with internal integrity so to sanctify our

²⁷⁰ Crisp, *Divinity*, 107. Perhaps of most significance to Torrance, his mentor Mackintosh denied that Christ’s genuine human development, lack of omniscience, necessary dependence on the Father, nor battles with temptations, were anchored in any internal weaknesses: ‘[N]o corrupt stain existed in His nature to which temptation could appeal’ (Mackintosh, *Doctrine*, 79; cf. 11-14, 26, 35-38, 79-80, 100-102, 104-107).

²⁷¹ Crisp, *Divinity*, 107-108.

²⁷² Stamps, *Will*, 170-171.

²⁷³ King, ‘Assumption’, 57.

²⁷⁴ King, ‘Assumption’, 58-59. As Leftow contends, the external assault of temptation includes, even for the Son, an internal arousal of desire for wrong; see B. Leftow, ‘Tempting God’, *Faith and Philosophy* 31 (2014), 3-23, 4-6.

rebellion.²⁷⁵ King seeks to resolve this by contending that it is sufficient, in maintaining this internal integrity, for Christ to only be *indirectly united* to the state of our humanity rebellious to God. Just as a bridge directly unites two realms but not every region of the realm must be directly connected to be considered part of the union, so too was there a direct union between divinity and unfallen humanity and an indirect union 'between the divine nature and all of the humanity of Christ'.²⁷⁶ The inherent moral reprehensibility of human rebellion is so great, that this power of fallenness must be sanctified indirectly.²⁷⁷

The second power of fallenness, the pull towards *actual* sin, as with Torrance, is conquered throughout Christ's life of obedience in the sanctification of the new Adamic humanity.²⁷⁸ This work is completed at the cross where the internal desire for evil that arises at temptation—indirectly present throughout Christ's life—was ripped out of his humanity entirely. King contends that this pull to sin must necessarily be removed, despite only being indirectly present, so to remove any blockades for the *transferring* union of the new Adamic life to others.²⁷⁹ Following the removal of what is unnatural to our humanity, Christ can now be said to be directly united to our whole nature. At this direct union with what is left of humanity, this nature is finally one that can be resurrected, with no pull to sin to draw it back to the grave. King writes,

Before, there was a direct union with his human nature, with all the natural elements of his humanity (but not the unnatural); now there could be a direct union, or alignment, with the whole of his humanity. Without this, Christ could not be resurrected, because he would have elements in his soul which God could not be

²⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 57.

²⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 58.

united to. Unless these elements were removed from his soul on the cross, Jesus seemingly would not have won the victory over sin and evil.²⁸⁰

2.2 *Internal Damage*

So must Christ's sufferings be internalised to His humanity to be borne with integrity? What is most striking of the Son merely assuming our symptoms and not their cause is that this still leaves us with a disease. This argument is certainly more palatable when considering Christ's association with our guilt, and is, in that sense, an understandable conclusion. However, this is, to use McFarland's phrase, 'quasi-Docetic';²⁸¹ not fully Docetic in the sense that Christ's sufferings are entirely illusory, but certainly not grounded in His actual humanity either. His sufferings are external assaults and are thus only the appearance of our sufferings; for Christ to suffer and be tempted as we do, He must share in the struggles that are *internal* to our damaged nature. This is an example of substitution in isolation from representation. Christ does take our place in our infirmities, ultimately taking our place at death on the cross. However, for this external exchange to be able to take our place, surely He must be representative of our mortal condition?

With King, similarities must be recognised with Torrance, as the sanctification of human fallenness occurs internally to Christ's own humanity.²⁸² However, where Torrance structures this around the non-assumptus, with the Son assuming our humanity to operate on it from within, King's "indirect union" presents a sanctification at arms' length. King takes the logic of the non-assumptus, that Christ must assume a humanity with the powers of fallenness operative within it so to redeem it, but separates the surgeon operating on our nature from direct contact with the patient.

Having said this, King's form of internalised atonement is inconsistent in this respect. If Christ's indirect union with humanity is sufficiently proximate to our fallenness that the

²⁸⁰ King, 'Assumption', 58.

²⁸¹ McFarland, 'Fallen', 408.

²⁸² King, 'Assumption', 71.

internal propensity to sin needs to be torn from His human nature at the cross to clear the path for resurrection, surely this is sufficient to say His nature is actually fallen? If Christ is so united to fallenness that it acts as a blockade of transferring union requiring removal, it is far more logical to say He is simply fallen. If this “indirect union” is to be used to place sufficient distance between Christ and our fallenness that He can be called “unfallen”, then logically there should be sufficient distance for there to be no blockade for transferral of the new Adamic life from Him to us. Both cannot be correct.

An “indirect union” also raises worrying questions for the level in which the ‘whole fullness of deity dwells bodily’ (Col. 2:9) in the humanity of Christ. If a bridge that connects two realms can be said to be only indirectly united to some regions of one realm, this must be true for the realm on the other side of the bridge. If the Son is only directly united to some select regions of our humanity, then is what is dwelling bodily in Christ only select regions of divinity? The motive of this denial of Christ’s substantive weaknesses shall be addressed in the next chapter as potential grounds for mutual understanding and progress in this debate.

3. Temporal Turmoil: Sequential Redemption

Chiarot, in an excellent recent survey of Torrance on the non-assumptus, questions Torrance’s intelligibility in the dubious extent and nature of the “continuous” sanctification of Christ’s humanity throughout the incarnation if it is supposedly sanctified “once and for all” at the virgin birth²⁸³ *and* culminating its progression at the cross.²⁸⁴ If the virgin birth is to be upheld as a sanctifying event, surely this is either an absolute redemption whereby humanity would no longer need sanctification for the rest of Christ’s temporal existence, or a merely partial sanctification at this moment. This raises the question as to whether the virgin birth is soteriologically significant at all.

²⁸³ Chiarot, *Unassumed*, 100-102.

²⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 161, cf. 202.

If, as with Torrance, atonement is internalised to the constitution of the incarnate mediator (that is, the eternal Son assuming flesh bound to temporality), to examine the status of redemption within temporal sequence is, fundamentally, a question of the interrelation between eternity and temporality.

Barth's doctrine of eternity makes sense of this. For Barth, God is not simply atemporal in the negation of created temporality²⁸⁵ but maintains a divine temporality of pre, supra and post-temporality, as He is before time, above time, and beyond time.²⁸⁶ The fallen temporality of the created order, though deriving its past, present and future from the prototypical categories of divine temporality,²⁸⁷ is characterised by its inescapable sequence of procession in which the past is unreachable, the present is a fleeting experience, and the future is a reality yet to exist.²⁸⁸ Divine temporality, on the other hand, is characterised by absolute simultaneity in which God is before, above, and after time at once, without exclusion nor contradiction.²⁸⁹

Applying this to the Son's redemption of fallen human nature, the being and act of God within human temporality must be considered in relation to eternity, since, in the incarnation, eternity has taken time to itself.²⁹⁰ Torrance adopts something of this, that as the Lord of time within time, the Son's atoning life and work extends beyond temporal sequence. In an 'indivisible continuum' the risen and ascended Christ is 'consistently and indissolubly one' with the boy in the manger.²⁹¹ Chiarot's concerns of temporal ordering are moot; the sanctification of fallen humanity once and for all at the virgin birth and the

²⁸⁵ Barth, *CD II/1*, 610, 617-618.

²⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 621-6

²⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 610.

²⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 608; cf. *CD I/2*, 47; *CD III/2*, 511ff; Torrance, *SpTR*, 97.

²⁸⁹ Barth, *CD II/1*, 610-611. God is thus only atemporal by lacking the separation that plagues created temporality, eternity 'does not possess beginning, succession, and end...to the extent that it is not "possessed," qualified, dominated, and separated by them as by a general principle of being foreign to itself' (*ibid.*).

²⁹⁰ Barth, *CD III/1*, 616; cf. *CD I/1*, 120; *CD I/2*, 49; *CD III/1*, 73f. The Son's incarnation does not mean God's limitation by time, but as humanity is bound to it, it is affirmed as a reality to God in the actualisation of divine-human relations (Torrance, *Incarnation*, 67).

²⁹¹ Torrance, *SpTR*, 169-172.

progressive condemnation sin in the flesh up to the cross, though contradictory in the sequence of created temporality, are entirely simultaneous without exclusion or contradiction as it occurs in the being and act of the eternal God.

4. Inconsistency of Assumption

Another matter of contention against Christ's assumption of fallen humanity is the consistency of what is said to be left unhealed if not assumed by Christ. Chiarot criticises Torrance, arguing that if it is a soteriological necessity that Christ assume fallen human nature, what is left to be said of human persons? Torrance's use of *enhypostasia* is 'devastating for the non-assumptus', since 'no concrete *personal* instance of fallen humanity is assumed', simply fallen nature abstracted from fallen persons.²⁹² Ho, similarly, criticises that the non-assumptus, taken literally, would leave everyone but Christ condemned. Only an *instance* of fallen humanity is assumed in the incarnation, not all of it. The Son assumed a specifically male, specifically Jewish humanity, incarnate as Jesus of Nazareth, not Paul.²⁹³

Here, it is crucial to recognise that Torrance has not limited salvation to simply physical redemption of nature.²⁹⁴ Though the sanctification of fallen nature, the submission to the Father's judgement and juridical ruling of innocence and the reconciliation of humanity to God are grounded within Christ's humanity, these blessings are still attained by common humanity through *participation*.²⁹⁵ The *telos* of Torrance's soteriological participation is not, as with Calvin and much Reformed theology, simply our justification and sanctification, nor that we are simply healed physically, but 'lifted up to

²⁹² Chiarot, *Unassumed*, 163.

²⁹³ M. K. Ho, *A Critical Study on T.F. Torrance's Theology of Incarnation* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2008) 75.

²⁹⁴ Torrance, *Trinitarian*, 156; *Meaning*, 84.

²⁹⁵ For the theological significance of participation and Torrance's distinct contribution to the notion, see D. O. Eugenio, *Communion with the Triune God: The Trinitarian Soteriology of T. F. Torrance* (Cambridge: James Clarke & Co., 2014) 175-198.

participate in the very light, life and love of the Holy Trinity'.²⁹⁶ The inclusion of distinct persons is central to this end. Far from being soteriologically neglected, ontological relationality hinges on unique contributions of distinct persons in any communion.²⁹⁷ Conversely, this participation does not risk the 'manysidedness of our humanity' into an 'undifferentiated union of the whole';²⁹⁸ rather, soteriological participation of human persons in the divine life renders 'a new and paradoxical conception of united separation and separated unity'.²⁹⁹ Sinful persons may not have been assumed by the Son, who did merely become, literally, an individual Jewish male from Nazareth, but to the ends that the divine life be mediated to human persons sharing that common fallen nature and those persons participate in the divine life. In participation, distinct personhood is neither soteriologically neglected in the non-assumptus, nor does it become indistinct in the body of Christ.

5. Continued Instrumentalism

Chiarot's critique of Torrance's non-assumptus continues to his assertion that the Son's assumption of a "neutral" human nature, as in Westminster Reformed ("Federal") theology, would remain merely soteriologically instrumental. Torrance's conviction that Christ remains sinless in His divine nature even while incarnate in fallen human nature threatens to topple his own view into instrumentalism. Chiarot contends that Federal theology is not as "instrumental" as Torrance perceives, as Christ's active obedience occurring within humanity is relevant for believers, even if imputed within a forensic framework. Chiarot questions whether Christ's assumption of such fallen humanity would be 'even *more* instrumental' than Federal theology, as His damaged will requires even

²⁹⁶ Torrance, *Mediation*, 66.

²⁹⁷ M. Volf, 'The Trinity is Our Social Programme', *Modern Theology* 14 (1998), 403-423, 407-411.

²⁹⁸ C. Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1997) 86.

²⁹⁹ Gunton, *Promise*, 94.

further external support, 'the only nature (or will) which can act freely to save it would be divine'.³⁰⁰

Here, Chiarot misrepresents instrumentalism. What Torrance criticises of Federal theology is that atonement is achieved without reference to our actual humanity, salvation is 'done upon and for us',³⁰¹ lacking our genuine human involvement. Chiarot, in accusing Torrance of instrumentalism, is confusing the absolute helplessness of humanity with a lack of involvement in God's grace. Christ's fallenness does require the touch of divinity to heal and restore it and this is an exclusively divine action. Yet, as Chiarot himself appreciates of Torrance, salvation is 'a human action *within the divine action*'.³⁰² Fallen humanity may not be worthy of being involved in the Son's work of redemption, certainly being helpless on its own merit, but rather than salvation being wrought *upon* us or *to* us, God involves human action within His soteriological work. It is not instrumental that Christ's humanity required restoration but God's grace to operate from the ontological depths of fallenness.

6. Pneumatological Clarification

Our final concern with the non-assumptus is pneumatological, with two extremes to be avoided. Firstly, it could be argued that if it is exclusively the Son's divine nature that redeems human fallenness rather than the Spirit, the Spirit cannot achieve the same work within our humanity. Secondly, if it is exclusively the Spirit that sanctifies the Son's fallen humanity, then a divorce is created between the Son and His humanity. It is particularly concerning to Crisp that the agency of the Spirit becomes necessary in upholding the hypostatic union, denying the intrinsic integrity of the Son's person.³⁰³ Crisp denies this

³⁰⁰ Chiarot, *Unassumed*, 157.

³⁰¹ Torrance, *Incarnation*, 212.

³⁰² Chiarot, *Unassumed*, 112.

³⁰³ O. D. Crisp, *Revisioning Christology: Theology in the Reformed Tradition* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011) 92, 100-101; Chiarot, *Unassumed*, 177.

pneumatological separation of the Son's agency from being immediate to all incarnate activity,³⁰⁴ asserting, '[T]here appears to be no metaphysical room for the interposition of another divine person between the intentions of God the Son (i.e. his agency) and the intentional actions brought about in his human nature'.³⁰⁵

Is this correct? Does the Son's sanctification of fallenness by His divine nature exclude the role of the Spirit and the same work to be achieved pneumatically within our nature? Conversely, though it cannot be denied that the Spirit mediates the Son's incarnation to some extent—His very conception being pneumatological—does the Spirit's agency in the incarnation exclude the agency of the Son from His own humanity?³⁰⁶

Myk Habets offers a nuanced perspective. To deny that the Son's incarnation is pneumatologically mediated is to deny the definition of incarnation; as with Athanasius, this would be 'God as man [not] God *in* a man'.³⁰⁷ However, the Spirit's personal agency in Christ's human acts is not to the exclusion of the Son's personal agency, but their perichoretic interpenetration renders an intricate work of cooperation between the Father's two hands. Though 'the Word is the subject who wills and acts...he works by or through the Holy Spirit' in the pneumatic mediation of His person to humanity.³⁰⁸

McFarland, perhaps, goes too far in suggesting of Chalcedonian Christology that, though 'the Word is the *subject* of Jesus' thoughts and actions', it is the Spirit that is the *cause* of these actions.³⁰⁹ Crisp's fears of the Son's separation from His humanity are somewhat substantiated in the denial that He is the causal operator for His own nature. However, when the Son's causal agency is pneumatologically mediated to humanity in a more

³⁰⁴ Crisp, *Revisioning*, 103-107.

³⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 105.

³⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 107.

³⁰⁷ M. Habets, 'The Fallen Humanity of Christ: A Pneumatological Clarification of the Theology of Thomas F. Torrance', *Participatio* 5 (2015), 18-44, 41; Athanasius, *Contra Arianos*, 3.29 (NPNF[2] 4) 306-447.

³⁰⁸ Habets, 'Fallen', 42; cf. O. Davies, 'Holy Spirit and Mediation: Towards a Transformational Pneumatology', *IJST* 16 (2014), 159-176, 165. For the mutual mediation between the Son and Spirit in Torrance, see Colyer, *Torrance*, 221-232; Eugenio, *Communion*, 127-129.

³⁰⁹ I. A. McFarland, 'Spirit and Incarnation: Toward a Pneumatic Chalcedonianism', *IJST* 16 (2014), 143-158, 153.

nuanced act of Christo-pneumatic cooperation,³¹⁰ then the sanctification of fallen humanity involves the Spirit without neglecting the Son.

On the other hand, neither is the Spirit neglected from the Son's work of redemption, excluding the pneumatic actualisation of that redemption within our same fallen state. The Spirit's mediation of the Son's redemptive work to His own humanity is a point of solidarity between Jesus and common humanity. As McFarland states, '[T]he role of the Spirit in Jesus' life is parallel with other human beings rather than something which distinguishes him from them. Whether the person in question is Jesus, the Word made flesh, or the least distinguished of the saints, it is the gift of the Holy Spirit rather than any intrinsic property of human nature that makes possible human life active in faith and love'.³¹¹

7. Summary

This chapter has detailed several conceptual issues with the Son assuming fallen human nature. The lack of clear definitions of key terms has been addressed, with fallenness being attributed to nature and sinfulness to person. With regards to Christ's suffering and temptations, it has been shown that it is difficult to maintain their integrity without His internalisation of such by assuming fallen humanity. Beyond this, several apparent issues with the consistency of Torrance's use of the non-assumptus have been resolved, in the simultaneity of redemption, the participation of human persons in Christ's work, Torrance's refutation of instrumentalism, and the interpenetration of the Spirit in the Son's incarnation. From here, the contextualisation of atonement to Christ's humanity in the historical corpus shall now be examined.

³¹⁰ Habets, 'Fallen', 43.

³¹¹ McFarland, 'Spirit', 155.

Chapter 3: Incarnational Atonement in the Historical Corpus

Returning to Torrance's "Latin Heresy", this thesis now examines whether it can truly be said that the Western Fathers externalised atonement from the constitution of the incarnate Mediator, separating Christ's humanity from our own fallen nature.

It is Tertullian and Augustine who are charged by Torrance to be the main propagators of the "Latin Heresy" beginning as a matter of revelation, where, in an odd dialectic, revelation is essentially separated from the being of God, formalised in static dogmas which are 'regarded as identical with the truths which they were meant to express'.³¹² Tertullian, while still rejecting Arianism, thought of the Word not as 'eternally generated' in God, 'but as an emanation from his Mind which became Word only when God spoke it in creating the world'.³¹³ Subsequently, Tertullian taught of a Rule of Faith (*regula fidei*), a set of dogmatic propositions that were 'logically deduced from divine Revelation' but ultimately abstracted from 'the substance of the Faith'.³¹⁴ In other words, dogma was held to be truthful, apart from God as living Truth. Augustine took up this 'semi-detach[ment]' of God from the Word by distinguishing between the Word as 'formable but not yet formed' and 'the external Word' in the Incarnation.³¹⁵ Thus, when Christ takes on human nature, He is not in the flesh what He is in eternity. It is this semi-detachment that Torrance claims trickles into reconciliation (see chapter one), manifesting in the separation of reconciliation from the locus of Christ's humanity into external, juridical, forensic categories.³¹⁶

With such a generalising perspective regarding the Western tradition, it is only right to examine whether the "Latin Heresy" is a legitimate historical critique and whether Torrance's move towards internalising atonement within the constitution of the incarnate

³¹² Torrance, 'Heresy', 468.

³¹³ *Ibid.*

³¹⁴ *Ibid.*

³¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 468-479.

³¹⁶ This, as we shall see, is most fully realised in the Medieval period, exemplified in the moralistic and satisfaction theories from Anselm, Lombard and Aquinas.

Son is as strongly emphasised in the East or as neglected in the West as he claims. Though, for Torrance, Gregory Nazianzen's 'the unassumed is the unhealed' is most commonly cited,³¹⁷ alongside Cyril of Alexandria's 'what Christ has not assumed, he has not saved',³¹⁸ his historical work is extensive.³¹⁹ This chapter turns primarily to the genesis and conclusive perspectives on the matter of both East and West, with Irenaeus and Cyril, and Tertullian and Augustine, respectively, and then to the significances of Torrance's Patristic reading, before asking whether any common ground can be found from this for the ongoing debate of whether Christ assumed a fallen human nature.

1. Eastern Fathers

1.1 Irenaeus

Irenaeus (c.120-140—c.200-203) was originally of Asia Minor before his mission to Gaul. Though providing a genesis of Greek theology, he also brings valuable insight that precedes the Eastern-Western ecclesial (and to some extent, theological) schism.³²⁰

³¹⁷ Cited in Torrance, *Theologian*, 103-104, 161, 179, 202, 231-232; 'Singularity', 237; *The Christian Frame of Mind: Reason, Order and Openness in Theology and Natural Science* (Colorado Springs: Helmers & Howard, 1989) 9; *Mediation*, 39; *Preaching*, 58; *Incarnation*, 62, 201; *Atonement*, 441; *God*, 250-251.

³¹⁸ Cited in Torrance, 'Singularity', 237; *Theologian*, 104, 202; *Preaching*, 58; *Atonement*, 441.

³¹⁹ For Torrance's fullest historical engagement on this, see *Faith*, 146-90, drawing mainly on Basil of Caesarea (153); Gregory of Nyssa (153f.); Athanasius (161-162); Hilary of Poitiers (162f). For Torrance's further historical work on this see *Reconciliation*, chs4-5; *Meaning*, chs4-5; 'Athanasius: A Reassessment', *Abba Salama* 5 (1974), 171-187; 'The Relation of the Incarnation to Space' in A. Blance (ed.), *The Ecumenical World of Orthodox Civilisation III, Russia and Orthodoxy: Essays in Honour of Georges Florovsky* (The Hague: Mouton, 1973) 43-70; 'Karl Barth and Patristic Theology' in J. Thompson (ed.), *Theology Beyond Comparison: Essays on the Centenary of the Birth of Karl Barth* (Alison Park: Pickwick, 1986) 215-239; 'Alexandrian Theology', *Ekklesiastikos Pharos* 52 (1970), 185-189; *The Doctrine of Grace in the Apostolic Fathers* (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1948).

³²⁰ See G. P. Wingren, 'Saint Irenaeus', Encyclopædia Britannica website (<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Saint-Irenaeus>; accessed 12th August 2018).

Writing against Gnosticism, Irenaeus regarded human nature to be a material creation of God.³²¹ This material was intrinsically good, derivatively of its Creator,³²² yet in the qualitative difference between Creator and a freshly-formed immature creation,³²³ it was a material that still needed development before bearing the image of the eternal and perfect God in full maturity.³²⁴ Immortality and incorruptibility, in particular, belong to the 'glory of the uncreated One' and are only maintained in humanity conditionally on their continued participation in the divine life through obedience.³²⁵ With such immaturity, humanity was unable to resist Satan's temptation,³²⁶ thus human development was delayed and mortality and corruptibility were no longer simply possible, but inescapable.³²⁷ As we

³²¹ Irenaeus' rebuttal to the 'high spirituality' of his gnostic opponents was to emphasise the 'material, fleshly dimensions' of humanity, that, by nature, we are moulded from the earth. This materialism catches Irenaeus' sense of our solidarity in Adam, and of Christ with us (D. Minns, *Irenaeus: An Introduction* [London: T&T Clark, 2010] 70-11; Irenaeus, *Haer.*, 1.9.3; 5.1.3). Our material is constituted in body, soul and spirit, without any which of which substance we are incomplete (Irenaeus, *Haer.*, 5.6.1; M. C. Steenberg, *Irenaeus on Creation: The Cosmic Christ and the Saga of Redemption* [Leiden: Brill, 2008] 131ff).

³²² In the inseparability of body from spirit and soul, even the physical flesh constituted humanity bearing the *imago Dei*: 'But man He formed with His own hands, taking from the earth that which was purest and finest, and mingling in measure His own power with the earth. For He traced His own form on the formation, that that which should be seen should be of divine form' (Irenaeus, *ApP*, 11).

³²³ Irenaeus, *Haer.*, 2.26.1, 3.22.4, 3.23.5; *ApP*, 12, 14; A. N. S. Lane, 'Irenaeus on the Fall and Original Sin' in R. J. Berry and T. A. Noble (eds.), *Darwin, Creation and the Fall: Theological Challenges* (Nottingham: Apollos, 2009) 130-149, 131-133, 136-137; T. G. Weinandy, 'St. Irenaeus and the Imago Dei: The Importance of Being Human', *Logos* 6 (2003), 15-34, 22.

³²⁴ Irenaeus, *Haer.* 4.5.1, 4.11.1, 4.38.1; M. C. Steenberg, 'Children in Paradise: Adam and Eve as "Infants" in Irenaeus of Lyons', *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 12 (2004), 1-22; E. Osborn, *Irenaeus* (London: T&T Clark, 2010) 75; Weinandy, 'Irenaeus', 22-26; S. O. Presley, *The Intertextual Reception of Genesis 1-3 in Irenaeus of Lyons* (Leiden: Brill, 2015) 158-164. Irenaeus' contention that the Father created through the Son in witness of the Spirit (*Haer.*, 5.6.1.) results in the Spirit proleptically orientating creation (and humanity as its highest form) towards the humanity of the Son through whom we are created. The prelapsarian progression of humanity is thus not directionless, as the Christ-shaped seed of growth is already planted within our flesh. See Irenaeus, *Haer.*, 5.16.2; *ApP*, 22; Osborn, *Irenaeus*, 74; S. H. Webb, *Jesus Christ, Eternal God: Heavenly Flesh and the Metaphysics of Matter* (Oxford: OUP, 2012) 48; G. P. Boersma, *Augustine's Early Theology of Image: A Study in the Development of Pre-Nicene Theology* (Oxford: OUP, 2016) 7ff.

³²⁵ Irenaeus, *Haer.*, 4.38.3; cf. 4.38.1, 4.39.2, 5.29.1; *ApP*, 14. Immortality and incorruptibility are only fully borne by reception of the Spirit who brings the germ of the Son's glory within our flesh into maturity of the *imago Dei* (Irenaeus, *Haer.*, 5.6.1, 5.7.2, 5.8.1). For the significance of mortality as natural to prelapsarian humanity, see Steenberg, *Creation*, 117-123. For its pedagogical role in human development, see Irenaeus, *Haer.* 3.20.2, 5.2.3; J. Behr, *Asceticism and Anthropology in Irenaeus and Clement* (Oxford: OUP, 2000), 50-52.

³²⁶ Irenaeus, *Haer.* 4.40.3; *ApP*, 12; H. Zimmerman, *Evolution and the Sin in Eden: A New Christian Synthesis* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1998) 157f; J. Behr, *Asceticism*, 50.

³²⁷ Irenaeus, *Haer.*, 5.10.2, 5.23.2; *ApP*, 31.

are seen to have ‘offended’ God alongside Adam,³²⁸ we are thus ‘bound up with death through his disobedience’.³²⁹

What characterises Irenaeus’ atonement is his notion of recapitulation.³³⁰ Simply defined, fallen matter is restored to its original divine intent through a correspondent instance of redemption. A later fulfilment of something ‘*reflecting, perfecting, or correcting* the earlier’.³³¹ The incarnation, within this economy, entails the Son’s recapitulation of the same material as Adam and his offspring by assuming it for His own. Had Christ’s flesh been formed of the dust in the same sense as Adam then He would not have been able to sum up the Adamic race in Himself, but would be ‘another formation called into being’.³³² For Christ to free humanity from the bondage of sin and death it was imperative for Him to become ‘that very same thing’ that we are so that our same substance could ‘go forth from death’.³³³ It was not a prelapsarian flock that Christ sought, but ‘the sheep which had perished’, so that He might ‘ascend to the height above, offering and commending to His Father that human nature (*hominem*) which had been found’.³³⁴

In this sense, Irenaeus seems to share Torrance’s contention that a redemptive exchange occurred within the Son’s theandric person that requires assumption of our corruption, that He must ‘become what we are, that He might bring us to be even what

³²⁸ Irenaeus, *Haer.*, 5.16.3. This is an early form of original sin, which, for Irenaeus, may well have included original guilt. See Lane, ‘Irenaeus’, 141-142; Osborn, *Irenaeus*, 216-219. However, Bray contends that though guilt is suggested, our broader inheritance of death is more likely Irenaeus’ central concern (Bray, ‘Sin’, 42-43).

³²⁹ Irenaeus, *ApP*, 31.

³³⁰ For the place of recapitulation in Irenaeus’ work, see Osborn, *Irenaeus*, 97-140; Minns, *Irenaeus*, 108-110; Presley, *Intertextual*, 103-106. For the origin of Irenaeus’ recapitulation in Justin Martyr, see J. Lashier, *Irenaeus on the Trinity* (Leiden: Brill, 2014) 22-26; Osborn, *Irenaeus*, 84.

³³¹ Van Kuiken, *Humanity*, 95. Osborn details the variables of Irenaeus’ recapitulation, which can be referred to distinctly but overall constitute a singular totality of postlapsarian matter and correspondent divine response, ‘because everything that God does is part of his economy and every part of his economy is defined in relation to its recapitulation’ (*Irenaeus*, 98; cf. 115-116).

³³² Irenaeus, *Haer.* 3.20.10.

³³³ *Ibid.*, 3.18.7; cf. *ApP*, 31.

³³⁴ Irenaeus, *Haer.*, 3.19.3.

He is Himself'.³³⁵ Indeed, for Irenaeus, what has perished in Adam, Christ brings to immortality within His own person.³³⁶ When our corruption is joined to Christ it is redeemed and the path is cleared for our reception of incorruption and immortality,³³⁷ sanctifying each age of human existence as He passes through it,³³⁸ until death is swallowed in victory.³³⁹ The logic of the non-assumptus appears to be present: that human fallenness remains unredeemed unless brought into healing union within the person of the Son. Thus Irenaeus writes,

For by no other means could we have attained to incorruptibility and immortality, unless we had been united to incorruptibility and immortality. But how could we be joined to incorruptibility and immortality, unless, first, incorruptibility and immortality had become that which we also are, so that the corruptible might be swallowed up by incorruptibility, and the mortal by immortality?³⁴⁰

However, Irenaeus does not appear to regard Christ as corrupt in the same sense as common humanity. Though assuming flesh from Mary places Christ firmly within Adamic continuity, His formation from the virgin's womb recaptures the *prelapsarian* humanity formed from virgin soil.³⁴¹ Moreover, in Christ's wrestling with temptation, where Wingren interprets Irenaeus' emphasis on Christ's recapitulation of Adam's disobedience as a 'lengthy struggle' of internal conflict,³⁴² without which He cannot have 'endure[d] the same struggle against evil that we have',³⁴³ it may be that the will, or the soul, was not

³³⁵ *Ibid.*, 5.Pref.

³³⁶ Irenaeus, *Haer.* 5.14.1.

³³⁷ *Ibid.*, 5.12.6.

³³⁸ *Ibid.*, 2.22.4; cf. 3.18.7.

³³⁹ *Ibid.* 3.23.7.

³⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 3.19.1; cf. 4.38.4.

³⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 5.1.3; Van Kuiken, *Humanity*, 98.

³⁴² G. P. Wingren, *Man and the Incarnation* (tr. R. Mackenzie; London: Oliver & Boyd, 1959) 116. It can therefore be truly said that 'it is in the man Jesus that God's victory is to be achieved' (*ibid.*).

³⁴³ Wingren, *Incarnation*, xiv, 46, 112ff.

what Irenaeus perceived to be the battleground of Christ's moral victory. Though choosing the good *against* the experience of evil was necessary for human development of maturity in bearing the *imago Dei*, Christ came in full maturity of divine intention for humanity so had no will to be led astray.³⁴⁴

Where this battle does take place, however, is in Christ's flesh, being weak and subject to the corruption of our mortality.³⁴⁵ Citing Romans 8:3, Irenaeus does not understand Christ's "likeness" of sinful flesh to be genuinely sinful, but it is not Docetic either.³⁴⁶ It is in the flesh that the exchange of immortality and mortality takes place, that in our own development we may 'become like Him...for He, too, "was made in the likeness of sinful flesh," to condemn sin, and to cast it, as now a condemned thing, away beyond the flesh'.³⁴⁷ Christ's weakness and temptations are thus genuine as Christ He allows mortality in His flesh, to overcome it in divinity. To Irenaeus, 'as He became man in order to undergo temptation, so also was He the Word that He might be glorified... the human nature being swallowed up in it (the divine), when it conquered, and endured... and rose again'.³⁴⁸ It is in this sense that Irenaeus considered Christ's flesh "fallen", unfallen in divinity, but in 'voluntary restraint of his divine influence over the flesh' bearing the mortality so inescapable to *postlapsarian* humanity for the purpose of resurrecting it in Himself.³⁴⁹ Irenaeus writes, 'He manifested the resurrection, becoming Himself *the first-begotten of the dead*, and in Himself raising up man that was fallen...as God promised by the prophet, saying: *And I will raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen*, that is, the flesh that was from David'.³⁵⁰

³⁴⁴ Minns, *Irenaeus*, 106; Van Kuiken, *Humanity*, 99.

³⁴⁵ Irenaeus, *Haer.*, 3.18.6; Minns, *Irenaeus*, 107.

³⁴⁶ Van Kuiken, *Humanity*, 100f.

³⁴⁷ Irenaeus, *Haer.*, 3.20.2

³⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 3.19.3. Significantly, mortality was absorbed, the reality of humanity was not collapsed into divinity (Van Kuiken, *Humanity*, 103).

³⁴⁹ Van Kuiken, *Humanity*, 103.

³⁵⁰ Irenaeus, *ApP*, 38.

1.2 Gregory Nazianzen

Gregory Nazianzen (c.330-c. 389), a central figure of Cappadocian theology writing predominantly against Apollinarius and Arius,³⁵¹ sits at the very heart of the debate. Thus his maxim, ‘the unassumed is the unhealed’,³⁵² must be understood contextually.

It is against Apollinarius’ suggestion that Christ had a divine mind in a human body (since one person cannot have two minds) that the non-assumptus is set, that Gregory responds that the incarnation would be incomplete without Christ’s absolutely solidarity with every element of human nature. He writes, ‘Godhead with only flesh, or even with only soul, or with both of them, is not man if lacking mind which is the even better part of man’.³⁵³ But why is this so? Gregory’s answer is soteriological, since, as Torrance adopts, the shape of atonement *is* the incarnation, and incarnation *is* atonement. The enmity between God and humanity is appeased in the mediation that occurs within Christ’s theandric person. Redemption is achieved by the sanctification (or divinising) of the humanity the Son’s divinity comes into contact with. As Winslow puts it, ‘The unity of Christ’s person, for Gregory, is *theosis*’.³⁵⁴

It should be recognised that Gregory is certainly not writing a treatise on whether or not Christ assumed fallen humanity, as the contemporary debate would have it. Indeed, the emphatic attributions of human weakness to God—that God is ‘passible for our sake’,³⁵⁵ that the ‘blood of God’ was shed,³⁵⁶ that Christ unites the ‘immortal with the

³⁵¹ E. R. Hardy, ‘Gregory of Nazianzus’, Encyclopædia Britannica website (<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Saint-Gregory-of-Nazianzus>; accessed 19th August 2018). For Gregory’s influence and the historical significance of the Cappadocians, see A. Louth, ‘The Cappadocians’ in F. Young, L. Ayres and A. Louth (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Early Christian Literature* (Cambridge: CUP, 2004) 289-301.

³⁵² Gregory Nazianzen, *Ep.* 101.5. All citations of *Or.* 27-31 from *On God and Christ*. All other orations from ‘Select Orations of Saint Gregory Nazianzen’ (*NFPF(2)* 7, ed. P. Schaff, tr. C. G. Browne and J. E. Swallow; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1961) 203-422.

³⁵³ Gregory Nazianzen, *Ep.* 101.6

³⁵⁴ D. F. Winslow, *The Dynamics of Salvation: A Study in Gregory of Nazianzus* (Cambridge: Philadelphia Patristic Foundation, 1979) 87; cf. C. A. Beeley, *Gregory of Nazianzus on the Trinity and the Knowledge of God: In Your Light We Shall See Light* (Oxford: OUP, 2008) 146-148. For the role of theosis in Gregory’s Christology, see F. W. Norris, *Gregory Nazianzen’s Doctrine of Jesus Christ* (New Haven: Yale, 1971) 128-166.

³⁵⁵ Gregory Nazianzen, *Or.* 30.1

³⁵⁶ Gregory Nazianzen, *Or.* 45.22

corruptible'³⁵⁷— must be read in line with Gregory's hermeneutical method. Though such statements describe the interrelation of divine and human natures, in reality this is little more than the cooperation of two distinct substances, with their own distinct properties remaining proper to each. The interpreter should, rather, 'predicate the more sublime expressions of the Godhead, of the nature which transcends bodily experiences, and the lowlier ones of the compound, of him who because of you was emptied, became incarnate and (to use equally valid language) was 'made man''.³⁵⁸ However, as Beeley notes, the perichoretic interpenetration of divine and human natures in Gregory's Christology renders divine perfection and human passibility entirely coalescent. The aforementioned unitive definition of "nature" as a subject's reality more common to Eastern theology means that the '*communicatio idiomatum* is true at the level of Christ's being'.³⁵⁹

Despite the differences with the contemporary debate of Christ's fallenness, even in Gregory establishing the basic premise of the redemptive nature of the Christ's assumption of the mind, it is clear that it is because of the mind's infirmity that it was assumed. It was because the mind held genuine rebellion against God that the Son redemptively united it to Himself. 'The very thing that had accepted the commandment', Gregory exclaims, 'did not keep the commandment. The very thing that did not keep it ventured its transgression. The very thing that transgressed stood in special need of salvation'.³⁶⁰ Thereby it is essential for the mind's restoration, not just for Christ to substitute our broken state for His perfection before the Father's judgement seat, but that He assume the mind's brokenness, so that *our* mind may be healed and restored, and presented to the Father. Anything else would only redeem part of humanity. Here, sanctification for common humanity, for Gregory, revolves around the theotic exchange

³⁵⁷ Gregory Nazianzen, *Or.* 39.13

³⁵⁸ Gregory Nazianzen, *Or.* 29.18

³⁵⁹ C. A. Beeley, *The Unity of Christ: Continuity and Conflict in Patristic Tradition* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012) 189-190.

³⁶⁰ Gregory Nazianzen, *Ep.* 101.9.

that Christ become what we are in fallenness, for the express purpose that we become like Him in righteousness.³⁶¹ Gregory states, 'Let us become like Christ, since Christ became like us...He assumed the worst that He might give us the better'.³⁶²

1.3 Cyril of Alexandria

Cyril of Alexandria (c.375-380-444) sums the Greek Fathers well, influenced by his predecessors but with perhaps the strongest ecumenical influence presiding over the councils of Ephesus (431) and Chalcedon (451).³⁶³ He may well have the most in common with contemporary fallenness theologians.

For Cyril, in bearing the *imago Dei*, prelapsarian humanity reflects divine reason, freedom, dominion, holiness, incorruptibility (in that, even when Adam came to sin, humanity did not cease to exist), and participates in sonship.³⁶⁴ Postlapsarian humanity remains unchanged, in some sense, having 'thrown away none of our essential properties';³⁶⁵ however, the *imago Dei* within humanity has been tainted where 'sin marred the beauty of the image and Satan befouled the bright visage of humanity'.³⁶⁶ For Cyril, postlapsarian humanity is inescapably mortal, corrupt, and became domineered by the desires over which we once ruled into captivity of sinful propensities under 'sin's law'.³⁶⁷

³⁶¹ What Norris calls the 'kenosis-theosis' pattern (*Doctrine*, 128-148; cf. Winslow, *Dynamics*, 95-96, 99; Beeley, *Gregory*, 148-151).

³⁶² Gregory Nazianzen, *Or.*, 1.5.

³⁶³ F. Young, *From Nicea to Chalcedon: A Guide to the Literature its Background* (London: SCM Press, 1983), 298-304; A. Louth, 'Cyril of Alexandria' in F. Young, L. Ayres and A. Louth (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Early Christian Literature* (Cambridge: CUP, 2004), 353-357. For an excellent overview of Cyril's atonement see D. Fairbairn, 'Cyril of Alexandria' in A. J. Johnson (ed.), *T&T Companion to Atonement* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017) 457-560.

³⁶⁴ W. J. Burghardt, *The Image of God in Man According to Cyril of Alexandria* (Washington: CUAP, 1957) 141-143.

³⁶⁵ Cyril of Alexandria, 'Answers to Tiberius' 10 (*Cyril of Alexandria: Select Letters* [ed. & tr. L. R. Wickham; Oxford: Clarendon, 1983]). All citations of *Tiberius*, *Doctrinal Questions and Answers* (*Questions*) and *Ep.* are taken from *ibid.*

³⁶⁶ Cyril, *Tiberius*, 8.

³⁶⁷ Cyril of Alexandria, *Ep. 45*, 9 in L. R. Wickham (ed. & tr.), *Cyril of Alexandria: Select Letters* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1983) 70-84. All citations of *Ep. 45* are taken from this translation unless otherwise stated. For Cyril on the effects of the fall on Adam's humanity, see Burghardt, *Image*, 143-160.

It was imperative that it be this flesh that Christ assume, as a humanity unlike our postlapsarian state would mean Christ would have little to do with us.³⁶⁸ In such union, fallen human nature is redeemed internally to the Son's theandric person. For Cyril, commenting on John 1:14, when "the Word became flesh" the mortal fate of humanity to return to the dust from which we came (Gen. 3:19) was relinquished, since 'the body that fell was united ineffably with the Word who gives life to all things'.³⁶⁹ To destroy human corruption and 'curb the innate, the sensual, impulses' within it, the Son assumed that very fallenness, making 'human flesh, subject to decay and infected with sensuality as it was, his own'.³⁷⁰ Again, in atoning exchange, He 'came down into that which was in slavery' for our freedom, that we might receive riches by His poverty,³⁷¹ as He deifies humanity throughout the course of His life in dynamic progression through each age of existence.³⁷² In his own articulation of the non-assumptus, Cyril contends that the Son 'united to himself the entire nature of a human being in order to save the whole person. For what is not assumed is not healed'.³⁷³

Cyril does clearly assert that Christ's humanity had to be unfallen to give life to others. As Crisp cites against contemporary fallenness theologians, the condemnation of sin 'does not belong to someone with a nature like ours, under the tyranny of sin, an ordinary man'.³⁷⁴ Indeed, Cyril goes to great lengths to separate Christ from sin. No sin could be

³⁶⁸ Cyril of Alexandria, *On the Unity of Christ* (tr. J. A. McGuckin; Crestwood: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2000) 64. All citations of *Unity* are taken from this translation. Grillmeier contends that younger Cyril, pre-Nestorian controversy, only held that Christ's flesh was soteriologically significant and the soul was not especially important (A. Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition: From the Apostolic Age to the Council of Chalcedon (451)* [tr. J. Bowden; Atlanta: John Knox, 1975] 415-416). Welch, however, convincingly contends that Cyril's holistic definition of *sarx* denies any dualism between the soul being healed in separation from the flesh (L. J. Welch, 'Logos-Sarx? Sarx and the Soul of Christ In the Early Thought of Cyril of Alexandria', *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* [1994], 271-292).

³⁶⁹ Cyril, *Joannis*, 1.139.

³⁷⁰ Cyril, *Ep. 45*, 9.

³⁷¹ Cyril, *Joannis*, 1.141.

³⁷² D. A. Keating, *The Appropriation of Divine Life in Cyril of Alexandria* (London: T&T Clark, 2004) 185-190.

³⁷³ Cyril, *Joannis*, 8.118. For the significance of the maxim in Cyril, see Meyendorff, *Byzantine*, 152-159, 163-164.

³⁷⁴ Cyril, *Unity*, 60, cited in Crisp, *Divinity*, 90.

found in Christ's flesh (actual or original),³⁷⁵ Christ's being "numbered among the transgressors", "becoming sin" or "likeness of the flesh of sin" can only be sin's imputation to Him, not sinfulness of flesh itself,³⁷⁶ and to claim that Christ's sacrifice was actually for Himself would implicate His sinfulness.³⁷⁷ Yet Cyril directly continues beyond Crisp's citation that it was such unworthy flesh that was assumed by the Son, but this was made worthy in unity with His person; flesh was assumed fallen for fallenness to be cast out from within it, so that life could flow to those sharing fallen nature. Cyril, quoted in full, says,

The condemnation of sin does not belong to someone with a nature like ours, under the tyranny of sin, an ordinary man. But insofar as it became the body of the one who knew no transgression, how rightly it could shake off the tyranny of sin to enjoy all the personal riches of the Word who is ineffably united with it in a manner beyond all description. Thus it is a holy and life giving thing, full of divine energy. And we too are transformed in Christ, the first-fruits, to be above corruption and sin.³⁷⁸

Such apparent contradictions are rife in Cyril as he dialectically distinguishes Christ's divinity and humanity: Christ developed in human wisdom and grace while still being full of grace in divine perfection,³⁷⁹ He both received as man and dispensed as God the sanctification of baptism,³⁸⁰ He both humanly hungered and divinely multiplied food,³⁸¹

³⁷⁵ Cyril, *Tiberius*, 13; *Adv. Nestorium*, 1.3, 3.5. There is difficulty in original guilt for Cyril; instead of inheriting Adam's guilt, we inherit his mortality (*Questions*, 6; *In Romanos*, 5.18-19, cited in Burghardt, *Image of God*, 152). Christ's natural fleshly weaknesses (hunger, ignorance, fear, etc.), though proof of His solidarity with humanity, were not considered sinful (*John*, 8.316; *Tiberius*, 4; cf. A. Mellas, "The Passions of His Flesh" St Cyril of Alexandria and the Emotions of the Logos', *Phronema* 29 [2014], 81-99).

³⁷⁶ Cyril, *Unity*, 56, 61; *Adv. Nestorium*, 4.Pref.

³⁷⁷ Cyril, *Ep. 17*, 9; *Adv. Nestorium*, 3.5.

³⁷⁸ Cyril, *Unity*, 60-61.

³⁷⁹ Cyril, *Joannis*, 1.143-144; *Adv. Nestorium*, 3.4.

³⁸⁰ Cyril, *Adv. Nestorium*, 4.2; *Unity*, 100.

³⁸¹ Cyril, *Adv. Nestorium*, 5.3

He was humanly ignorant yet divinely omniscient,³⁸² He was fearful of His human safety yet submissively obedient to the Father at Gethsemane,³⁸³ and ultimately, He was humanly crucified yet was divinely impassible.³⁸⁴ Against Nestorius, these distinctions had to be clarified as divine-human interpenetrations from the unity of the Son's theandric person. God's power to give life is now considered inseparable from the Son's flesh and is operative within it³⁸⁵ and, on the other hand, elements exclusive to the passibility of human existence are now attributable to the impassible Son.³⁸⁶ The human experiences of Jesus and the saving work of God, even in these distinctions, cannot be applied uniquely to divinity or humanity³⁸⁷ but to the singular reality of the Son.³⁸⁸ Thus the Son is impassibly-passible inasmuch as Cyril speaks of Christ as humanly suffering and being divinely impassible, but does so only from the foundation of this singular reality.³⁸⁹ In the sense of atonement, then, the Son is indeed considered divinely holy and humanly fallen, but only from the foundation of the singular reality of the Son.

2. Western Fathers

2.1 Tertullian

Tertullian (c.155-160—220) provides something of a genesis for Latin theology, his most significant legacy being his rebuttal of the Marcionite understanding of Christ merely having the appearance of flesh, and the Valentinian limitation of salvation to the soul and

³⁸² Cyril, *Tiberius*, 4.

³⁸³ Cyril, *Joannis*, 4.487; 8.317-318; *Adv. Nestorium*, 5.3; *Unity*, 102-104.

³⁸⁴ Cyril, *Adv. Nestorium*, 1.Pref.

³⁸⁵ Cyril, *Joannis*, 4.529-531.

³⁸⁶ Cyril, *Unity*, 107-110. For divine impassibility in Cyril, see R. Lister, *God is Impassible and Impassioned: Toward a Theology of Divine Emotion* (Nottingham: IVP, 2012) 90-94.

³⁸⁷ Cyril, *Ep. 17*, 12.4.

³⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 8; note the previous discussion of Christ's singular nature.

³⁸⁹ Foreseeing being charged with Nestorianism for this, Cyril quips, 'But wait, he writes, we find that you are doing exactly the same thing as us; for you confess that he suffered, in so far as you attribute the sufferings to the flesh, even though you keep him impassible as God. Ah, but we, my friend, have first of all united the Word and Man, and only then do we attribute the passions to the flesh while keeping him impassible as God' (Cyril of Alexandria, 'Scholia On the Incarnation of the Only Begotten', 35 in J. A. McGuckin [ed. & tr.], *Cyril of Alexandria* [Leiden: Brill, 1994] 294-335).

subsequent separation of Christ from materiality. This legacy remains valuable despite his later influence from (and possible defection to) the Phrygian heresy Montanism.³⁹⁰ He is of particular interest since, as mentioned, he is held most culpable by Torrance for the “Latin Heresy”.

Tertullian's anthropology is constituted in one soul and two natures. The human soul is a rational entity reflecting the rationality of the Creator, yet irrationality intrudes at the fall and grows inherently within the soul. Though, as a work of Satan, irrationality remains external to God, despite this intrusion the soul is not split in a Platonic sense into two;³⁹¹ there is simply a distinction in the soul's faculties,³⁹² its two elements reflecting two rational and irrational authors.³⁹³ Human nature, however, is distinguished in retention of a good nature which continues to reflect the goodness of God and in the constitution (through Adam's sin) of a ‘second nature’ that shrouds the first with corruption, ruled over by Satan and corrupted with sinful propensities.³⁹⁴ Humanity, in its two natures, is thus a blend of ‘*inherent* goodness and *adherent* evil’.³⁹⁵ In this sense the *imago Dei* is lost and must be restored by grace,³⁹⁶ and more than a moral exemplar is required to cleanse this evil that has infected Adam's progeny.³⁹⁷ Human flesh, within this, is not intrinsically sinful of its own accord, as it has no capacity for ‘advising or commanding sin’ in the same

³⁹⁰ R. L. Wilken, ‘Tertullian’, Encyclopædia Britannica website (<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Tertullian>; accessed 20th August 2018); R. E. Heine, ‘The Beginnings of Latin Christian Literature’ in F. Young, L. Ayres and A. Louth (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Early Christian Literature* (Cambridge: CUP, 2004) 131-141; E. Osborn, *Tertullian: First Theologian of the West* (Cambridge, CUP, 1997) 7; D. Rankin, *Tertullian and the Church* (Cambridge: CUP, 1995) 27-51.

³⁹¹ Tertullian, *An.*, 16. Humanity had the capacity to deny the irrationality of Satan and remain true to God but transgressed in disobedience (Tertullian, *Marc.* 2.2, 6).

³⁹² Tertullian, *An.*, 14.

³⁹³ Osborn, *Tertullian*, 164.

³⁹⁴ Tertullian, *An.*, 16, 39-41; Osborn, *Tertullian*, 164-167. As Adam and Eve are the source of human sin (Tertullian, *Marc.*, 1.22.8, 2.2.7) there is a physical continuity of souls from Adam (*An.*, 27) by which family resemblance of sin is transmitted (*An.*, 25).

³⁹⁵ Van Kuiken, *Humanity*, 131.

³⁹⁶ Tertullian, *De Baptismo*, 5 (*Tertullian's Homily on Baptism: Edited with an Introduction, Translation and Commentary*, ed. & tr. E. Evans; London: SPCK, 1964). All citations of *Baptismo* are taken from this translation unless otherwise stated.

³⁹⁷ Tertullian, *De Testimonio Animae*, 3 (*On the Testimony of the Soul*, tr. Q. Howe; Faulkner University Patristics Project website [http://www.tertullian.org/articles/howe_testimonio_animae.htm; accessed 21st August 2018]).

sense as the soul, it is merely the cup by which sin is tasted.³⁹⁸ Yet, it is still considered sinful by association with the soul.³⁹⁹

This cleansing of adherent evil is achieved by Christ assuming not just the first good nature but the second nature so to discard the shroud that obscures God's handiwork. The sin in our nature is 'brought to nought' through such assumption.⁴⁰⁰ Tertullian implies that Christ assumes fallenness from Mary to (in Irenaeus fashion) recapitulate what had been defiled in Eve. Eve had borne Satan's seed of death; a virgin defiled by mortality. Thereby Mary, under that same condition of death, was impregnated with the seed of life. For Tertullian, 'that which through that sex had gone astray into perdition should through the same sex be led back again into salvation...for the salvation of man Christ must needs come forth from that organ into which man already under condemnation had entered'.⁴⁰¹ Indeed, if it had been any other flesh that Christ assumed, His solidarity with us would have little soteriological significance:

[I]t would not suit Christ's purpose, when bringing to nought the sin of the flesh, not to bring it to nought in that flesh in which was the nature of sin: neither would it be to his glory. For what would it amount to if it was in a better kind of flesh, of a different (that is, a non-sinful) nature, that he destroyed the birthmark of sin?⁴⁰²

Tertullian does say that Christ bearing the "likeness of sinful flesh" (Rom. 8:3) means Christ's flesh is 'itself not sinful' being only 'the like of that to which sin did belong', solidary with Adam in 'species but not in defect'.⁴⁰³ However, Tertullian's meaning here is

³⁹⁸ Tertullian, *An.*, 40.

³⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 40. Conversely, the *imago Dei* is not borne in the flesh as no human physicality can encapsulate the divine image, so can only be tainted by association in this sense as well (Tertullian, *Marc.*, 2.5).

⁴⁰⁰ Tertullian, *Carn.*, 16.

⁴⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 17; cf. 17-23. Tertullian's use of Irenaeus recapitulation extends to Christ redeeming 'our nativity by his own nativity, and thus also loose the bands of our death by his own death, by rising again in that flesh in which he was born with intent to be able to die' (*Marc.*, 3.9).

⁴⁰² Tertullian, *Carn.*, 16.

⁴⁰³ Tertullian, *Carn.*, 16; cf. Hatzidakis, *Jesus*, 342.

simply that Christ does not sin from within the same nature within which common humanity sins; 'in Christ that same flesh exists without sin which in man did not exist without sin'.⁴⁰⁴ Expecting that ascribing our same flesh to Christ would invite charges of Christ being sinful, Tertullian writes, '[B]y clothing himself with our flesh he made it his own, and by making it his own he made it non-sinful'.⁴⁰⁵ Here, Torrance's claim that Tertullian perpetuates the Latin Heresy, separating the work of Christ from His person by externalising atonement, is certainly questionable. Though Tertullian is certainly more cautious than his Eastern counterparts with explicitly naming Christ "fallen", or having "sinful flesh", any forensic or juridical elements are couched firmly within what Christ achieves in redemptive assumption of humanity. Though Christ takes to Himself 'flesh of the ancient seed without the agency of the ancient seed', Christ must still have 'expelled its ancient defilements' by sacrifice of His passion to 'reshape it with new (that is, spiritual) seed'.⁴⁰⁶ Though Christ is not touched by sin (original or actual) He assumes mortality for its resurrection,⁴⁰⁷ and though the accursedness of crucifixion is not Christ's own He is solidary with the common condition of all who would be hung on a tree.⁴⁰⁸ Van Kuiken sums Tertullian well, saying that he places Christ 'amid sin and evil but does not identify him with them; instead, from out of their midst he renders redemption'.⁴⁰⁹

2.2 Augustine

Augustine of Hippo (354-430), writing rhetorically in the face of controversy (notably, against the Manichaeans and Pelagius) and in broader corpus, has shaped Western

⁴⁰⁴ Tertullian, *Carn.*, 16.

⁴⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 16.

⁴⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 17.

⁴⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 5.

⁴⁰⁸ Tertullian, *Marc.*, 5.3.

⁴⁰⁹ Van Kuiken, *Humanity*, 134.

theology more than any other,⁴¹⁰ and thus serves well to sum the Latin perspective. He too is of particular interest since, alongside Tertullian, he is held most culpable by Torrance for the “Latin Heresy”.

Augustine’s postlapsarian anthropology consists of a composite of an immortal soul and degenerative body, subject to death.⁴¹¹ The soul, though immaterial (contra Manichaeism),⁴¹² animates and reigns over the body.⁴¹³ However, the soul, even in its prelapsarian state, was distinct from its Creator in its mutability, and thereby capable of moral change.⁴¹⁴ From this, postlapsarian humanity and the effects of original sin over the will, mind and body, for Augustine, are largely circumscribed by concupiscence—the perversion of desire, often sexual, but generally, our ‘lust against the Spirit’.⁴¹⁵ All Adam’s progeny are born into this rebellion; as we reproduce by means of concupiscent desire, concupiscence carries over to the next generation, continuing the transmission of original sin.⁴¹⁶

⁴¹⁰ J. J. O’Donnell, ‘St Augustine’, Encyclopædia Britannica website (<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Saint-Augustine>; accessed 23rd August 2018); P. Brown, *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography* (revised edn.; Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000); H. Chadwick, *Augustine* (Oxford: OUP, 1986); D. MacCulloch, *Christianity: The First Three Thousand Years* (London: Penguin, 2010) 303-312. This thesis will narrow its focus to Augustine’s works cited in or of relevance to this debate.

⁴¹¹ Augustine, *Civ. Dei.*, 14.3. Though the body may have been initially neglected by Augustine as rationality and free will are earlier constituted in ‘the rational soul’ which simply ‘has a body’ (*Io. Ev. Tr.*, 19.15), later Augustine suggests that the rational substance of human being is attributed to the unified body and soul (*Trin.*, 15.7.11). For an excellent summary of Augustine’s theological anthropology and interrelated Christology, see M. Keech, *The Anti-Pelagian Christology of Augustine of Hippo, 396-430* (Oxford: OUP, 2012) 70-105.

⁴¹² Augustine, *Ep.* 143; 166.3–4. All citations of Augustine’s *Ep.* are taken from *Letters: Vol 3-4 (FC 20 [Letters 131-164], FC 30 [Letters 165-203]*, ed. H. Dressler, tr. S. W. Parsons; Washington: CUAP, 1953, 1955, respectively).

⁴¹³ Augustine, *Quant.*, 13.22; *Genesi.*, 2.11.

⁴¹⁴ Augustine, *Ep.* 166.3; *Conf.*, 4.15.26. Despite this mutability, Augustine grants it possible for Adam to have remained innocent by continuing to find sustenance in the tree of life, whereby the body, though naturally mortal, would eventually have been made naturally immortal (*Merit.*, 1.2-5; 2.35.21).

⁴¹⁵ Augustine, *Civ. Dei.*, 13.13; *Ver. Rel.*, 1.11.21-1.12.15; *Agon.*, 10.11. For an excellent survey of Augustine on concupiscence, see T. Nisula, *Augustine and the Functions of Concupiscence* (Leiden: Brill, 2002); for the role of concupiscence in sexual desire, see D. F. Kelly, ‘Sexuality and Concupiscence in Augustine’, *The Annual of the Society of Christian Ethics* 3 (1983), 81-116; J. B. Weidenaar, ‘Augustine’s Theory of Concupiscence in City of God, Book XIV’, *Calvin Theological Journal* 30 (1995), 52-74; A. Wallace, ‘Sex and the City (of God): An Overview of the Writings of Augustine on Sex and Sexuality and How They Relate to the Development of His Understanding and Teaching on Marriage’ (PhD Thesis, Queen’s University Belfast, 2016) ch6.

⁴¹⁶ Augustine, *Merit.*, 1.9.9-1.12.15; *Ep.* 187.31.

In his earlier work, Augustine separated Christ from this fallen existence. Salvation was attained simply by humanity following ‘a pattern of living, that is, a sure way by which we might reach God’,⁴¹⁷ set by the example of Christ’s moral perfection in place of our moral failures, His kenotic humbling contrasting our attempts of self-exaltation in disobeying the Father’s will. Where Torrance contends that Christ’s work was *ontologically* paradigmatic for common humanity by His cleansing through assumption of our shared fallenness in which we then share by the Spirit, young Augustine presents a *moral* paradigm, though claiming that ‘the same nature had to be taken on as needed to be set free’,⁴¹⁸ it was a neutral humanity that was assumed to give ‘a lesson in morals’ that evil may not touch a humanity that remains obedient.⁴¹⁹

Even in his mature work, Augustine goes to great lengths to separate Christ from a “flesh of sin”. Christ is exempt from the transmission of original sin as the concupiscence from which common humanity is born is bypassed with His virginal birth, thus ‘he took only the flesh from Adam, he did not assume his sin’.⁴²⁰ Unlike the Eastern Fathers, Augustine consciously avoids postlapsarian language, that though Christ had the likeness of sinful flesh, ‘there was not the sinful flesh’.⁴²¹ Lacking concupiscence, Christ’s soteriological work was never for His own sake, but He received the baptism of a servant, not for His bonds of sin but our own, to serve us with salvation, that we might attain it by following His example.⁴²² Even the mortality He assumed from Mary⁴²³ was not actualised in death but by His own free choice, as the soul (or spirit) only leaves the body unwillingly when it has ‘willingly abandoned God’ in sin,⁴²⁴ thereby His cry of Godforsakenness was

⁴¹⁷ Augustine, *Fid. et Sym.*, 4.6.

⁴¹⁸ Augustine, *Ver. Rel.*, 1.16.30

⁴¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 1.16.32.

⁴²⁰ Augustine, *Io. Ev. Tr.*, 4.10.3, cf. 10.11-12; *Meritis*, 1.55.28.

⁴²¹ Augustine, *Io. Ev. Tr.*, 42.1.1.

⁴²² *Ibid.*, 4.13-14.

⁴²³ *Ibid.*, 3.12.1-2; 4.2.3-4.3.1.

⁴²⁴ Augustine, *Trin.*, 4.13.16

one of empathy for our condition, not for His own abandonment.⁴²⁵ It is in this separation of the Son from fallen humanity that Augustine seemingly moves farthest away from internalised ontological atonement towards the judicial categories so criticised in the “Latin Heresy”. He does not necessitate that we choose between humanity being healed by power or judicial innocence, yet he does require that justice *precede* power. Since Satan (and fallen humanity who imitate him) strives after power, and thereby hates God’s justice, ‘the devil was to be overcome, not by the power of God, but by His justice’.⁴²⁶ In Christ’s humanity, Satan is not conquered by the power of divinity being bound to human fallenness in healing union, but by Satan wrongly inflicting suffering and death on an innocent man, thereby losing his legal claim to humanity. Power is only a subsequent divine act, as Christ is raised by power only once Satan’s grip is released in justice.⁴²⁷

Yet, despite these juridical categories and denial of postlapsarian references to Christ, Torrance’s claims that Augustine neglects the significance of internalised ontological redemption are overstated. Indeed, that the “Latin Heresy” manifests in the separation of redemption from Christ’s humanity seems dubious with Augustine’s proclamation: ‘Let the human race take hope and rediscover its own nature. Let it see what an important place it occupies among the works of God’.⁴²⁸ Though Christ’s humanity was not tainted by concupiscence nor original sin, the Son ‘[took] upon Him man through whom to conquer the enemy of the human race from the race itself that had been conquered’.⁴²⁹ Here, more credence is given by Augustine to humanity’s emancipation from Satan’s grasp only being possible by Christ taking a humanity not without human parentage, as with the first Adam, but aligning Himself with the continuity of Adam’s descendants. The human nature deceived by Satan is brought to submission to the Father’s judgement at the cross,

⁴²⁵ *Ibid.*, 4.3.6.

⁴²⁶ Augustine, *Trin.*, 13.17.

⁴²⁷ *Ibid.*, 13.17-14.18.

⁴²⁸ Augustine, *Agon.*, 11.12

⁴²⁹ Augustine, *Trin.*, 13.18.

whereby the Enemy is exorcised from it.⁴³⁰ The divine-human union is seen to be inherently redemptive, where pride, avarice, anger, and ungodliness are cured by the Son's humility, poverty, patience, and charity. Augustine rejoices: 'O Medicine, making provision for all: deflating what is distended; renewing what is wasting away; cutting away what is superfluous; preserving what is necessary; restoring what has been lost; curing what is corrupted!'⁴³¹

Augustine, amongst the Fathers, is certainly furthest away from Christ having postlapsarian humanity. The significance of Christ being medicine to our humanity, Augustine continues, is that 'human nature was preserved intact amid violent persecution', thereby no wickedness is found in those who make 'the object of [their] contemplation, love and striving' the 'pattern of life' set by the Son.⁴³² Yet atonement is not exclusively externalised despite juridical conclusions, meaning Christ is certainly not prelapsarian either. Atonement is internalised in the sense of Christ assuming the human contagion of mortality (even if death is actualised by choice not captivity) and bringing from within it these juridical and exemplary outcomes, expelling guilt and the punishment of death from the flesh and actualising within it the Father's justice and divine righteousness as a pure sin offering and a moral example to which we strive. He 'transferred to His own flesh not sin, as the poison of the serpent, but He did transfer to it death, that the penalty without the fault might transpire in the likeness of sinful flesh, whence, in the sinful flesh, both the fault might be removed and the penalty'.⁴³³ It was so this offering should come from within the most feeble states of human weakness that Christ came as an infant—though infancy is most rife with the weaknesses of sin in its absolute helplessness, so much so that Augustine anticipates Christ's assumption of such stark weakness would raise questions of His sinlessness (despite being born of a

⁴³⁰ Augustine, *Agon.*, 1.1; *Trin.*, 4.13, 13.17; *Io. Ev. Tr.*, 3.13.

⁴³¹ Augustine, *Agon.*, 11.12

⁴³² *Ibid.*

⁴³³ Augustine, *Meritis*, 1.61.32

virgin), Augustine contends that Christ did not come as a fully mature adult but as an infant so sin could be condemned within the internal reality of immaturity in the flesh. Despite not bearing any sin, Christ coming in the likeness of sinful flesh still meant atonement was wrought from *within* the feeblest instance of human puerility by Christ internalising that weakest human reality. Augustine writes, '[O]ur answer is as follows: Adam was not created in such a state, because, as no sin from a parent preceded him, he was not created in sinful flesh. We, however, are in such a condition, because by reason of his preceding sin we are born in sinful flesh. While Christ was born in such a state, because, in order that He might for sin condemn sin, He assumed the likeness of sinful flesh'.⁴³⁴ Keech sums well the soteriological significance of the incarnation for Augustine, that '[i]n order for it to be salvific, Christ has to assume a post-Adamic humanity, which is neither the pristine nature enjoyed by Adam at his first creation, nor fully conformed to sinful nature, as in the case of the rest of postlapsarian humanity'.⁴³⁵

3. Torrance and the Latin Heresy: Historically Erratic Schismatic?

Through surveying a selection of Patristic material, three points of significance can be recognised.

Firstly, Torrance's reading of the Eastern Fathers is imbalanced in the isolation of their language of Christ's "sinful flesh". He fails to recognise that, as Van Kuiken highlights, postlapsarian terminology is balanced with an (approximately) equal use of prelapsarian terms.⁴³⁶ However, Crisp, in contending that Christ assumed an exclusively prelapsarian humanity and that no Patristic evidence to the contrary exists, is guilty of the opposite.

Secondly, Torrance's reading of the Latin Fathers is also imbalanced, as, though it is only the Eastern Fathers who ascribe fallenness terminology to Christ's humanity and

⁴³⁴ Augustine, *Meritis*, 1.68.37.

⁴³⁵ Keech, *Christology*, 94.

⁴³⁶ Van Kuiken, *Humanity*, 159-161.

take up maxims such as “the unassumed is unhealed”, both Eastern and Western Fathers certainly have an element of internalised atonement. Torrance is not presenting anything ground-breaking in suggesting that the crux of atonement is the Son’s healing touch of divinity upon His humanity in the hypostatic union and is perhaps overly schismatic between East and West to claim the Latin Fathers directly rejected this (by means of neglect) with judiciary conclusions.⁴³⁷ There is something to be said for the influence of Augustine’s judiciary conclusions and tendencies for Christ to be a moral exemplar being carried through to much of Medieval atonement, yet losing the nuance of being grounded internally to Christ’s humanity. In Torrance’s language of substitution and representation, Anselm, viewing the Son’s ransom of humanity from Satan’s clutches to be the historical focal point of atonement but in need of reprioritisation around the monarchy of God over any rights of Satan, contends the incarnation to only be necessary to atonement exclusively in substitutionary terms, where the Son must become human to settle an honour debt to God, albeit in superabundance.⁴³⁸ Peter Lombard, in turn, asserted that sanctification was never for Christ’s own humanity, but ours.⁴³⁹ The incarnation was necessary, not for any atoning work to occur internally to Christ but simply because common humanity did not deserve to loose itself from Satan’s grasp. Freedom would have been taken unconscionably, not ‘by justice, but by violence’;⁴⁴⁰ thereby the

⁴³⁷ Such a black-and-white view of East vs. West is being increasingly challenged in modern scholarship. Keating excellently displays the conceptual unity of Cyril with Augustine and Leo the Great in both salvation as assumptive divinization and the Spirit’s role in such incarnational redemption (*Appropriation*, 289-293). For Augustine’s dedication to the Nicene tradition of Athanasius and the Cappadocians, see Ayres, *Nicaea*, 364-383. Bremer highlights that Orthodox theologian Georges Florovsky’s significant contributions to ecumenical dialogue are driven by his charge to return to the common ground found in Patristic thought (T. Bremer, ‘The “West” as the Archetypal Enemy in the Theological and Philosophical Discourse of Orthodox Christianity’, tr. N. Williams; European History Online website [<http://www.ieg-ego.eu/bremert-2012-en>], Mainz: Leibniz Institute of European History; accessed 25th August, 2018).

⁴³⁸ Anselm, *Cur Deus Homo*, 1.6. For a balanced appraisal of these charges of Anselm, and subsequently Aquinas, see K. Sonderegger, ‘Anselmian Atonement’ and C. Raith II, ‘Thomas Aquinas’ Pauline Theology of the Atonement’ in A. J. Johnson (ed.), *T&T Companion to Atonement* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017) 175-194 and 195-212 respectively.

⁴³⁹ P. Lombard, *Sentences*, 3.18.5 (4 Volumes, ed. & tr. G. Silano; Ontario: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 2008).

⁴⁴⁰ Lombard, *Sentences*, 3.19.2.

incarnation was required for a different, more worthy substance, to satisfy the juridical exchange. Aquinas, following this, formalises Anselm's framework of satisfaction. Though moving away from Christ settling an honour debt to appease a wrathful God, instead asserting the restoration of a state of divine-human harmony disrupted by sin,⁴⁴¹ he also excludes any meaningful significance of fallen humanity being represented so to be healed internally to Christ by healing union with divinity. Where for Augustine it is Christ's humanity itself that is medicinal to our own nature, for Aquinas it is simply the *exchange* of punishment that is considered redemptive, externalising atonement more absolutely.⁴⁴² In this Medieval isolation of substitution, Christ's humanity is simply instrumental, and fairly charged of the "Latin Heresy", the non-assumptus certainly in need of recovery. For the Latin Fathers, however, it has been demonstrated that Torrance's notion is problematic. Although the explicit language of *fallen* human nature is not used, atonement is still very much internalised to Christ's humanity. This shows that for both East and West at this period, God was understood to be ontologically inseparable from the content of His own work of redemption. Despite differences in lapsarian terminology, Van Kuiken recognises that 'conceptually both Latin and Greeks concur that Christ's humanity was fallen in his mother and regained in the Incarnation a sinlessness which is prelapsarian in the sense of reflecting Edenic innocence, yet still postlapsarian in the sense of suffering from many of the Fall's effects'.⁴⁴³

Thirdly, the significance of this Patristic study for more clearly defining what is meant by Christ's assumption of fallen human nature, is that Christ seems to be *physically* corrupt in the flesh, but not necessarily *morally* corrupt. Van Kuiken contends that the Fathers unanimously assert 'Christ's assumption of a real humanity like ours and, with it, sinless infirmities, but exclude every manifestation of sin - whether sinful impulse or sinful

⁴⁴¹ Aquinas, *Summa*, 2.113.2

⁴⁴² *Ibid.*, 2.87.8.

⁴⁴³ Van Kuiken, *Humanity*, 159.

action'.⁴⁴⁴ This is mostly fair, as hunger, tiredness, and sickness are all seen to be effects of the fall that must be conquered internally to Christ's humanity. Yet, for all but Augustine, even concupiscence is assumed, meaning the propensities, impulses and desires (in the diverse range of meaning held by the term) are also conquered internally, and are not considered inherently morally reprehensible. In either sense, Crisp's contention that only the symptoms (or appearance) of fallenness are assumed has little Patristic support. On the other hand, it is in this consideration that it may well be beyond the intention of the Fathers to consider (i) with Federal theology, that the propensity to sin is inherently morally reprehensible, and (ii) with Torrance, that Christ assumes this mantle vicariously, but it is not an unnatural extension.

Torrance does not make this leap in his earlier work, separating Christ from the moral reprehensibility of original corruption.⁴⁴⁵ However, in his mature work, Torrance extends the non-assumptus to Christ becoming *vicariously* morally corrupt in the assumption of original sin to redeem it. Here, the attribution of fallenness to nature and sin to person is enlightening. That the physical effects of the fall are healed in physical restoration (ultimately in resurrection), while the will, as an element of nature but only operative by the person, is restored by Christ's bringing the perfection of His person which pre-exists the damaged nature into healing operation within it, elucidates the Patristic unanimity of Christ's weaknesses and desires being restored internally to His sinless person.

Given these points of significance, the question remains as to whether this Patristic conceptual unity and nuanced use of prelapsarian and postlapsarian terminology, can be a point of common ground amongst both fallenness and unfallenness theologians.

⁴⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 156.

⁴⁴⁵ He here follows H. R. Mackintosh's critique of Edward Irving in distinguishing between Christ being 'corruptible' in physical subjection to death and 'corrupt' in moral depravity (Mackintosh, *Doctrine*, 277-278).

4. Common Ground

4.1 Isolation of Natures

As we have seen, the contentions made by Crisp and others in our last chapter—that the weaknesses of Christ’s humanity are merely symptomatic—are not only problematic logically but also historically. Although, as Crisp states, the weaknesses of Christ’s human nature for the Fathers may well be ‘for all practical purposes, obliterated’ by His divine origin,⁴⁴⁶ the Patristic witness is ubiquitous in that intricate care is taken to maintain the integrity of these weaknesses for the purposes of their conquering being internal to Christ’s humanity.

However, the motive by which Crisp contends Christ’s weaknesses to be merely symptomatic, and his defence that these weaknesses are more than just a facade, is where common ground might be found. In Christ’s temptation, Crisp concedes that Jesus’ time in the wilderness and later troubles in Gethsemane were a genuine pull on His conscience, meaning His humanity is like our own. On the other hand, Christ is unlike us, since, in the strength of the Son’s divinity, it was entirely inevitable that holiness would win out. Were Christ’s human nature ever to draw near to giving in to temptation, His divine nature would intervene to prevent sin.⁴⁴⁷ As a result of this inevitability, for Crisp, the Son’s fight against temptation is not necessarily the same as our “fallen” temptation, because the Son could never give in. However, despite the inevitability of Christ’s denial of temptation, he accepts that temptation must still be actively denied. The analogy is of an invincible pugilist who, though he may never lose, must still fight his opponents.⁴⁴⁸ Crisp goes on to concede that when the human nature of the Son is viewed in isolation from His divine nature, that nature may indeed have the same capacity to sin as our fallen humanity. He writes, ‘Christ’s human nature may have the disposition or capacity to sin (in

⁴⁴⁶ Crisp, *God*, 125.

⁴⁴⁷ See *ibid.*, 124–32.

⁴⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 133.

abstraction from the incarnation, as it were, and yet be rendered incapable of sinning by being in personal union with his divine nature'.⁴⁴⁹

Darren Sumner's excellent recent work has highlighted that this theotic role of the Son's divinity in divinising His humanity may provide the foundation for dialogue in this debate,⁴⁵⁰ and though his is not a historical work, we would suggest that such common ground may prove a contemporary return to the conceptual unity of the Fathers. Here, does Crisp not hold the very same intention as advocates of the fallenness view? Crisp has rightly contended that Classical Christology holds within it the peccability of the Son's humanity that is made impeccable in unity with His divinity.⁴⁵¹ Yet is it right to contrast this with the intentions of advocates of the fallenness view?

Unfortunately, Crisp rejects this shared motive as a resolution, instead suggesting this 'poses problems for defenders of the fallenness view', as such similarity makes the attempt to uphold the integrity of Christ's temptation redundant as a theological motivation.⁴⁵² More broadly, it shows the inadequacy of the fallenness view in distinguishing itself from classical Christology.⁴⁵³ Since Christ's human *posse peccare* is overridden by His divine *non posse peccare*, it is useless to ever describe Christ as anything but impeccable.

⁴⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 132–3.

⁴⁵⁰ D. O. Sumner, 'Fallenness and Anhypostasis: A Way Forward in the Debate over Christ's Humanity', *SJT* 67 (2014), 195–212.

⁴⁵¹ Citing medieval habitual grace, 'One traditional account of the Incarnation suggests that the Divine Son of God assumes a sinless but peccable human nature, which, by virtue of being united to the Son, is rendered incapable of sin. If this is right, then this strand of classical Christology has the resources to deal with the 'no-capability to sin' objection that is raised by the advocates of the sinlessness view' (Crisp, *God*, 127; cf. D. Bathrellos, 'The Sinlessness of Jesus: A Theological Exploration in the Light of Trinitarian Theology' in P. L. Metzger (ed.), *Trinitarian Soundings in Systematic Theology* [New York: T&T Clark, 2015] 113–126, 115).

⁴⁵² Crisp, *Divinity*, 106.

⁴⁵³ Crisp, *God*, 133. This is surely, in some sense, needless rhetoric. One would struggle to find an advocate of the fallenness position out to intentionally set themselves apart from classical Christology for the sake of argument. Torrance, for example, has simply sought to reclaim what has been neglected in Latin theology, to internalise to the constitution of the Mediator what has been made instrumental.

However, this approach towards fallenness advocates such as Torrance signifies, what Cameron and Deddo have dubbed, an ‘aloneness thesis’.⁴⁵⁴ Deddo writes that such ‘habits of mind almost inevitably regard relationship as extrinsic, as accidental to who and what God, God’s creation and creatures are...Everything that can be said to have being is essentially what it is without being related to anything else’.⁴⁵⁵ In this, Crisp misrepresents the fallenness position in viewing the fallen humanity of the Son in *isolation* from the redemptive union of His theandric person. The central contention of the fallenness view is that Christ’s human nature must never be regarded *apart* from His divine nature, thereby never apart from redemption,⁴⁵⁶ yet for His human nature to always be regarded as *distinct* from His divine nature, so to understand the redemptive quality of the union.⁴⁵⁷ What both sides of this debate may be able to agree to is that the Son’s humanity is, at the very least, *anhypostatically* fallen. The nature that the Son assumes is in need of sanctification—even if the battle may inevitably be won, the battle must still be fought.

4.2 *Communicatio Gratarium*

Sumner contends that this common motive may be best expounded through shared foundations of the *communicatio gratarium*. The basic premise that Christ received an impartation of divine grace to His human nature is generally common ground between various theological traditions. Within this, it is as Christ’s humanity bears some level of divine properties in unity with God that, all would agree, Christ’s humanity is fundamentally and necessarily *alike* and *unlike* our own. Christ’s humanity is most significantly *unlike* our own in sinlessness, yet most *alike* our own in being kept from

⁴⁵⁴ D. J. Cameron, *Flesh and Blood: A Dogmatic Sketch Concerning the Fallen Nature View of Christ's Human Nature* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 2016) 46.

⁴⁵⁵ G. Deddo, ‘The Realist and Onto-Relational Frame of T. F. Torrance’s Incarnational Trinitarian Theology’, *Theology in Scotland* 16 (2009), 105-133, 121.

⁴⁵⁶ This “onto-relationality” is precisely Torrance’s central motive in separating Christ in fallenness from personal sin: that Christ’s assumption of fallenness be considered dynamically, not statically; that fallenness is never left in the state in which He takes it throughout the process of redemption, thereby never actualising sin. See Torrance, *Incarnation*, 63f, 85f, 204ff.

⁴⁵⁷ Sumner, ‘Fallenness’, 201-203.

sinning, or that sinning was made impossible, by the impartation of grace to His human nature. Though this communication of grace may take different shapes amongst traditions, it is in this similarity that common ground may be found in Christ being *anhypostatically* fallen.⁴⁵⁸

In the Catholic tradition, the human nature of Christ is endowed with a divine *habitus*, inherited from His own holy Mother. All grace and virtue intrinsic to divinity are naturally borne in Mary, passed to Christ, human nature being infused with the perfection of divine. As Aquinas states, ‘Christ had grace and all the virtues most perfectly...the ‘fomes’ of sin was nowise in Him’.⁴⁵⁹ The Son’s humanity is like ours yet differs as, in unity with God, it naturally bears within itself divine sinlessness. Anhypostatically, Christ’s (and Mary’s) humanity as distinct from the endowment of such *habitus* would be fallen, in need of redemption.

In Lutheranism, Christ’s sinlessness is located in the *genus maiestaticum*—that in the hypostatic union, Christ’s humanity is so closely bound to His divinity that it gains divine attributes.⁴⁶⁰ This humanity is like ours yet differs as, through the hypostatic union, it bears the sinlessness of the divinity it is bound to. Anhypostatically, Christ’s humanity as distinct from such union would be fallen, in need of redemption.

In distinctly Protestant works, the Spirit sanctifies the Son’s nature assumed from Mary,⁴⁶¹ either at conception where the Spirit ‘keeps every speck of sin away from the

⁴⁵⁸ Much of the following elaborates on *ibid.*, 207-210.

⁴⁵⁹ Aquinas, *Summa*, 3.15.2, cf. 3.7.1,5,7. Here, Aquinas details the graces and gifts naturally habitual to Christ’s human nature. Barth denies that such attributes would be naturally habitual, instead contending that such graces are communicated by God in the actuality of the incarnation. ‘[G]race is a divine giving and human receiving’, meaning it can only be ‘had’ in the Son’s humanity within His temporal reception of them; they are not habitually present in our humanity that the Son takes for His own (Barth, *CD IV/2*, 90).

⁴⁶⁰ M. Chemnitz, *The Two Natures in Christ* (tr. J. A. O. Preus; St Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1971) 251. In distinction from the transferral of attributes in the *genus maiestaticum*, less significant gifts are given in “communicated grace”. External to the hypostatic union, the humanity of Christ is given finite gifts that prime His human nature to be a fitting tool for His broader redemptive work. His humanity receives ‘such supernatural gifts in order that it can be the fully and properly prepared instrument with and through which the deity of the Logos exercises and carries out its activities’ (Chemnitz, *Natures*, 252).

⁴⁶¹ H. Hepppe, *Reformed Dogmatics* (ed. E. Bizer, G. T. Thomson; London: George Allen & Unwin, 1950) 424–427, contra the Catholic contention that Jesus’ sinlessness was inherited from the perfection of His own holy Mother.

humanity of Jesus in the Virgin's womb',⁴⁶² or continuously throughout Jesus' life, as with Irving.⁴⁶³ The Son's humanity is like ours yet differs as, through pneumatological sanctification, the nature borne from Mary is cleansed. Anhypostatically, Christ's humanity as distinct from the pneumatological healing of the nature assumed from Mary would be fallen, in need of redemption.

Especially emphasised in Reformed theology, the sinlessness of Christ is indeed naturally habitual, but by special dispensation of the Spirit to Christ's humanity. The graces habitual in Christ's humanity, including impeccability, 'were of course imparted to the humanity of Christ without measure, since they are the highest gifts of the Spirit which a creature can receive at all'.⁴⁶⁴ This could resolve issues with the *genus maiestaticum* that, logically speaking, if the Son's humanity is sinless as it is bound to His divinity within His hypostasis, surely *all* that is true of the Son's divinity should be present in His humanity (leading to problematic concepts of physical omnipresence in the incarnation). This Reformed pneumatological communication of graces is more selective in detailing the divine attributes present in Christ's humanity by moving beyond simply attributing them to His inherent divinity or the hypostatic union. The Son's humanity is like ours yet differs as, by communication of the Spirit, it is endowed with divine sinlessness. Anhypostatically, Christ's humanity as distinct from this pneumatological dispensation would be fallen, in need of redemption.

With Spirit Christology, the Son's sinlessness is located in His obedience enabled by submission to the Spirit and the empowerment of the Spirit's presence. The Son's humanity is like ours yet differs as, by the guidance of the Spirit, the Son is led to stay

⁴⁶² Heppe, *Dogmatics*, 426.

⁴⁶³ Dorries, *Christology*, 360–361.

⁴⁶⁴ Heppe, *Dogmatics*, 434.

sinless.⁴⁶⁵ Anhypostatically, Christ's humanity as distinct from pneumatological empowerment would be fallen, in need of redemption.

For the definition of the *communicatio gratiarum* used in this thesis, Barth's treatment of the *communicatio gratiarum* is most constructive for this study, being most formative of Torrance's own theology and, more broadly, being the most comprehensive in encompassing the dynamism of the divine life that is being communicated in human reception of grace. He takes up the Reformed position but departs from each extreme of previous static formulations. Though Christ's sinlessness is a grace communicated to His humanity by the Spirit, this is not communicated to the human nature to be received as an external benefit. Rather, it is 'the total and exclusive determination of the human nature of Jesus Christ by the grace of God'.⁴⁶⁶ In this way, Christ's humanity, even in the trappings of the fall, is still entirely determined by absolute divine freedom. As that freedom is communicated to and received by fallen humanity, it is thus truly free of sin itself.

Sumner's contribution, developed here, should present to each of these traditions something of worth in recognising Christ's humanity to be anhypostatically fallen, not in separation from the redemption that will thus occur and guarantee the spotlessness of the Saviour, but in distinction, so to recognise the true extent and value of the redemption achieved.

⁴⁶⁵ Habets, 'Fallen', 36-37, cf. E. Irving, *The Collected Writings of Edward Irving* (5 volumes, ed. G. Carlyle; London: Alexander Strachan, 1864) 2:98; J. Owen, *The Works of John Owen: Volume 3, Pneumatologia* (ed. W. H. Goold; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1863) 170.

⁴⁶⁶ Barth *CD IV/2*, 88.

Conclusion

In dogmatic dialogue with T. F. Torrance, it can be seen that the Son's assumption of fallen humanity is intelligible under the soteriological concern—that the “unassumed is unhealed”, where divine-human union is an essentially redemptive bond. This has been neglected in the “Latin Heresy”, where a dualism between the Son's person and His work has instrumentalised Christ's humanity, rendering it bereft of inherent soteriological significance, leaving the ontological depths of human fallenness untouched by redemption where atonement occurs on or to, not within, our nature.

In Torrance's contextualisation of atonement to Christ's humanity, redemption is not isolated to the singular moment of judiciary satisfaction at the cross but spans the entirety of the incarnation. In the dialectic synthesis of distinct elements of the Son's atoning work, fallen human nature is restored both “once and for all” as the Son initially takes it to Himself at the virgin birth, and in “continuous union” throughout Christ's temporal existence.

At the virgin birth, the Son's redemptive union with fallen humanity is veiled beneath His flesh, to be revealed and authenticated at the resurrection where the atoning work is brought to fruition. In turn, atonement is shown to be contextualised to Christ's humanity (i) where the virgin authenticates His physical reality and therein enables redemption to be shared with those of solidary nature; (ii) in that God Himself is at work within fallen nature, and is the sole cause of its redemption, as Christ's birth is an exclusively monergistic divine act of kenosis; (iii) in that redemption is a creation “*ex virgine*”, not “*ex nihilo*”, that is, a restoration of fallen matter, not a replacement of the old; and (iv) in that Christ aligns Himself with the continuity of Adamic fallenness, yet sets aside sinful human autonomy.

In the continuous union, Torrance grounds the contextualisation of atonement to Christ's humanity by restating the common Christological foundation of the *homoousion*, hypostatic union, and *an/enhypostasia*.

The *homoousion* articulates Christ's dual consubstantiality with both God and fallen humanity, ontologically authenticating His being and act as both, substantiating His revelatory and reconciliatory work as "very God" and, against the instrumentalist of the "Latin Heresy", securing genuine human involvement within it. Epistemologically, in Christ's *prokope*, He grows in wisdom from within the fallen state, therein removing the obstacles of human ignorance and attaining knowledge of God within our modes of thought and speech, providing the axis of divine revelation and human receptivity in His consubstantiality with both.

The hypostatic union, in turn, is dynamically restated so to contextualise atonement to Christ's humanity. Divine-human union in the "mystery of Christ" is not simply the interrelation of humanity with the transcendent God (*mustērion*) but this unity is set forth into the fallen state (*prothesis*) whereby fallen humanity can participate in the divine life (*koinōnia*). The essentially redemptive effect of divinity on humanity is brought into contact in the dyophysitical interrelations of Christ's person; where the "two ends" of the *homoousion* are brought together, the revelation and reconciliation authenticated by Christ's dual consubstantiality are actualised as divine self-knowledge is translated into human modes of form and speech and the ultimate *telos* of reconciliation of divine-human union is wrought within Christ's own person. Restating the Chalcedonian adverbs, Christ's two natures interrelate inconfusedly, immutably, indivisibly and inseparably. The distinction of divinity and fallen humanity is retained in their union with each other (*inconfuse*), even when God Himself enters the turmoil of human suffering so to bring it to peace (*immutabiliter*). In this, it is as fallen human nature is indivisible from the divine life (*indivise*) that to isolate any of Christ's redemptive acts within His continuous union with that state would be to place separation within the very life of God (*inseparabiliter*). It is here that, as redemption is actualised within the mechanism of dyophysitical

interrelations, dualism between Christ's person and work is refuted, and atonement becomes *who* Christ is, not *what* Christ has done.

The anhypostatic-enhypostatic couplet details (i) the Son's anhypostatic assumption of generic fallen humanity, with no individual persons added to the Son's *hypostasis* and can thereby refer to our universal fallen substance distinct from personhood, and, (ii) the Son's enhypostatic instantiation of particular fallen humanity, personalising a fallen individual in His own *hypostasis*. The couplet contextualises atonement to Christ's humanity in three ways. Firstly, it does so by securing the universal involvement of fallen humanity in reconciliation while still considering it a pure act of God, in Christ's anhypostatic assumption of generic fallen substance and enhypostatic personalisation of fallen individuality in His divine *hypostasis*. Secondly, it does so by rendering Christ a sinless fallen human, as despite His anhypostatic universal solidarity with generic fallen humanity, He enhypostatically instantiates fallen existence as the sinless God, therein setting aside the division of sinful personhood to unite fallen nature in redemption within Himself. Christ lives within the continuity of Adam's progeny as a perfectly obedient fallen individual in a level of communion with the Father that has not previously been achieved within that state, within which those of solidary nature can participate. Thirdly, the couplet secures the ontologically generic and epistemologically personal union of God and fallen humanity within Christ. Where *anhypostasia* ensures redemption occurs universally within the ontic depths of fallenness, *enhypostasia* secures the Son's noetic bond with fallen humanity (included and predicated in the ontic union), wherein Christ reconciles humanity and God within the context of personal relations, providing a positive personal response to divine revelation, paradigmatic for common humanity.

While grounded in the *homoousion*, hypostatic union, and *an/enhypostasia*, the redemption of fallen humanity in continuous union with Christ is actualised in the perfect obedience of Christ's vicarious humanity, where the Son acts on behalf of fallen humanity

in every instance of divine-human interaction. Christ's substitution for fallen humanity is not at the expense of our involvement and thereby entirely instrumental; He acts as a genuine representative of the postlapsarian condition. In active and passive obedience the Son acts positively in every instance where sin should arise and accepts the Father's judgement on the cursed state He assumes. By this, while bearing the concrete likeness of sinful flesh, the Son condemns sin in the flesh (Rom 8:3), actively bending the fallen will back into communion with the Father and passively bearing the curse of our humanity to overcome it, vindicating our guilt by His innocence within our fallen state.

The cross and resurrection, in turn, bring the redemption of fallen humanity in continuous union with Christ to fulfilment. As the crescendo of the non-assumptus, the darkest moment of human fallenness—our Godforsakenness in death—is assumed by the Son to be restored. The Son internalises the root conflict of divine enmity against sin and human rebellion against God in their furthest extents and settles it within Himself.

Torrance therefore provides an excellent framework for atonement contextualised to Christ's humanity, showing the soteriological necessity of doing so where the unassumed is unhealed and the significance of Son's assumption of fallen human nature for redemption.

Chapter two sought to address the conceptual ambiguity of the debate by more clearly defining key terms. Fallenness, firstly, was established as a contingent anthropological property and therefore assumed not by necessity but by God's free choice in His self-definition as Redeemer. Fallenness was understood in terms of original corruption and guilt. In original corruption, Crisp contends, Christ cannot assume even a "weak" corruption of internal propensity to sin, as this alone would be morally reprehensible to God, whereby fallenness would have to be predicated to a secondary Nestorian subject. In original guilt, Edwards' contends that guilt is not merely imputed

from Adam to his progeny merely by consubstantiality of nature, but, concurrent to this, our personal concurrence with his sin.

In response to Crisp's critique, the attribution of fallenness to nature and sinfulness to person was discussed. Nature, while retaining an element of substantialism, was defined as the holistic reality of a human individual, rather than a concrete individual or an abstract set of properties. Person, meanwhile, was defined as the individual personalising force, the *hypostasis* wherein nature is instantiated. With McFarland, where the will is an element of nature only operative in person, the hypostatic identity of humanity as "sinner" is manifest within nature by the will. Sin, thereby, is not attributed to nature as the will is indeterminate apart from person; that is, human nature cannot control that it desires sin—it is person that is the causal agent of sinful desire. Fallen nature and sinful person are inseparable for common humanity, whereby the hypostatic identity of "sinner" inevitably renders sin within the individual's nature. In Christ, however, where the hypostatic identity of the Son preexists His fallen nature; it is not sin that is manifest within His human will but divine perfection, actualised in perfect obedience.

With clearer definitions established, the integrity of the Son's suffering and temptations if His humanity was unfallen was explored, concluding that, had the Son assumed merely the symptoms of fallenness or only select portions of our humanity, this would leave the root cause of those symptoms unredeemed and His humanity quasi-Docetic with genuine materiality but illusory weakness.

In other dogmatic concerns, Chiarot's critique of the simultaneity of redemption within temporal sequentiality were resolved with Barth's doctrine of eternity. In the simultaneity of God's own pre-, supra-, and post-temporality, redemption—as the interrelation of God in transcendence with creation—is freed from the separation and distance of our own temporal restrictions.

Further critique that Torrance is inconsistent in applying the non-assumptus—as sinful persons are not said to be assumed but are still redeemed—is resolved in Torrance’s notion of participation. Though the Son anhypostatically assumes common nature and enhypostatically excludes sinful persons, those persons may pneumatologically participate in the redemption achieved within the Son’s *hypostasis*, entering into the communion of the divine life.

Chiarot again criticises that the imputation of righteousness of “Federal” theology is not as instrumental as Torrance perceives, as it is still an imputation of the achievements from within Christ’s neutral humanity. Torrance, in turn, is seen to slip into instrumentalism himself, as Christ’s fallen will also relies on external divine assistance. This, however, misrepresents Torrance’s understanding of instrumentalism, as what is instrumental is not whether the Son graciously humbles Himself to a place of desolation but whether or not fallen humanity is genuinely involved in the redemptive process.

Finally, pneumatological concerns of the non-assumptus were addressed, avoiding the two extremes of the Spirit being entirely neglected from the Son’s redemptive union with fallen nature and thereby powerless to recreate that redemption within common humanity and, conversely, that the Spirit separates the Son from causal operation of His own humanity. The Spirit’s mediation of the Son to His humanity is not to the exclusion of the Son’s agency but is in fact what constitutes incarnation. This mediative involvement, in turn, grounds the Spirit’s recreation of the redemption of the Son’s fallen humanity in believers.

With these conceptual obstacles resolved, chapter three addressed Torrance’s historical reading and the legitimacy of the “Latin Heresy”. It was shown that the Eastern and Western Fathers are more conceptually united than Torrance would give credit for. Though the shape of atonement differs, and Augustine in particular shifts his emphasis to more juridical conclusions, atonement is still certainly internalised to Christ’s humanity

and is therefore certainly not considered absolutely prelapsarian. Several conclusions were drawn. Firstly, Torrance is guilty of isolating the Eastern Father's postlapsarian terminology, neglecting their balanced use of prelapsarian language to describe the affectations of redemption. Conversely, Crisp's claim that there is no historical grounding for Christ's humanity to be considered postlapsarian, is also groundless. Secondly, in this conceptual unity, the "Latin Heresy" misrepresents the Western Fathers. However, the development of Latin theology in the Medieval tradition, through the Reformation into contemporary Evangelicalism, adopts the juridical conclusions (predominantly of Augustine but neglects the nuances of atonement internalised to Christ's humanity. Augustine still regarded Christ's humanity itself to be intrinsically medicinal, whereas Aquinas considered merely the *exchange* of punishment to be redemptive, thereby externalising atonement more absolutely. Thirdly, the Fathers considered Christ to be physically corrupt but not necessarily morally corrupt. Physical weaknesses are not inherently morally wrong, so they can be internally redeemed by Christ without question. However, for all but Augustine, even concupiscence is assumed by the Son, meaning that fallen desires, passions and temptations are internalised and are not considered to be inherently morally reprehensible in the Patristic witness. It may well be beyond the intention of the Fathers to consider, with Federal theology, that the propensity to sin is inherently morally reprehensible and, with mature Torrance, that the Son becomes so vicariously, but it is not an unnatural extension.

These observations led to the conclusion that this Patristic conceptual unity elaborated on Sumner's suggestion that the Son's anhypostatic assumption of fallen human nature may provide common ground for the progression of the debate. In the ecumenically universal notion of the *communicatio gratiarum*, all can agree that Christ receives grace within His humanity for means of redemption. It is this assertion, that Christ's humanity was considered postlapsarian to be redeemed into prelapsarian state,

that was common to the Fathers, and it should provide synthesis of intentions for the contemporary debate. Christ's humanity is not considered simply fallen but our humanity is redeemed in Him.

Appendix 1 - Suggestions for Biblical Research: The Virgin Birth in the Non-Assumptus

This thesis, as a dogmatic dialogue with T. F. Torrance, did not engage heavily in biblical research. However, suggestions for biblical research can be made, to further progress the debate of the Son's assumption of fallen human nature. Firstly, the biblical significance of the virgin birth in the non-assumptus.

1. Virgin Birth in Synoptics and Johannine Literature

In detailing the soteriological significance of the virgin birth within the contextualisation of atonement to Christ's humanity, Torrance's sees the non-assumptus as present in the Synoptic Gospels and Johannine literature, in his interpretation of the Matthean genealogy of Jesus; the often overlooked account of John 1:13 as a reference to the virgin birth; and the correlation between Christ's virgin birth and the spiritual rebirth of believers.

Torrance's contends the Matthean genealogy testifies to Christ's absolute solidarity with His fallen ancestry, that in unbroken continuity 'Jesus was incorporated into a long line of sinners'.⁴⁶⁷ The virgin birth commences the actualisation of the Son's displacement of the continuity of sin, 'summing up in himself our sinful stock' to restore it.⁴⁶⁸

Turning to the Johannine literature, one of Torrance's most contentious interpretations is of John 1:13, "who *were* born", not as a plural term for believers reborn in Christ, but a singular reference to Christ at the virgin birth, better translated "who *was* born".⁴⁶⁹ However, even if one were to concede to the plural interpretation, Torrance asserts that "who *were* born" would be 'an extended reference to the virgin birth' since John has used the term *ανδρος* (*andros*, "man") in a singular reference to a male or husband, over and

⁴⁶⁷ Torrance, *Mediation*, 41.

⁴⁶⁸ Torrance, *Mediation*, 41.

⁴⁶⁹ Torrance, *Incarnation*, 90. Torrance here cites Patristic support for interpreting John 1:13-14 in the singular, namely, Tertullian, Irenaeus, Justin Martyr, *Epistola Apostolorum*, Hippolytus, and Clement of Alexandria, and slightly more contemporarily, he cites Harnack, claiming his judgement to be 'increasingly followed by scholars'. Torrance, *Incarnation*, 90; A. Harnack, *The Date of the Acts and of the Synoptic Gospels* (J. R. Wilkinson [tr.], London: Williams & Norgate, 1911) 148.

above using *ἀνθρώπου* (*anthrópou*, “humankind”) as a general reference to all humanity.⁴⁷⁰

The singular interpretation of John 1:13 is highly debated, though Kulandaisamy finds the interpretative weight, from the end of the nineteenth century up to present scholarship, to be with the singular over the plural.⁴⁷¹ The singular interpretation, as with Torrance, finds John to be speaking not simply of the spiritual rebirth of believers, but of the incarnation. Although readings vary as to the strength of John’s intentions to emphasise the virgin birth, almost all of these singular interpretations, at the very least, read the virgin birth as a background assumption in this reference to the incarnation.⁴⁷²

What is of significance to Torrance’s reading, however, is that some plural interpreters would accept his contention of an extended or secondary reading of John 1:13 as a reference to the virgin birth. This becomes particularly apparent as the connection is commonly made amongst plural interpreters, between the spiritual rebirth of the believer and the physical birth of Christ. For example, Le Frois highlights that John’s plural reference to the rebirth of believers is articulated in the same terms that describe the virgin birth, thereby conceptually linking the two.⁴⁷³ Barrett, though also denying v13 to be a direct reference to the virgin birth, contends John’s use of language implies Christ’s birth to be paradigmatic of the believer’s rebirth, as both share an exclusively divine origin.⁴⁷⁴ Crossan, following Barrett, asserts that John intentionally alludes to the virgin birth to

⁴⁷⁰ Torrance, *Incarnation*, 90.

⁴⁷¹ D. S. Kulandaisamy, *The Birth of Jesus or the Birth of Christians? An Inquiry into the Authenticity of John 1:13* (Rome: Marianum, 2015) 46-86.

⁴⁷² Loisy is the odd exception to the singular interpreters, since, though he affirms v13 to refer to the incarnation, he directly denies the virgin birth. Braun comments of him, ‘[to Loisy,] the birth of the Incarnate Word in time was as foreign to the role of a human mother as to the action of a father according to the flesh. In the Evangelist’s eyes, he felt, Jesus was an ordinary man, conceived according to the natural process. But John paid no heed to that, for what was important in his eyes was the divine sonship of the Saviour—understood almost as the Gnostics understood it, as a descent of the divinity upon Jesus as on the occasion of the Baptism at Jordan’, F. M. Braun, *Mother of God’s People* (New York: Alba House, 1967) 39.

⁴⁷³ Le Frois, B.J., ‘The Spiritual Motherhood of Mary in John 1:13’, in *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 13 (1951) 422-431.

⁴⁷⁴ C. K. Barrett, *The Gospel According to St. John: An Introduction With Commentary on the Greek Text*, (2nd Edn., Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1956) 137-138.

shape the reader's understanding of Christian rebirth, that 'the virgin birth of Jesus from Mary was archetypal forever of the baptismal rebirth of Christians'.⁴⁷⁵ Of particular interest to Torrance's singular interpretation is the dismissal of the reading by his *Doktorvater* Karl Barth. However, despite his contention that John's words should not be directly interpreted as referential to Christ in the singular, Barth sympathetically adds that John may well have included suggestive language to conceptually echo Christ's birth. Barth writes, 'In the light of the virgin birth it is natural to speak of Christ in the phrases of this verse without thinking that this is the real meaning'.⁴⁷⁶

Torrance interpretation renders the same theological conclusion, that such reference to the virgin birth—whether explicit or extended—reveals our own rebirth from death into life to be directly correlative to Christ's own birth. Torrance highlights in John's first epistle that a believer's denial of sin as one 'born of God' is held and sustained by Christ as he himself is 'born of God' (1 John 5:18). Thus, it is not unthinkable John's gospel directly correlates the believer's being born 'from above' (John 3:7) with Christ's being born 'of God' (John 1:13). John's message, Torrance perceives, is that 'it is upon Christ's unique birth once and for all that our birth depends and in his birth we are given to share'.⁴⁷⁷

The significance of our rebirth relying on Christ's birth in this way, to Torrance, is the soteriologically necessary role of Christ's vicarious virgin birth within the non-assumptus. As Christ vicariously assumes the act of human birth, he redeems it, and as such, our own rebirth is secured as we come to share in his birth. Our own spiritual rebirth is simply a participation in the paradigm of redemption achieved in Christ's own act of assumption—without his physical birth, we would be without the paradigm that proleptically enables and conditions our own rebirth. To Torrance, John testifies that in the moment of human rebirth,

⁴⁷⁵ D. Crossan, 'The Marian significance of John 1, 12-13', in *Maria in Sacra Scriptura. Acta Congressus Mariologici-Mariani anno 1965 celebrati, vol. V: De Beata Virgine Maria in Evangelio S. Ioannis et in Apocalypsi*, (Rome: Pontificia Academia Mariana Internationalis, 1967, 99-107) 107.

⁴⁷⁶ K. Barth, *Witness to the Word: A Commentary on John 1* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 2003) 80-81.

⁴⁷⁷ Torrance, *Incarnation*, 91.

‘there takes place in us the birth of Jesus, or rather, we are in a remarkable way given to share through grace in his birth... Just as he was born from above of the Holy Spirit, so we are born from above of the Holy Spirit through sharing in his birth’.⁴⁷⁸

2. Virgin Birth in Paul

Torrance’s reading of the non-assumptus continues in his interpretation of the virgin birth in Pauline literature, in Paul’s presentation of the virgin birth as an assumptive act that qualifies Christ for human representation within his Adamic Christology; the correlation between the believer’s status as children of God and the virgin birth referred to in Galatians 4:4-5; and, concurrent with John, the significance of the virgin birth in enabling the rebirth of the believer through participation in Christ’s birth.

The non-assumptus is particularly prominent throughout Torrance’s reading of Paul’s Adamic Christology. Christ’s virginal conception is an assumption of the same type of birth as the first Adam—the first human birth of Eden is replicated as the birth of Jesus is brought about exclusively by divine initiative. In assuming this same birth, the Son is qualified for His representative capacity as the second Adam, bringing life through the same birth within which the first Adam brought death.⁴⁷⁹ Torrance sees Christ’s virginal conception in this Adamic Christology utilised most explicitly in Paul’s language of human generation. In Galatians, when Paul refers to Christ’s generation, Paul refuses to use the verb *γεννάω* (*gennaō*, “to be born”, Gal. 4:23, 24, 29), ubiquitously used throughout the New Testament for regular human generation. Instead, Paul uses the verb *γίνομαι* (*ginomai*, “to become”, Gal. 4:4), only ever used in reference to Adam and Christ. This distinction in Adamic Christology between regular human generation and Jesus’ generation is, to Torrance, Paul’s ‘strongest disavowal of birth by ordinary human

⁴⁷⁸ Torrance, *Incarnation*, 101, 91.

⁴⁷⁹ Torrance, *Incarnation*, 92, here citing 1 Cor.15:22 to this end.

generation in regard to the birth of Jesus'.⁴⁸⁰ To apply this to the redemptive terms of the non-assumptus, if Adam's birth is not assumed by Christ, Adam's descendants remain unhealed.

Torrance goes on to interpret Paul's Adamic Christology in a manner similar to the Johannine literature, finding a clear correlation between the virgin birth of Christ, and the spiritual rebirth of believers. Torrance interprets Paul's language of Christ's sonship in Galatians 4:4 as a reference to the believer's adoption declared in Galatians 3:26-27, that the believer's status as a child of God in 3:26-27 is explained by and reliant upon the Christ's own sonship in 4:4. In this, the Son was sent to become the child of a woman so that humanity might become children of God (4:4-5); as the Son was commissioned by the Father to assume the act of human birth for the very purpose of our sonship, our status as children of God becomes entirely reliant on Christ's own birth.⁴⁸¹

We would criticise Torrance here, that reading γίνομαι ἐκ γυνῆ (*ginomai ek gynē*, "born of a woman", 4:4) as a direct reference to the virgin birth has been largely rejected by biblical scholars throughout his career.⁴⁸² What can be affirmed of Paul's intention in this passage, however, is not that Paul links the nature of Christ's conception to His redemptive work, but that it is of central soteriological concern that the Son be in absolute solidarity with those He came to redeem, by sharing in a genuinely human birth.⁴⁸³ It is necessary that the Son assumed the same processes of human birth of those He came to redeem, for the sake of their salvation. Despite denying Galatians 4:4 as a direct reference to the virgin birth, Dunn draws similar conclusions to Torrance of Paul's Adamic

⁴⁸⁰ Torrance, *Incarnation*, p93.

⁴⁸¹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸² E. D. W. Burton, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1921) 217; W. Hendriksen, *A Commentary on Galatians* (London: Banner of Truth, 1968) 158; F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, (Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans, 1982) 195; R. Y. K. Fung, *The Epistle to the Galatians* (Grand Rapids: W.B Eerdmans, 1988) 182; R. N. Longenecker, *Galatians* (Waco: Word Books, 1990) 171; J. D. G. Dunn, *The Epistle to the Galatians* (London: A&C Black, 1993) 215; J. L. Martyn, *Galatians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (New York: Doubleday, 1997) 390.

⁴⁸³ Fung, *Galatians*, 214; Dunn, *Galatians*, 215-216.

Christology. Here Paul contrasts ‘the ordinary humanness of God’s Son in his mission, and the adoption of ordinary human beings to divine sonship’,⁴⁸⁴ a correlation that reveals the heart of Adamic Christology, that ‘Christ [is] the man who retrieved the course of Adam through his fallenness to death (cf. Rom. viii.3)...in order that those in him might share in this completion of the divine purpose for creation’.⁴⁸⁵

Although Torrance goes beyond the intention of the passage by reading the virginal nature of Christ’s conception, he still grasps the significance of the text. As Christ genuinely shares in the act of human birth, there is a direct correlation between human spiritual rebirth and Christ’s physical birth. As with John, Christ’s assumption of human birth is paradigmatic for being born into sonship and daughtership of God, a paradigm in which we participate in our own rebirth. Torrance states, Christ can bestow participation in parentage of God ‘because of his own coming into existence of a woman, as a real man. So Paul can say, like John, when Christ was born I was born a son of God, for I partake of Christ in his Spirit of sonship’.⁴⁸⁶

Torrance’s exegesis of the virgin birth is certainly worthy of further biblical exploration, of great importance to the non-assumptus. Questions should be asked of the correlation between Christ’s assumption of human birth and the believer’s spiritual rebirth in Johannine and Pauline literature, and the role of the non-assumptus undergirding it.

⁴⁸⁴ Dunn, *Galatians*, 215

⁴⁸⁵ Dunn, *Galatians*, 215-216.

⁴⁸⁶ Torrance, *Incarnation*, 93. The non-assumptus is made explicit in Torrance’s reference to Christ’s work in the place of humanity under the law. ‘Because Christ came into existence under the law, he can redeem those that are under the law’, (Torrance, *Incarnation*, 93).

Appendix 2 - Suggestions for Biblical Research: Christ's Vicarious Humanity and the *Pistis Christou* Debate

A further area for biblical research relevant to the contextualisation of atonement to Christ's humanity, is the interpretation of *pistis Christou* as either an objective genitive, referring to the faith of believers (as Christ is the object of faith), or a subjective genitive, referring to Christ's personal faith in the Father. As stated in our thesis, Christ's vicarious humanity is soteriologically significant, but before one can assert that Christ's faith is subjectively efficacious for believers, our own faith participating in His, it must first be proven that Christ *had* faith at all. Clarity of *pistis Christou* would be most constructive to this element of Christ's redemptive assumption of fallen humanity.

1. Torrance's Hebraic Reading of *Pistis*

Torrance does not explicitly advocate either the subjective or the objective reading of the genitive, but he was influential, alongside A.G. Hebert,⁴⁸⁷ in popularising the *Πίστις Χριστοῦ* debate in 20th century biblical scholarship in his lexical approach to the use of *pistis* in the translation of the Hebrew term *'emeth* in the LXX. Where the common translation is *aletheia*, widely meaning "truth", on occasion the LXX uses a form of the term *pistis* instead (Proverbs 3:3, 14:22, Jeremiah 32:41; 33:6). In this, Torrance believes the Hebrew emphasis of divine faithfulness—as opposed to an act of human belief—in the terms *'emeth* and *'emunah*, must be brought into our New Testament understanding of *pistis*. He writes,

The usual translation of *'emeth* in the LXX is *aletheia*, but *aletheia* is not used to signify abstract or metaphysical truth, but what is grounded upon God's faithfulness, i.e., truth not as something static, but as active, efficacious reality, the reality of God in covenant-relationship...There is no doubt that again and again where we have the words *pistis* and *dikaiosune* in the New Testament we must see behind them the Hebrew words, *'emeth* and *'emunah*, and where in the New Testament we have *aletheia* we must understand that not simply as a Greek word, but in the light of the Biblical inclusion of *pistis* and *dikaiosune* in the concept of truth.⁴⁸⁸

This, in essence, grounds Torrance's view of Christ's vicarious faith within atonement. By reading the Hebraic understanding of *'emeth* into Greek lexicon, Torrance contends that

⁴⁸⁷ A.G. Hebert, "Faithfulness" and "Faith", *Theology* 58 (1955), 373-379.

⁴⁸⁸ Torrance, 'One Aspect of the Biblical Conception of Faith', *The Expository Times* 68 (1957), 111-114, 112.

pistis predominantly pertains to the faithfulness of God, but involves and includes within it the faithfulness of man—that to say that “the righteousness of God is revealed from faith (*pisteos*) to faith (*pistin*)” (Romans 1:17), is to say ‘man’s *pistis* is his implication in the Divine *pistis*’.⁴⁸⁹ In this Hebraic understanding, the phrase *pistis lesou Christou* (Romans 3:21-25; Galatians 2:16, 20; 3:22) is not simply an isolated reference to *either* Christ’s faithfulness or an human act of belief in response, but the term is ‘a polarised expression’ of the inclusion of responsive human faith in Christ within the Son’s own vicarious faith, as ‘even within itself the faithfulness of Christ involves both the faithfulness of God and the faithfulness of the man Jesus’.⁴⁹⁰ In this use of *pistis*, Christ embodies the Hebraic understanding of divine faithfulness twofold, manifesting both the perfect faithfulness of God towards humanity, and the perfect faithfulness of humanity in response. In Him is the ‘the steadfastness of God the Word revealing Himself to man, and the steadfastness of man believing and trusting in His Word and living faithfully upon it...He is from the side of man, man’s *pistis* answering to God’s *pistis*, as well as from the side of God, God’s *pistis* requiring man’s *pistis*’.⁴⁹¹

James Barr refuted Torrance’s reading of Hebraic understanding into the Greek,⁴⁹² after which Torrance never publicly wrote on this lexical approach again. Barr accepts that, on occasion, both *pistis* and *dikaiosune* are used in the LXX as alternate translations of ‘*emeth* in place of *aletheia*. However, the scarcity and contexts of these examples means neither *pistis* nor *dikaiosune* should be seen to universally appropriate the underlying connotations of divine faithfulness in the Hebrew term ‘*emeth* in their other uses throughout the New Testament. Barr writes,

The cases of ‘*emeth* translated by *pistis* are therefore so special and particular, so associated with particular books and their translation techniques, that they certainly can not be used as evidence for a general realisation of a relation of *pistis* to ‘truth’; and still less can they demonstrate that in the exegesis of the New Testament ‘again and again’ the presence of the Hebrew ‘*emeth* is to be detected behind *pistis*’.⁴⁹³

⁴⁸⁹ Torrance, ‘Aspect’, 113.

⁴⁹⁰ Torrance, ‘Aspect’, 113. Before Torrance, Barth translates Romans 3:22 as ‘through his [God’s] faithfulness in Jesus Christ’, yet fails to substantiate this reading (Barth, K. *The Epistle to the Romans*, (tr. Edwin C. Hoskyns), London: Oxford University Press, 1933), 96-97.

⁴⁹¹ Torrance, ‘Aspect’, 114.

⁴⁹² J. Barr, ‘Faith and Truth: An Examination of Some Linguistic Arguments’, in *Semantics of Biblical Language* (London: Oxford University Press, 1961, 161-205).

⁴⁹³ Barr, ‘Faith and Truth’, 193.

Beyond this, Barr criticises both Torrance and Hebert for eisegetically bringing their philosophical and theological concerns into their interpretation of the New Testament, neglecting the interpretative significance of the social context from which these terms were borne.

The whole argument here presupposes that the sense of words is determined predominantly by their metaphysical or theological usages... What is lacking from this discussion is any idea of a word as a semantic marker, indicating an essential difference from another word and having the ability to mark that differentia in any one of a number of contexts; not becoming intrinsically infected by any particular one of these contexts, and having its sense as a marker sustained and determined not by metaphysical or theological usage but by a general social milieu, in which the language has its life.⁴⁹⁴

On the precedent of other Greek and Jewish writings, Barr contends that ‘neither Greek metaphysics nor Hebrew conceptions of the reality of God are built into the intrinsic semantic function of the word *ἀλήθεια*’.⁴⁹⁵ Torrance, to Barr, is guilty of manipulating the lexicon to suit his broader theological purposes, his ‘whole theology becomes the characteristic semantic marker-function of the word ‘truth’’.⁴⁹⁶ More broadly, Barr questions whether Torrance’s claim that runs through the heart of his doctrine of vicarious faith of *pistis Iesou Christou* being a ‘polarised expression’ of both divine faithfulness and human faithfulness being united in the eternal Son, is not in fact two different ‘alternative meanings’ that Paul uses when appropriate. Torrance has, in creating a ‘polarised expression’ where there should simply be distinction in these alternative terms, has ‘integrated them in a theological reciprocity system, [and] is now simply trying to force upon each particularise the entirety of that system’.⁴⁹⁷

Although Torrance’s lexical approach has been left behind since Barr’s criticisms, the debate as to the interpretation and significance of *pistis Iesou Christou* still rages on, with many supporting Torrance’s conclusions on other exegetical grounds.⁴⁹⁸

⁴⁹⁴ Barr, ‘Faith and Truth’, 188.

⁴⁹⁵ Barr, ‘Faith and Truth’, 190

⁴⁹⁶ Barr, ‘Faith and Truth’, 191.

⁴⁹⁷ Barr, ‘Faith and Truth’, 204.

⁴⁹⁸ See bibliography in R. B. Hays, *The Faith of Jesus Christ: The Narrative Substructure of Galatians 3:1–4:11* (Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans, 1983), 147.

2. Key Points of the Πίστις Χριστοῦ Debate

The debate as to the translation of *pistis Christou* continues amongst biblical scholars, asking whether these instances of faith—or faithfulness—are references to Christ, or the human believer. Indeed, if *πίστις Χριστοῦ* can be read as Christ’s faith, either exclusively or in part, the phrase remains pregnant with implications for the soteriological significance of Christ having vicarious personal faith. Here, key points on either side of the debate are detailed.

2.1 Faith or Faithfulness?

The preliminary question of the *pistis Christou* debate is whether *pistis* should be translated “faith” or “faithfulness”? Does Christ or the Christian offer up a response of belief, or steadfastness and constancy?

Advocates of the objective genitive necessarily contend “faith” to be the proper translation, indeed, the centrality of human faith in Christ is the true significance of an objective genitive rendering of *pistis Christou*. Amongst those who favour the subjective genitive, however, there is slightly more ambiguity as to whether Christ himself can be said to have taken on the act of human belief. For example, Caneday and Choi, despite affirming the subjective genitive, contend for “faithfulness” as they simply don’t deem Christ’s faith to be a significant theme for Paul.⁴⁹⁹

2.2 Objective Genitive

2.2.1 Definite Article

In contention for the objective or subjective interpretation, perhaps the most common defence of the objective genitive is the appeal that, if *pistis* lacks any attachment to a definite article, then the default reading should be of Christ as the object of believer’s faith. The genitive should only be subjective in the presence of a specific article.⁵⁰⁰

⁴⁹⁹ A. B. Caneday, ‘Galatians 3:22ff—a Crux Interpretum for ΠΙΣΤΙΣ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ in Paul’s Thought’, (in *Papers Presented at the 47th National Conference of the Evangelical Theological Society, Philadelphia, PA, November 16-18, 1995*, Evangelical Theological Society papers, Portland: Theological Research Exchange Network, 1999), 10; H. S. Choi, ‘ΠΙΣΤΙΣ in Galatians 5:5–6: Neglected Evidence for the Faithfulness of Christ’, (*Journal of Biblical Literature*, Vol. 124, [2005], 467-490), 471.

⁵⁰⁰ A. J. Hultgren, ‘The *Pistis Christou* Formulation in Paul’, (*Novum Testamentum* 22, 1980, 248-63) 253; J. D. G. Dunn, ‘Once More, ΠΙΣΤΙΣ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ’, (in E.E. Johnson and D.M. Hay (eds.), *Pauline Theology Volume 4: Looking Back, Pressing On*, Atlanta: The Society of Biblical Literature, 1997), 64-66; G. Fee, *Pauline Christology: An Exegetical-Theological Study* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 2007), 224-225; S. E. Porter and A. W. Pitts, ‘Πίστις with a Preposition and Genitive Modifier: Lexical, Semantic, and Syntactic Considerations in the Πίστις Χριστοῦ Discussion’, (in M.F. Bird and P.M. Sprinkle (eds.), *The Faith of Jesus Christ: Exegetical, Biblical, and Theological Studies*, Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2009, 33-53), 49-51.

However, scholars on both sides of this debate have rejected this claim,⁵⁰¹ as objective advocate Silva writes, ‘the presence or absence of the definite article is of no help whatever in determining the force of the genitival construction... The presence or absence of the article is motivated by other factors (sometimes inscrutable) and is no clue to the semantic import of the genitival relationship’.⁵⁰²

2.2.2 Objective Genitive: Common Greek?

One of the main defences of the objective genitive is that the expected formulation for “faith in Christ”, *πίστις ἐν Χριστοῦ* (*pistis en Christou*), is simply not a Pauline idiom. Thus, *πίστις Χριστοῦ* read in the objective genitive would have been the common phrase for Greek speakers at the time.⁵⁰³ Harrisville, contends that the common Patristic grammatical interpretation was the objective reading, and when the subjective genitive was used with *pistis* it was not in *pistis Christou*, but *pistis autou* (‘his faith’).⁵⁰⁴ Harrisville does concede, however, that as the Patristics indeed varied in their use of both the objective and subjective genitive, a universal standard cannot be placed onto Paul in every instance of his use of them.⁵⁰⁵ Later, Harrisville scours formulations of *pistis* and its derivatives pre-dating the Christian era, to deem whether the use of objective genitive alongside *pistis* is ‘good greek’.⁵⁰⁶ It was, in fact, the dative which was most common throughout ancient Greek writings for expressing a personal faith or reliance, but both the objective and subjective genitive would still be regularly accepted.⁵⁰⁷ In fact, it may be

⁵⁰¹ R. B. Hays, ‘ΠΙΣΤΙΣ and Pauline Christology: What is at Stake?’ (in E.E. Johnson and D.M. Hay (eds.), *Pauline Theology Volume 4: Looking Back, Pressing On*, Atlanta: The Society of Biblical Literature, 1997, 35-60), 57, where Hays notes for the record that Dunn himself conceded the irrelevancy of the definite article argument in the editorial discussion group; S. K. Williams, ‘Again *Pistis Christou*’, (*Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 49, 1987, 431-47), 432; D. A. Campbell, *The Deliverance of God: An Apocalyptic Rereading of Justification in Paul*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 643, 847, 1101-1102, 1149, 41; ‘The Faithfulness of Jesus Christ in Romans 3:22’, in M.F. Bird and P.M. Sprinkle (eds.), *The Faith of Jesus Christ: Exegetical, Biblical, and Theological Studies* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2009, 57-71) 66-67; I. G. Wallis, *The Faith of Christ in Early Christian Traditions*, (Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series 84, Cambridge: CUP, 1995), 70.

⁵⁰² M. Silva, ‘Faith versus Works of Law in Galatians’, in P.T. O’Brien, D.A. Carson and M.A. Seifrid (eds.), *Justification and Variegated Nomism: Vol 2, The Paradoxes of Paul*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 217-48), 227.

⁵⁰³ Hultgren, ‘The *Pistis Christou* Formulation’, 254; R. B. Matlock, “‘Even the Demons Believe’ - Paul and *πίστις Χριστοῦ*”, (*Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 64, 2002, 300-318), 306; Silva, ‘Faith versus Works of Law’, 228-230.

⁵⁰⁴ R. A. Harrisville, ‘ΠΙΣΤΙΣ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ: Witness of the Fathers’, (*Novum Testamentum* 36, 1994, 233-241), 241.

⁵⁰⁵ Harrisville, ‘Witness of the Fathers’, 241.

⁵⁰⁶ R. A. Harrisville, ‘Before *Πίστις Χριστοῦ*: The Objective Genitive as Good Greek’, *Novum Testamentum* 48, 2006, 353-58), 353-354.

⁵⁰⁷ Harrisville, ‘Before *Πίστις Χριστοῦ*’, 353, 356.

found that a single author may use both the objective or the subjective within one work, so again, a universal standard cannot be placed on each instance of a genitive.⁵⁰⁸

In further historical literature, we see the grammatical ambiguity of the Greek continued into Patristic scholarship. While the explicit references to the objective or subjective genitive are few amongst the Patristics, it must be said that the objective seems to be preferred.⁵⁰⁹ However, the question must be asked, for what reason? In Wallis' examination of the Fathers, he finds that the subjective genitive was most common, but under the looming threat of Arianism, the objective became more prevalent in defending the divinity of Christ—that Christ could have had faith at all is disputed by on the grounds that faith is an exclusively human act.⁵¹⁰ Elliott, on the other hand, contends that any move towards the subjective reading would simply be done 'despite the evidence of the witness of the tradition of Christian theology'.⁵¹¹ In any sense, such ambiguity also makes placing any universal standard onto the biblical and Patristic use and interpretation of genitive an impossible task.

2.2.3 "Eis Christon Iēsou episteusamen" in Galatians 2.16 Illuminates Pistis Christou

Another point from advocates of the objective genitive, is that Paul's use of the phrase *εἰς Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν ἐπίστευσάμεν* (*eis Christon Iēsou episteusamen*, 'we believed in Christ Jesus' (Gal. 2:16), reveals his use of genitive in the same verse—*διὰ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ* (*dia pisteōs Ihsou Christou*) and *ἐκ πίστεως Χριστοῦ* (*ek pisteōs Christou*)—to be objective.⁵¹² Subjective advocates have responded, criticising that few have even attempted to justify that *eis Christon Iēsou episteusamen* should be read as an explanation on the two surrounding genitives,⁵¹³ and assumptions of such weight cannot be made in a debate such as this.

We would also add that, in terms of content, it would not be beyond the realms of possibility to suggest that Paul could speak of the Christian's "belief in Christ Jesus",

⁵⁰⁸ Harrisville, 'Before Πίστις Χριστοῦ', 356.

⁵⁰⁹ R. B. Matlock, 'Saving Faith: The Rhetoric and Semantics of πίστις in Paul', in M.F. Bird and P.M Sprinkle (eds.), *The Faith of Jesus Christ: Exegetical, Biblical, and Theological Studies*, Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2009, 73-90), 87.

⁵¹⁰ Wallis, *Early Christian Traditions*, 200-212.

⁵¹¹ Elliott, M.W., 'Πίστις Χριστοῦ in the Church Fathers and Beyond', (in M.F. Bird and P.M Sprinkle [eds.], *The Faith of Jesus Christ: Exegetical, Biblical, and Theological Studies*, Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2009, 277-89), 289.

⁵¹² J. Murray, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1968), 371; Hultgren, 'The Pistis Christou Formulation', 255; T. Schreiner, *Romans* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1998), 185; Silva, 'Faith versus Works of Law', 232; Fee, *Pauline Christology*, 224; Matlock, 'Saving Faith', 83-86.

⁵¹³ A. B. Caneday, 'Galatians 3:22ff', 12; Campbell, *The Deliverance of God*, 1145-46. Only Matlock offers up a case for such a reading, 'Saving Faith', 83-86.

directly conjoined with a statement of the faith of Christ. Again, no universal standard of Paul's use of genitive can be established from this context in Galatians. Moreover, as discussed, the use of one grammatical function does not instantly rule out varied use of other functions, even within the same text, more so in other works—the use of objective genitive in one passage does not create a universal standard that we can expect of Paul.

2.2.4 Law Contrast

Some on the objective side contend that, as Paul often contrasts works of the law with *pistis* (Rom. 3.28, 4.5, 4.13-16, 9.32, 10.4; Gal. 2.16, 3.2, 3.5, 3.11-12, 3.23-26; Eph. 2.8; and Phil. 3.9), *pistis Christou* can be seen to prescribe a human response of “faith in Christ” to counter the human failure in works of the law.⁵¹⁴ However, this is generally countered by advocates of the subjective genitive that the truly significant contrast, for Paul, was not between two types of human action, but between human action and divine action. Markus Barth writes,

It is unlikely that the alternative preached by Paul to perverse, external, optimistic works-righteousness consisted of nothing better than a supposedly healthy, inverse, passive self-assertion. If Christ's own faith counted nothing, and if men were totally delivered to the sincerity, depth, certainty of their own faith—how could any man ever be saved? Doubts about himself and his own honesty would trouble him without end. But there is no doubt about the perfect faith of Jesus Christ.⁵¹⁵

2.2.5 Abraham's Faith

Another argument for the objective reading is Paul's use in Romans and Galatians of Abraham as an example of faith (Rom. 4.3; Gal. 3.6). As Abraham is counted righteous because of his faith—not simply his faithfulness—*pistis Christou*, when objectively rendered ‘faith in Christ’, presents those believing in Christ as the New Testament

⁵¹⁴ Murray, *Romans*, 365-67; Hultgren, ‘The *Pistis Christou* Formulation’, 258-59; Dunn, ‘Once More, ΠΙΣΤΙΣ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ’, 80-81; Fee, *Pauline Christology*, 226.

⁵¹⁵ M. Barth, ‘The Faith of the Messiah’, (*The Heythrop Journal* 10, 1969, 363-70), 368-69. See also, M. D. Hooker, ‘Πίστις Χριστοῦ’, (in M.D. Hooker [ed.], *From Adam to Christ: Essays on Paul*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990, 165-186), 180, 186; A. B. Caneday, ‘Galatians 3:22ff’, 20; Wallis, *Early Christian Traditions*, 74, 110-111, 119-20; J. L. Martyn, *Galatians* (New York: Doubleday, 1997), 271; Choi, ‘Galatians 5:5-6’, 480.

continuation of the framework of justification by faith established in Abraham's 'faith in God'.⁵¹⁶

However, the significance of this continuation of justification by faith from Abraham to the New Testament believer need not be weakened by the subjective reading. Simply, Christ would be counterpart to Abraham's belief,⁵¹⁷ offering vicarious faith within which those who believe participate. Hays, bluntly, believes the strength of this link between the faith of Abraham and the faith of Christ to be 'a fatal embarrassment for all interpreters who seek to treat *Ἰησοῦ* as an objective genitive'.⁵¹⁸

2.3 The Subjective Genitive

2.3.1 Repetition

From the subjective camp, a poor—yet often used—criticism is that the objective genitive creates unnecessary repetition from Paul in Romans 3:22; Galatians 2:16; 3:22; and Philippians 3:9.4.⁵¹⁹ However, repetition need not mean redundancy in Paul's writing. Dunn contends that, though the practice may seem strange to modern eyes, Paul's repetition of the same point, even within the same sentence, may have been the grammatical normality for emphasising a matter of significance.⁵²⁰ Some from the subjective side have called for this argument to be dropped.⁵²¹

⁵¹⁶ J. D. G. Dunn, 'Faith, Faithfulness', in K.D Sakenfeld (ed.), *The New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible Vol 2: D–H* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2007, 407-23), 418-19; 'ΕΚ ΠΙΣΤΕΩΣ: A Key to the Meaning of ΠΙΣΤΙΣ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ', in J.R. Wagner, C.K. Rowe and A.K. Grieb (eds.), *The Word Leaps the Gap: Essays on Scripture and Theology in Honor of Richard B. Hays*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 351-66), 361; H. W. Johnson, H.W., 'The Paradigm of Abraham in Galatians 3:6-9', (*Trinity Journal* 8, [1987], 179-99), 192.

⁵¹⁷ K. Schenck, '2 Corinthians and the Πίστις Χριστοῦ Debate', (*Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 70, 524-37), 533-537.

⁵¹⁸ Hays, 'What is at Stake?', 47

⁵¹⁹ M. Barth, 'Jews and Gentiles: The Social Character of Justification in Paul', (*Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 5, 1968, 241–67), 247; Hays, 'What Is at Stake?', 46; R. Longenecker, 'The Obedience of Christ in the Theology of the Early Church', in R. Banks (ed.) *Reconciliation and Hope: New Testament Essays on Atonement and Eschatology*, (Exeter: Paternoster, 1974, 142-52), 147; P. T. O'Brien, *The Epistle to the Philippians: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 249; S. Tonstad, 'πίστις Χριστοῦ: Reading Paul in a New Paradigm', (*Andrews University Seminary Studies* 40, 2002, 37-59), 54.

⁵²⁰ J. D. G. Dunn, *Romans 1–8* (Word Biblical Commentary, Volume 38A, Dallas: Word Books, 1988), 166.

⁵²¹ D. A. Campbell, *The Quest for Paul's Gospel: A Suggested Strategy* (London: T & T Clark, 2005), 221-222; *The Deliverance of God*, 1093, 1146; 'The Faithfulness of Jesus Christ in Romans 3:22', 66.

2.3.3 “Faith in”: Wrong Use of Genitive?

Another point from the subjective side is that it would have been incorrect grammar for Paul to have used a genitive attached to *pistis* to refer to faith *in* that figure.⁵²² Howard notes that, outside of *pistis Christou*, Paul attaches *pistis* to a subject twenty-four times to express that subject’s faith,⁵²³ and that it would have been ‘inappropriate to the Hellenistic Jewish mentality to express the object of faith by means of the objective genitive’.⁵²⁴ This, however, has been soundly refuted by biblical scholars,⁵²⁵ with commonly cited biblical examples of faith in a figure articulated with *pistis* being attached to an objective genitive in Mk 11.22, Acts 3.16, Jas 2.1, Rev. 2.13 and Rev. 14.12.

2.3.4 Habbakuk 2:4

One key point for the subjective reading is the interpretation of Paul’s quotation of Habbakuk 2:4 in Romans 1:17 and Galatians 3:11. Instead of “the righteous (one)” being read as a plural reference to all who have faith, this is to be read as a messianic title for Christ himself establishing divine righteousness by his faith/faithfulness.⁵²⁶

In the context of Romans 1:17, Cranfield criticises that it would be unlikely that Paul’s readers would assume that “the righteous one” is a reference to Christ. Christ has not been mentioned since 1:8-9, whereas the plural body of believers are mentioned directly before the Habbakuk quotation (1:16), making them the far more obvious object of the statement.⁵²⁷ However, if Hays and Campbell are correct in their claim that the synonymy of Christ and “the righteous one” was so engrained into the mindset of the early Judaeo-Christian community,⁵²⁸ then the notion that Paul’s reader may have read 1:17 as Christ’s righteousness through faith/faithfulness is certainly tenable.

⁵²² G. Howard, ‘Notes and Observations on the “Faith of Christ”’, (*Harvard Theological Review* 60, 1967, 459-84), 460-461; D. W. B. Robinson, ““Faith of Jesus Christ”—a New Testament Debate’, (*Reformed Theological Review* 29, 1970, 71-81), 78-79; Williams, ‘Again Pistis Christou’, 434; Wallis, *Early Christian Traditions*, 88.

⁵²³ Howard, ‘Notes and Observations’, 459.

⁵²⁴ G. Howard, ‘Faith of Christ’, (in D.F. Friedman (ed.), *Anchor Bible Dictionary Vol. 2: D–G*, [New York: Doubleday, 1992, pp758-60]), 758.

⁵²⁵ D. Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 225; C. E. B. Cranfield, *On Romans and Other New Testament Essays* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1998), 84-85; Fee, *Pauline Christology*, 224-225.

⁵²⁶ Hays, *The Faith of Jesus Christ*, 132-41; D. A. Campbell, ‘Romans 1:17-A Crux Interpretum for the πίστις Χριστοῦ Debate’, (*Journal of Biblical Literature* 113, 1994, 265-85), 281-84; *The Deliverance of God*, 613-16; ‘The Faithfulness of Jesus Christ in Romans 3:22’, 64-66; Wallis, *Early Christian Traditions*, 110-111.

⁵²⁷ Cranfield, *Romans*, p88.

⁵²⁸ R. B. Hays, ‘Apocalyptic Hermeneutics: Habakkuk Proclaims “The Righteous One”’, (in R. Hays [ed.], *The Conversion of the Imagination: Paul as Interpreter of Israel’s Scripture*, [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005, 119-42]), 121-36; Campbell, ‘The Faithfulness of Jesus Christ in Romans 3:22’, 65.

2.3.5 The Coming of a Singular Pistis

Finally, some advocates of the subjective genitive appeal that Paul's use of *pistis Christou* in Galatians 3:22 is illuminated by His exclamation in 3:23 that the causal factor in breaking human bondage to the law, is the arrival of a singular *pistis*.⁵²⁹ Dunn contends that this arrival of *pistis*, to Paul, is simply a shift from a time of bondage into a new era of faith, that Christ as the true seed of Abraham has necessitated a human response of faith in return, a 'complement to the coming of the seed'.⁵³⁰ However, this wouldn't make sense in Paul's immediate context. Christ is the sole seed of Abraham to whom "the promise" comes (Galatians 3:16), the law shall stand until the seed comes to whom the promise has been made (3:19), and now *pistis* has come, the bondage of the law has ended (3:23). In this context, instead of the promise being given by "faith in Christ" to all who believe, surely it makes much more sense in the context of Christ being the seed who bears the promise, that the promise be given "by the faith of Jesus Christ" to those who believe. Thus the breaking of the law by the coming of a singular *pistis*, is easily attributable to Christ in the immediate context. It would be too significant a suspension of disbelief, for Campbell, to suggest that the coming *pistis* and Christ as the coming seed are references to two different subjects.⁵³¹

3. A Different Path?

One thing that is clear of the *pistis Christou* debate, is that there are no clear resolutions. Some, from this ambiguity, have looked for a different path, other than the binary choice between the subjective and objective genitive.

A largely unsuccessful approach to an alternative resolution, is to shift the emphasis in interpreting *pistis Christou* towards the adjectival function of the genitive. Though this gives deeper respect to the theological significance of the term, an adjectival reading still largely requires one to choose between the objective or the subjective. For example, on opposite sides of the debate Hultgren and Williams translate the term 'Christic faith' and 'Christ-faith', respectively.⁵³² Though each translation rightly emphasises the Christological foundation and Christocentric nature of all Christian faith, each still regards

⁵²⁹ Hays, *Faith of Jesus*, 139; Wallis, *Early Christian Traditions*, 87-88, 113; Choi, 'ΠΙΣΤΙΣ in Galatians 3.5-6: Neglected Evidence for the Faithfulness of Christ', (*Journal of Biblical Literature* 124, 2005, 467-490), 475; Campbell, *The Quest*, 196, 225-230; *The Deliverance of God*, 869-874.

⁵³⁰ Dunn, 'ΕΚ ΠΙΣΤΕΩΣ', 364.

⁵³¹ Campbell, *The Deliverance of God*, 869

⁵³² Hultgren, 'The *Pistis Christou* Formulation', 257; Williams, 'Again *Pistis Christou*', 437

Paul to be exclusively referring to one particular individual figure or group who exercises this *pistis*, in a singular objective or subjective interpretation.

Here we recognise the true significance of Torrance's interpretation of *pistis Christou*, as a "polarised expression". Such an interpretation seeks to transcend the impasse of the objective and subjective, bringing the significance of both types of genitive into the phrase. However, Debbie Hunn suggests that overburdening the phrase in such a way crosses the line of plausibility for both Paul's authorial intentions and his intelligibility for the reader;

To read *πίστις Χριστοῦ* as both subjective and objective...means that in each occurrence of the phrase we are to read of both Christians and Christ expressing *πίστις* and to track these parallel meanings through the text as Paul continues his argument. Overloading a phrase with theology overloads the reader's mind as well.⁵³³

Firstly, for Hunn to dismiss a particular interpretation simply because of its complexity is simply bad practice, particularly since a term holding layers of meaning is not exactly outside the realms of plausibility. Torrance exemplifies the contention of some grammarians, that one genitive in isolation may be insufficient for the portrayal of the intended message. For Zerwick, to choose between the objective and subjective is to 'sacrifice to clarity of meaning part of the fullness of the meaning'.⁵³⁴ Secondly, however, Torrance does indeed deserve criticism for his exegetical ambiguity, as his emphasis on the *polarity* of Christ's faith and the Christian's faith in *pistis Christou* may mislead one to the conclusion that these two poles of subjective and objective genitive must be lexically present in every instance of the term. The presence of multi-faceted meaning in a genitive, still may require one to say that one of these is not present in the sentence. Hooker salvages the significance of Torrance's work, resolving his antithesis by amending his phrase to be a '*concentric* expression'.⁵³⁵ That although the subjective and objective genitive are not lexically present in every instance of *pistis Christou*—thereby references to Christ's faith and the Christian's faith may indeed be distinct—the meaning of one may

⁵³³ D. Hunn, 'Debating the Faithfulness of Jesus Christ in Twentieth Century Scholarship', (in M.F. Bird and P.M. Sprinkle (eds.), *The Faith of Jesus Christ: Exegetical, Biblical and Theological Studies*, Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2009, 15-32), 25.

⁵³⁴ M. Zerwick, *Biblical Greek Illustrated By Examples*, (Rome: Biblical Institute, 1963), 8; see Osborne, G.R., *The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*, (Downers Grove: IVP, 1991), 55-56.

⁵³⁵ Hooker, 'Πίστις Χριστοῦ', 184.

be included in the presence of the other, and still point towards the theological inseparability of the two. To Hooker, '[t]he lexica's different definitions [of *πίστις*] reflect what is in fact a hen-and-egg situation. Our trust/faith is founded in the trustworthiness/fidelity of God, but those who trust in him become like him, trustworthy in their turn'.⁵³⁶

In her exegesis of Romans 3:21-26—one of the most contentious passages in this debate—Hooker recognises the dual emphasis of Christ's faith *and* Christian faith within *Πίστις Χριστοῦ*. Within the narrative of Romans, the phrase sits between Paul's initial presentation of the gospel in 1:2-4 and the upcoming gospel summaries in 4:24-5, and 5:6-11, in which we begin to see the running theme of human faith being grounded in the faithfulness of God,⁵³⁷ a theme that continues into 3:22. As only God has remained faithful (3:2), a fact revealed (3:5) in the universality of human sinfulness (3:10), God's righteousness is to be made known apart from the law (3:21). Clearly, it is to Christians that this righteousness will be made known (*πάντας τοὺς πιστεύοντας [pantas tous pisteuontas]*, 'all who believe' [3:22b]), so Paul is to provide explanation as to *how* this revelation will occur. So, continuing the theme of human faith being grounded in God's faithfulness, Paul presents righteousness coming through Christ's own *πίστις*. To Hooker, it is obvious that 'God's righteousness is revealed *through Christ himself*, not in our response to him'.⁵³⁸ This is not to neglect the prominence of Christian belief as recipient of revelation, but to acknowledge that this manifestation of divine righteousness is grounded upon Christ's own *pistis*.

Does this, however, mean that Christ himself *has faith*, or does He share the divine faithfulness? Hooker recognises both in Paul's writings. When later contrasting the obedience of Adam to Christ, Paul thrice emphasises that it is God who is at work *through* the obedience of Christ (Rom. 5:15-17).⁵³⁹ Paul uses the same logic in 3:25, as righteousness is made known because God works *through* the obedience of Christ—Christ is put forward as a *ἱλαστήριον (hilastērion, 'a mercy seat')* through his faith/fidelity. As Christ is obedient unto death, we see both the faithfulness of God at work, actualised through a genuine display of human faith in Christ's obedience. To

⁵³⁶ M. D. Hooker, 'Another Look at *πίστις Χριστοῦ*', (*Scottish Journal of Theology* 69, [2016], 46-62), 53.

⁵³⁷ Paul opens by establishing that the Gentiles come to share in the 'obedience of faith' as saints belonging to Jesus Christ (Romans 1:5-7), which is outworked in the gospel of the resurrected Son of God born of the line of David (1:3-4), while ultimately grounded on the faithfulness of God in his promises to Israel (1:2).

⁵³⁸ Hooker, 'Another Look', 59.

⁵³⁹ Cf. Paul's emphasis in 2 Corinthians 5:19, that God at work *through* Christ reconciles humanity to himself.

Hooker, 'redemption was achieved both through the action of God *and* through Christ's trust in him'.⁵⁴⁰

In this, Paul's theme of human participation in Christ extends to acts of human faith being participative in Christ's own faith. Those led by the same Spirit of Christ have come to share in his divine parentage (Rom. 8:14–17), by such participation becoming conformed to his image (8: 29), coming into the same 'obedience of faith' (1:5) of which the Son is the firstborn in his perfect and sinless obedience within human nature, that has fulfilled the expectation of the law on his human kin (8:4). Hooker sees no coincidence 'that every occurrence of the phrase *πίστις Χριστοῦ* is found in a context which speaks of the faith of Christians, for through death and resurrection his faith becomes theirs'.⁵⁴¹ Continuing this theme throughout his other works, Paul writes to the Galatians that, as the Son is born of Mary, under the law, to set humanity free from the law into the parentage of God (4:4-5), we too have died to the law, as we live by faith because of the obedience of Christ who now lives in us (2:20).⁵⁴² To the Philippians Paul writes that, as Christ assumes our nature and is obedient to the point of death cross, those 'in him' share his resurrection in conformity to his glory (Phil. 3:11, 21), because those 'in Christ' participate in the righteousness attained through Christ's own *pistis* (Philippians 3:9).⁵⁴³

The subjective genitive includes within it the objective genitive, not in a linguistic sense that every instance of one also includes the other, but in a theological sense, that in every reference of human faith in Christ, one must remember that such faith is participative and reliant upon other references to Christ's own faith. Hooker states,

[The] answer to the question 'Does this phrase refer to Christ's faith or ours?' may be 'Both'. Nevertheless, that faith/faithfulness is primarily that of Christ, and we share in it only because we are in him. Although all the passages where the phrase *πίστις Ἰησοῦ* is used refer to our faith in Christ, it would seem that this faith is possible only because it is a sharing in his. In Christ, and through him, we are able to share his trust and obedience, and so become what God called his people to be.⁵⁴⁴

⁵⁴⁰ Hooker, 'Another Look', 60.

⁵⁴¹ Hooker, 'Another Look', 61.

⁵⁴² Hooker, 'Another Look', 61.

⁵⁴³ Hooker expands on the link between Philippians 2:6-11 and Philippians 3 in *From Adam to Christ*, (Cambridge: CUP, 1990) 88–100.

⁵⁴⁴ Hooker, 'Another Look', 62.

Though much work has been done in the *pistis Christou* debate, further biblical work in this area would show Torrance's integration of this dual usage into one holistic system of reciprocity in the interpretation of *pistis Christou* to be completely understandable. To do so is simply to recognise the inseparability of the term's distinct uses that points towards a larger structure of the incorporation of human faith into the personal faith of the eternal Son.

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