Excerpts From The Consciousness Of The Historical Jesus Written By Austin Stevenson PhD

The following excerpts are from:

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Observation:

Dr. Stevenson's book provides not only ample inroads but also closure in the topics only briefly alluded to here. These excerpts from Dr. Stevenson are given as a part of about three or four other sources simply to offer context on the range and depth given. Part of the goal in giving various excerpts from various sources and juxtaposing them alongside these and the other PDFs is simply to marginate and delineate the edges of what has already been soundly discussed rather than to try to do what only the full length essays and books can do (obviously) in order to allude to the fact that none of the topics are, at the end of the day, problematic for standard Creedal Trinitarian Christology.

Excerpts From Chapter Three's Doctrine of the Incarnation

Albert Schweitzer wrote that, at Chalcedon, the "doctrine of the two natures dissolved the unity of the Person, and thereby cut off the last possibility of a return to the historical Jesus."1 He continued, "That the historic Jesus is something different from the Jesus Christ of the doctrine of the Two Natures seems to us now self-evident. We can, at the present day, scarcely imagine the long agony in which the historical view of the life of Jesus came to birth."2 Schweitzer is not alone in his sense that the dogmatic confession of Christ's two natures is incompatible with historical inquiry into the figure of Jesus of Nazareth.3 And it was not only the historical Jesus scholars who rejected the possibility of speaking of Jesus as a historical person with two "natures," for many theologians then and now have argued similarly.4

In this chapter I would like to address two closely related issues. One is a modern trajectory of theological reflection that has rejected ontological Christology in favor of what is often termed a "Christology from below," in which Jesus' divinity is accounted for by means of the perfection of some characteristic of his humanity, such as his God-consciousness or archetypal receptivity of the Spirit.5 Many have supposed that this reversal of aspect, which begins with narrative,

intention, and operation rather than ontology, is more amenable to historical treatments of Jesus. The other issue is historical Jesus scholars' conviction that treating Jesus as the subject of critical historical investigation necessitates the denial of Chalcedon. I contend that both elements rest on a mistake, due in large part to fundamental misunderstandings of classical Christological discourse, which are, in turn, often due to problematic metaphysical presuppositions, further highlighting the relevance of the previous chapter.6 Compared with the various Christologies "from below," I want to suggest that classical Christology is better suited to maintain the properly finite reality of Christ's human nature and the unity of his person such that Jesus can be considered the subject of historical investigation, and that Aquinas' Christology in particular offers resources to augment our access to the historical figure of Jesus.7 I will begin this argument with a critical discussion of philosophical concepts of personhood and their bearing on the oneness of Christ. Following that, the core of the chapter will provide a constructive account of Aquinas' doctrine of the hypostatic union, which includes discussion of a Thomist "Spirit Christology" that unites ontological and narrative accounts of Jesus' divine identity, affording common ground for dialogue between metaphysical and historical treatments of Christ.

Hypostasis and Personal Identity

Recent scholarship has noted a marked tendency in modern Christological reflection toward Nestorianism: a conception of the Incarnation as the accidental union of a human person with a divine person.8 This tendency underwrites a persistent dualism that frequently leads scholars into conceptual gridlocks like those we discussed in Chapter 1, confronting them with insurmountable dichotomies that drive them to reject basic elements of classical theism, such as divine simplicity, impassibility, and so on.9 This tendency is acutely manifest among historical Jesus scholars, and their discussions of traditional Christological concepts belie a common assumption that the Christian tradition endorses a Christology in which a divine nature is united to the human person of Jesus.10 By way of contrast, Aaron Riches rightly notes that the unity of Christ is traditionally maintained by affirming that "the human nature of Jesus exists only as subsisting in the divine Son such that, in the Son, the human Jesus and the Lord God are 'one and the same' (*unus et idem*)" (see 1 Cor. 8:6).11 In other words, there is no human person in Christ; the human nature of Jesus only exists insofar as it is united to the divine person of the Word.12 To unpack the significance of this approach for historical study of Jesus, we will begin by addressing common misconceptions about the kind of unity envisaged in classical Christology.

The Chalcedonian definition confesses that Christ is truly God and truly man, and that the distinction of natures is not taken away by the hypostatic union, "but rather the property of each nature [is] preserved, and concur[s] in one Person [πρόσωπον] and one *hypostasis* [ὑπόστασιν], not parted or divided into two persons [πρόσωπα], but one and the same Son, and only begotten, God the Word, the Lord Jesus Christ."13 The terms used to describe the oneness of Christ, the

Greek nouns *prosopon* and *hypostasis*, are typically translated into Latin as persona, and English as "person." However, "person" has come to have a different meaning in contemporary thought than it did for the church fathers, and this confusion has led not a few theologians and historians astray in their understanding of Chalcedon. Rather than attempting a detailed genealogical account of the philosophical influences on specific theologians, I want to discuss an idea that seems to have been "in the air," so to speak, by the eighteenth century and remains highly influential today. This is an account of personhood grounded in consciousness and memory: an approach originally proposed by the English philosopher John Locke.

Around the mid-seventeenth century, the question of personal identity began to shift away from ontology toward a more subjective approach. No longer understood as something inscribed in things themselves, it was now thought of as arising from our concepts or ideas of things. Alongside this shift, the concept of personhood began to serve a different purpose philosophically. For Boethius, a person was a particular type of *supposit*, and it was a concept that answered questions related to individuation.[14] But virtually all of the prominent English philosophers in the seventeenth century were nominalists, and nominalists need not account for individuation.[15] As a result, they began to consider the question of personhood as an inquiry into what preserves personal identity across time and change. When Locke published his chapter on identity in the second edition of his Essay *Concerning Human Understanding* in 1694, he forged a new direction for this conversation, arguing that personal identity across time is a function of continuity of consciousness, rather than substance-identity. "For the same consciousness being preserv'd," he wrote, "whether in the same or different Substances, the personal Identity is preserv'd."[16] Locke's account is about diachronic personal identity, not synchronic individuation—he argues that bare existence is sufficient to account for individuation[17]—and it remains a leading approach in the literature, despite centuries of critical response.[18] Locke distinguishes between three abstract ideas under which we can consider human subjects: soul, man, and person.[19] "Soul" refers to the thinking substance, and Locke remains agnostic about its immateriality; though, notably, many subsequent thinkers pick up his approach because of its compatibility with a materialist philosophy of mind.[20] "Man" essentially refers to the human body, though the exact referent of these terms will depend on one's broader anthropology.[21] The importance of the concept of "Person," in this triad, is that it indicates the aspect of a human subject with respect to which it can be judged from a legal or moral perspective.[22] The question of personal identity is the ground of law and morality. Whom can we hold accountable for their actions? Not the "Soul" or the "Man," but the "Person," which Locke grounds in a relatively novel concept of consciousness.[23]

In the English-speaking world, the first philosopher to use the term "consciousness" with a particular technical meaning was the Cambridge Platonist Ralph Cudworth (1617–88). Drawing on Neoplatonic sources, he used the term to indicate an awareness of one's own thoughts and actions, and in his usage it is closely related to the more widely used concept of conscience:

conscience is the term for moral judgments of the self, based on internal *conscious* reflection.24 Consciousness thus refers to that piece of the conscience that precedes moral judgment and enables reflection. Notably, Cudworth only ascribes to consciousness a role in knowledge, and he holds that personal identity is secured by the immaterial substance of the soul.25 Locke takes up this concept of consciousness, which is distinct from two closely related notions: reflection and memory. Reflection occurs when our mental acts become objects of observation: it is a higher-order mental act directed toward other mental acts.26 Memory is the way our consciousness relates to the past: it is the avenue for acts of thinking linked to the past, to which consciousness attends, and it is through this relation to past experiences that personal identity is preserved over time. Consciousness, on the other hand, is understood as a presence of the mind to itself, an immediate awareness that attends all acts of thinking but is not itself a distinct or higher-order act of thinking.27 For Locke, consciousness does not account for the individuation of substances; it presupposes a thinking substance and adds a particular abstract idea under which it is to be considered.28 While conscious memory can span gaps of unconsciousness, loss of memory can mean that I am still the same "Man" as before, but no longer the same "Person," and in this way personhood floats entirely free of substance.29

Locke's approach was developed in various ways by Leibniz and Wolff, attacked by Hume, and reestablished on different grounds by Kant. Its influence is also perceptible in the reflection on *das Gefühl* ("feeling" or "sentiment") in the German Romantic movement. Schleiermacher (1768–1834) transformed this broader Romantic concept into the distinctive notion of the "feeling of absolute dependence," which stood at the foundation of his dogmatic project.30 By grounding dogma in religious consciousness, he established an alternative basis for theological speech that was broadly empirical. Further, because he developed a Christology out of human subjectivity, Schleiermacher has been referred to as the "father of consciousness Christology."31 While Schleiermacher is directly influenced far more by Kant than Locke, the concept of personal identity grounded in consciousness stands at the heart of his Christological project and appears to contribute to his rejection of Chalcedon.

In his mature work, *The Christian Faith*, Schleiermacher interrogates the Chalcedonian approach, asking: "how, then, is the unity of a person's life to endure with the duality of natures without one yielding to the other … or, without the two natures blending into each other?"32 He believed that the starting point of Chalcedon inevitably results in either Eutychianism or one of the twin errors of Apollinarianism and Nestorianism. Furthermore, he opposed the dyothelitism33 of the Christian tradition, concluding that "if Christ has two wills, then the unity of the person is no more than apparent."34 This led Schleiermacher to reconceive divine transcendence and human existence, as well as the unity of the two in Christ, in a radically new fashion. For him, Christ brings the divine to full expression within history through his perfect god-consciousness—that is, his arrival at a complete consciousness of the self as dependent on God. This is not a divine consciousness in Christ, but a human consciousness fully aware of its

dependence on the divine; Jesus calls himself the Son "insofar as the Father is in him, but not insofar as something divine, which is called Son, dwells in him as a man."35 As Thomas Joseph White has noted, a number of more recent theologians have followed a similar trajectory, and scholars such as Karl Rahner,36 Jacques Dupuis, Jon Sobrino, and, in a different sense, N. T. Wright and Hans Urs von Balthasar, have sought to ground the unity of Christ in a form of consciousness, thus interpreting the personal union of God and man in the Incarnation through the medium of Christ's human spiritual operations.37 Even scholars not intending to develop a "consciousness Christology" often intuitively assume that the confession of one "person" amounts to, or is reducible to, positing one consciousness in Christ. Keith Ward stands as a representative example. In his book, *Christ and the Cosmos*, he states erroneously that "in what was to become Patristic orthodoxy, it was asserted that the human consciousness of Jesus was identical with the divine consciousness of the eternal Logos."38 Ward reflexively interprets the patristic language of hypostatic union *in terms of consciousness*, and he is not alone in this.39

The fact that our theological terms do not necessarily align with the meaning they have acquired within our broader culture is a perennial issue in Christological reflection. In his 1960 book *L'Incarnation*, Francis Ferrier wrote of the term "person" that "It may be true that certain philosophers use these terms in the context of their philosophical systems, but when the Church uses them in her official definitions she does not necessarily use them in the specialized senses in which a particular school of philosophers habitually uses them."40 In the sixth century, Leontius of Byzantium argued similarly: "What is at issue for us is not a matter of phrasing, but the manner in which the whole mystery of Christ exists. So we cannot make judgments or decisions here simply on the basis of this or that expression, or of certain phrases, but on the basis of its fundamental principles."41 What we are after is the judgment at the heart of the Christological tradition, not simply its terminology. While this should be obvious to theologians, it is not always so.42

By way of contrast, Aquinas, following Boethius, offers a substantial account of personhood.43 Michael Gorman helpfully unpacks Aquinas' understanding of substance as follows: "substances are all *individuals*; they all *subsist* [meaning they exist through themselves and not in another]; they all *stand under* non-subsisting beings [such as accidents]; [and] they are all *unified* [unlike a pile of sand, they are just one thing]."44 "Person" adds to this concept of substance a determinate nature: "rational."45 A substance with a rational nature has dominion over their actions, and this is why they have a special name over other substances.46 The scholastic approach, therefore, denies Locke's distinction between substance, man, and person. The "man" is the same as the "person" for a realist, because consciousness is conceived of as a power of the substance and thus accidental to it. A substantial account of personhood, which grounds both synchronic individuation and diachronic identity, cannot be reduced to accidents.47 If we are only discussing our ideas or "naming" of things, then we can parse out such accidental features and make them constitutive of our concepts, but that will only *replace* our understanding of things

themselves if we are skeptical about knowledge of essences, which, as we will see in Chapter 4, we have good reason not to be. As Henry Felton (1679–1740), an early critic of Locke, noted, we may distinguish between the idea of soul, man, and person in our minds, but they are not separate in things themselves.48 Delimiting our understanding of the human person to a concept of consciousness is tremendously reductive,49 something that Locke was well aware of.50 Personhood is not simply one of various ideas we can apply to a substance in terms of its psychological powers. Rather, it signifies a particular substance "as it is in its completeness (*in suo complemento*):"51 it refers to a subject of active existence in its entirety.52 That is not to say that human subjectivity is therefore unimportant to Aquinas,53 but it is insufficient to account fully for the nature of personhood.54

In the *tertia pars*, Aquinas writes that "to the hypostasis alone are attributed the operations and the natural properties, and whatever belongs to the nature in the concrete."55 The person is not reducible to the operations of its nature. This is why the Christian tradition is able coherently to attribute two wills to Christ, why Aquinas attributes two "knowledges," and why theologians such as Bernard Lonergan extrapolate two consciousnesses from these attributions.56 Insofar as these are properties of the natures, they are not constitutive of the hypostasis, but are *attributed* to it, through the communication of idioms. And, therefore, "the human nature in Christ," writes Aquinas, "cannot be called a hypostasis or suppositum … but the complete being with which it concurs is said to be a hypostasis or suppositum."57 In order to grasp the central judgment inscribed in classical accounts of Christ's personhood—that is, the affirmation of the substantial, personal presence of God in Christ—we cannot reduce the predicate in view to a power of one or both natures, because it would render the union accidental.58

In fact, the mistake of many who have rejected the Chalcedonian approach is to assume that the fathers were interested in discussing the action of two natures, whereas what is in view is the assumption of a human nature by a divine person. Aquinas notes in an objection that "to act befits a person, not a nature [*agere convenit personae, non naturae*]," so that while he is clear that "the principle of the assumption belongs to the divine nature itself," he also maintains that "the term of the assumption belongs not to the Nature in itself, but by reason of the Person."59 The divine nature is, of course, inseparable from the divine person, no less so in the Incarnation than from all eternity,60 but that does not mean that Christology is about parsing out which bits of Jesus' appearance, words, or actions are the result of his divine "nature" and which are from his humanity. Rather, Chalcedonian Christology preserves the ancient Jewish confession of the invisibility of God: "no one shall see me and live" (Exod. 33:20; cf. 1 Tim. 6:16, Jn 1:18), which means that the Incarnation is not about transforming the divine nature to make it available to our senses.61 *Everything* we perceive in Christ is created and human,62 but it is a human nature taken up and transformed by the active existence of the divine person of the Word. As Rowan Williams writes, this is

an act of being which "enacts" its personal distinctiveness by comprehensively shaping the finite actions of a human subject in such a way that the real and concrete distinctiveness of that subject cannot be spoken of without reference to the Word. Finite agency becomes a real communication of more than it is (abstractly considered) in itself.63

Unity at the level of *hypostasis* and act of being are both far grander claims than can be grasped by the concept of consciousness. The transcendent mystery of the divine hypostasis, constituted through subsistent relations, giving a specificity to the eternal act of being of the Word (proceeding from the Father in the eternal unity of the triune Godhead), hypostatically united to a human nature in the Incarnation, is otherwise reduced to a strikingly mundane conception of a precognitive awareness of mental acts.

Thinking of personhood in terms of consciousness leads us to think of God and humanity in a competitive paradigm and encourages us to conceive of the unity of Christ by way of the addition of predicates, as if divinity plus humanity *adds up* to something. By placing divinity and humanity on the same plane, it sets up a quantitative paradigm between them where elements of one can be added to elements of the other. There is an Apollinarian caste to this,64 where we look to replace a feature of Jesus' humanity with a feature of his "divinity": in this case not necessarily the whole mind but the consciousness. This goes hand in hand with a conception of the Incarnation as a divine nature being united with the human supposit of Jesus. In this way, Jesus' "divinity" is accounted for by the addition of certain divine predicates to a preexisting human person. Conceiving of personhood in terms of consciousness led Schweitzer et al. to understand classical Christology as a form of Nestorianism that rendered Christ a ghostly ahistorical figure, a schizophrenically divided jumble of divinity and humanity, far removed from the first-century Jewish man named Jesus of Nazareth. It was this approach they felt compelled to abandon.

Contrary to this whole picture, Aquinas argues that there is no human "person" in Christ, but that his human nature is hypostatically united to the divine person of the "Word." It is not personhood itself that his humanity lacks, but a person *other than the Word*.65 In other words, there is no finite act of being in virtue of which Christ is who he is, but the act of being of the Word is the sole ground of Jesus of Nazareth's active agency.66 This is arguably the central, distinctive insight of Aquinas' Christology. While the hypostatic union brings about, by the work of the Spirit, certain perfections of Jesus' human nature,67 it in no way involves the addition of divine predicates to the humanity of Christ, nor the transformation of his human nature into something else.68 Rather, as Williams articulates, it is an affirmation that the active presence of the Word "makes the humanity what it is, in the sense that it makes it to be the *way* it actively is (not in the sense that it makes it to be the *sort* of thing it is)."69 As we will see, Aquinas understands this in instrumental terms: Christ's humanity is the instrument of his divinity.70 As a result of Aquinas'

metaphysical distinction between essence and existence in created things, he is able to attribute a single act of being to Christ—that is, the esse of the eternal Word—thereby securing the unity of Christ's personhood without recourse to predicates of essence, such as consciousness. This discussion illustrates the importance of metaphysics for theological reflection by highlighting how our ideas about the individuation and knowledge of essences transform our theology.71 If we cannot speak of things in themselves, then we will render properly ontological dogmatic judgments in terms of empirical phenomena, as Schleiermacher does.72 In Christology, if we can no longer talk about substances and natures, then we are left with psychological descriptions of what it must have felt like to be God incarnate. Ironically, such metaphysical skepticism often leaves us with a perniciously speculative form of theology. As Eric Mascall noted in 1956:

> I am convinced that the early Church was right in seeing the problem of the Incarnation as primarily a metaphysical one. I am frankly amazed to find how often the problem of the Incarnation is taken as simply the problem of describing the mental life and consciousness of the Incarnate Lord, for this problem seems to me to be strictly insoluble. If I am asked what I conceive to be the metaphysical relation between the human and the divine in Christ, I can at least make some sort of attempt at an answer; but if I am asked to say what I believe it feels like to be God incarnate I can only reply that I have not the slightest idea and I should not expect to have it.73

Whether or not Neo-Lockean accounts of personhood in terms of consciousness are adequate to serve as phenomenological descriptions of personal identity and provide sufficient grounds for ethics and law—something we have good reason to question74—we must recognize that this emphasis stems from a broader metaphysic. While discussions of consciousness expand our range of idioms for treating philosophical and theological questions, there is no reason to allow such subjective approaches to *substitute* for substantial accounts of personhood, not least in Christology. In other words, psychological, phenomenological, and historical approaches to philosophical and theological questions are, at times, valuable and appropriate to the task at hand, but they do not carry within themselves sufficient grounds to reject an attendant consideration of ontology. Furthermore, a substantial account of the unity of Christ provides greater space for historical approaches to Jesus because it alone protects the integrity and properly finite reality of Christ's human nature.

Aquinas on the Doctrine of the Hypostatic Union

In the previous section, we sketched an outline of Christology by way of a discussion of personhood. We now turn to a more systematic discussion of the doctrine of the hypostatic union in order to substantiate further the ways in which classical Christology protects the integrity of Christ's humanity for the sake of historical research. As much recent historical scholarship has shown, the Christian articulation of Christology in ontological terms is not driven by an aberrant

obsession with Greek metaphysics, but by the insight that the mystery of Christ can finally be upheld consistently only through predication at the level of being—something Aquinas accomplishes with particular clarity. Anything short of this relies on "accidental" predicates at the level of nature, which admit only of separation or mixing. To speak in this mode is not to delimit what can be said of Christ in other modes: historical, narratival, existential, affective, ethical, and so on. Rather, it is, at the deepest level, to uphold the mystery of Christ in the face of various intentional and unintentional attempts to dissolve that mystery. In this way, classical Christology protects the integrity of Christ's humanity and the unity of his personhood in a way that much modern Christology fails to do. I would like to illustrate this fact by outlining Aquinas' Christology in dialogue with a variety of modern approaches. This will set the scene for our discussion of the mind of Christ in Chapters 5 through 7.

We have already seen how Aquinas understands "person"; what, then, is a nature? Aquinas defines nature as "the 'whatness' (*quiddity*) of a species."75 A nature is the intrinsic principle of its supposit by virtue of which it possesses its essential features and has its simple existence as a supposit: Aristotle is human by virtue of his humanity; humanity is that by which he exists as a supposit, for without his humanity he would not exist at all.76 In light of this understanding of nature, Aquinas explains three ways that unity in nature could be understood, highlighting how each is unable to account for the unity of Christ. The first is found in artifacts, where two things are brought together untransformed to make up a third thing—like steel and wood in an axe. While this seems promising at first glance, in the end it can only amount to a juxtaposition; it is not a true union.77 The second is by confusion, where the two are transformed into a third thing that is no longer either of them. This union of mutual transformation is impossible in Christ because the divine nature is immutable and infinite, so nothing can be added to it to make it something else.78 The third involves the combination of two things incomplete in themselves, which become a complete thing through their union (such as a body and soul). Aquinas notes that this is impossible in Christ, (a) because divinity and humanity are each complete natures, (b) because there is no quantitative difference between them, such that they could add up to a whole, and (c) because just as a "human" is neither fully soul nor fully body, so Christ would be neither fully divine nor fully human.

Aquinas' understanding of "nature" is important in one further respect. As Michael Gorman has noted, Christology involves talking about Christ's human nature a lot, which tempts us to reify it, as if it were a thing in itself. But this is a serious mistake, and surely part of the reason why Nestorianism is such a perennial issue in modern thought. Affirming the reality of Jesus' humanity should not involve treating it as a thing, which is tantamount to hypostatizing it: treating it as a person.79 While it is tempting to assume, as Schillebeeckx does, that only by denying the *anhypostasis* of Jesus' humanity can we affirm that he was really, truly a first-century Jewish man who lived and died in history, to do so is a fundamental Christological mistake, which rests on a misunderstanding of ontology. If we recall the modus principle once

more, we can say that a nature is not a thing, rather, it is that by which something exists in a certain way: it is the principle of their particular mode of being. As such, to say that the Word assumed a human nature is to say that the person of the Word took up, in the Incarnation, that in virtue of which he exists in a human mode, without being multiplied into two supposits.

In the standard theological text of Aquinas' day, Peter Lombard's *Sentences*, the nature of the hypostatic union was addressed in terms of three common "opinions."80 Because of his extensive recovery of Greek patristic conciliar documents, Aquinas came to reject the first and third of these opinions as versions of Nestorianism.81 Many medieval commentators opted for the first opinion, known as the *homo assumptus* theory, which affirmed the substantial reality of Christ's humanity by arguing that, while there is one person (*persona*) in Christ, there are two hypostases or supposits: the humanity of Christ, body and soul, was a supposit that was assumed by the Word. Aquinas had already established in ST III.2.3 that a hypostasis or supposit is a person ("person only adds to hypostasis a determinate nature … hence it is the same to attribute to the human nature in Christ a proper hypostasis and a proper person"), and therefore, he maintains, the *homo assumptus* theory posits two persons.82 If there is a second hypostasis or supposit in Christ, then whatever pertains to humanity will be predicated not of the Word but of that supposit to which it belongs—which means we can no longer affirm that the Word of God was born of a virgin, suffered, died, and rose again.83 Like those we discussed in the previous section, this theory falls into error per *ignorantiam*, because it misunderstands the nature of personhood.84

In rejecting the third opinion, known as the *habitus* theory, Aquinas was in common company with many other thirteenth-century authors who viewed it as problematic.85 This opinion, in an attempt to avoid Nestorianism, denied that the humanity of Christ could be considered something substantially distinct from the Word by maintaining that, rather than coming together in a substantial unity like they do in us, the body and soul of Christ were each united to the Word as accidents. To this theory, Aquinas responds that such an accidental union amounts to the same position as Nestorius, "for there is no difference in saying that the Word of God is united to the Man Christ by indwelling, as in His temple (as Nestorius said), or by putting on man, as a garment, which is the third opinion."86 As with many reactionary theological positions, the extremity of this view pushes it into incoherence. Here the most anti-Nestorian attempt falls ironically back into Nestorianism by positing the accidental union of two substances as a result of "a shared quality or set of habitual relations" instead of a common hypostatic identity.87 The problem with this, Aquinas argues, is that whatever truly adheres to a person is united to it in person: "Hence, if the human nature is not united to God the Word in person, it is nowise united to Him and thus belief in the Incarnation is altogether done away with."88 This theory renders Christ's humanity illusory, which equally undermines our ability to affirm that the Word of God lived and died as a human. Therefore, Aquinas opts for the second theory, known as the *subsistence* theory. This view maintains the nonaccidental assumption of a complete human

nature (body and soul integrated), which does not possess its own subsistence or esse (act of being), but is assumed into personhood by a higher, already-existing hypostasis.89

Following on his insight that Nestorianism is a Christology of accidental union, Aquinas outlines five modes of accidental union that have commonly been suggested: (1) unity by indwelling, such that the Word dwells within the man as in a temple; (2) unity of intention, such that the will of the man was united with the will of God; (3) unity by operation, such that the man was an instrument of the Word; (4) unity by greatness of honor, such that the honor due to God was equally shown to the man; (5) unity by equivocation, or the communication of names.90 This list of accidental modes of union is striking for its resemblance to contemporary Christology. (1) Non-Chalcedonian Spirit Christologies posit a unity by indwelling; (2) Consciousness Christology is a sophisticated version of the unity of intention; (3) Christologies of "mission consciousness" suggest a unity of operation; (4) mythological approaches emphasize unity by greatness of honor, and (5) unity by equivocation might be seen in those who posit the late development of high Christology, such that over time Christians came to worship and ascribe divine attributes to a purely human Jesus. As such, it might be more accurate to describe most Christologies "from below" as Christologies of accidental union.

Just as important, however, is the fact that Aquinas does not reject any of these modes of accidental union in his own Christology. He affirms (1) that the Spirit, though not the Word, dwells within Jesus' humanity as in a temple;91 (2) that Jesus' human will was united with his divine will;92 (3) that Jesus' humanity is an instrument of his divinity;93 (4) that the honor due to God is shown to Jesus in his humanity;94 and (5) that we should employ the communication of names. Aquinas' point is that these kinds of unity are too reductive to account adequately for the personal presence of the Word in Christ. These accidental forms of union must be grounded in and flow from substantial union in order to maintain Christ's hypostatic identity and the reality of his humanity. As a result, this theology of substantial union provides a structure for interrelating methods of inquiry that typically focus on accidental forms of union. In light of this, I would like to discuss how a Christology of substantial union allows us to integrate, compare, and assess Christological insights coming from historical, liberationist, existentialist, religious pluralist, apocalyptic, and other perspectives.

Procedural differences lead some to begin their enquiry into the identity and nature of Christ by way of narrative and operation before proceeding to the attendant ontological implications, while others (including most of the classical Christian tradition) begin with ontology, in the light of which they proceed to explore the historical, intentional, and operational questions. This divide is not, in itself, necessarily problematic, as it mirrors the division between the order of being and the order of knowing, which should always issue in a hermeneutical spiral. The problem arises when a procedural order that begins with history and narrative becomes a methodological restriction that denounces ontology or reduces it to empirical and historical phenomena (such as

those historicizing and kenotic Christologies we discussed in Chapter 1),95 or when an ontological Christology fails to engage with narrative and history (such as the decidedly a-historical Christ of Hegel or Kant, for example). Both errors impoverish our Christology.96 Accidental modes of union are vital in our understanding of Christ, but they are insufficient as explanations of his substantial identity. Aquinas argues that this is because, "whatever is predicated accidentally, predicates, not substance, but quantity, or quality, or some other mode of being."97 If our treatment of accidental modes of union is not ordered to, or does not arise from, an affirmation of hypostatic union, then we will not escape Nestorianism, with all of its attendant consequences. In the following chapter, we will address more fully the questions of epistemology that drive these divides, but first, it is worth discussing the role given by Aquinas to these modes of accidental union within a properly incarnational Christology and how it relates to prominent contemporary approaches.

Unity by Indwelling

Arguably the most noteworthy Christology centered on unity by indwelling is known as "Spirit Christology," which is often set in opposition to the "Logos Christology" of the Christian tradition.98 The Jesuit theologian Roger Haight is an influential proponent of this approach. He characterizes it as proceeding "from below" in three senses: it is historical, genetic, and experiential, meaning that it relies on historical reconstruction, traces the development of beliefs about Jesus, and appeals to the Christian experience of grace for its Christological grammar.99 As a result, Haight writes that the "foundational metaphor" underlying his spirit Christology is empowerment. Here he departs from various alternatives within Spirit Christology: John Hick's symbol of *inspiration*, Paul Tillich's metaphor of *possession*, Jürgen Moltmann's image of *incarnation*, and Shailer Mathews' metaphor of *indwelling*. Haight sees the metaphor of empowerment as more interactive and dynamic than these. He makes it clear that "God as Spirit is not present as the subject of Jesus' being and action," and, indeed, the focus here is on Jesus' activity, rather than his identity.100 Haight writes that "Empowerment presumes the indwelling of God as Spirit to the human person of Jesus."101 Jesus is to be thought of as the location or symbol of the Spirit's action: "where God acts, God is" writes Haight, "in this empowerment Christology Jesus is the reality of God."102 There seem to be three reasons in particular why Haight finds this approach preferable—he thinks it is warranted exegetically (here relying on James Dunn in particular), he finds that the resulting "pioneer soteriology" emphasizing Jesus as second Adam makes Christ more imitable, and it allows for religious pluralism. As he writes, "Jesus … is constitutive and the cause of the salvation of Christians because he is the mediator of Christian awareness of life in the Spirit. But Jesus is not constitutive of salvation universally" because the Spirit is operative elsewhere as well.103

Dominic Legge has argued persuasively that Aquinas evidences his own balanced Spirit Christology.104 Legge explores how, for Aquinas, the eternal processions of the Son from the

Father (cf. Jn 8:42) and of the Spirit from the Father and Son (cf. Jn 15:26) are extended into time in the divine missions. The key here is that "a mission includes the eternal procession, with the addition of a temporal effect."105 While every divine action is efficiently caused by the whole Trinity, the effect (or "terminus") of a divine mission is properly related to a single divine person who is made uniquely present therein.106 In their invisible missions the Son and Spirit produce in rational creatures, through habitual grace, a likeness to their processions by which they dwell within the creature and lead it back to the Father.107 In these cases, creatures are drawn into the divine persons as a "terminus" according to exemplar causality.108 Within their visible missions the presence of the Spirit is only *signified* visibly by a sign (e.g., the dove in Jn 1:32), while the divine person of the Son is truly and uniquely *made visible* as the Word made flesh.109 In the Incarnation, the human nature of Christ is drawn into the second person of the Trinity in a wholly unique way, as a terminus according to being (*esse*).110

Aquinas distinguishes between the one esse of the three divine persons and their threefold mode of existing (*modum existendi*), delineated according to the relations of origin.111 The three persons exist as subsistent relations within the one divine nature, such that when we speak of the "personal esse" ("act of being") of the Son, we are referring to the proper supposit of the Son whose esse just is the one divine nature as it is *received from* the Father.112 As a result, Christ's human nature is not united to the divine being in general, but specifically to the personal esse of the Son. In this way, the single personhood or "act of being" of the Word incarnate exists in a distinctly "filial" mode of being, such that everything he is and does comes from the Father and makes Him known (cf. Jn 14:9). Jesus humanly manifests the Son as the one who proceeds eternally from the Father, and thereby reveals the Father as his principle.113

One of the views that Aquinas shares with certain contemporary proponents of Spirit Christology is that, in order to avoid a confusion of natures, we cannot simply say that the hypostatic union divinizes Christ's humanity.114 As St. Thomas puts it, "the soul of Christ is not essentially Divine. Hence it behooves it to be Divine by participation (*fiat divina per participationem*), which is by grace."115 The invisible mission of the Holy Spirit is present through habitual grace in the human soul of Christ, fully sanctifying Christ's human nature and preparing it with the "habitus" to function as an instrument of the Word.116 Aquinas says that Christ receives "the whole Spirit" (*totum spiritum*),117 and Legge notes three key implications of this: Jesus receives the gifts of the Spirit to the fullest extent;118 he perpetually possesses the fullness of the Spirit's power to work miracles and prophesy;119 and he has the infinite capacity to pour out the gifts of the Spirit, and the Holy Spirit himself, upon others.120

For Aquinas, because the Spirit proceeds eternally from the Father and the Son, the humanity of Christ receives the habitual grace of the Spirit from the font of the Word, to which he is united in person. As Legge notes, Aquinas thus

offers an authentic Spirit-Christology, [which] preserves the Trinitarian order of processions … while accounting for the absolute uniqueness of Christ … The humanity of Christ is not mixed with the divine nature, but is supremely sanctified by the Holy Spirit's gift of grace in accordance with his human condition, so that the Holy Spirit is present in that humanity according to the full capacity of a human nature for union with God.121

Aquinas' approach encourages us to delineate the different depths and modes of the causality and presence of the Word and the Spirit within the person and work of Christ. Not only is this important for consistently upholding Trinitarian doctrine, it also allows us to discern the patterns of the eternal processions *within* the created effects of the divine missions, patterns that provide what Legge calls the "vectors" for our own return to God.122 Furthermore, it protects the integrity of Jesus' humanity by emphasizing the filial *theandric* actions of Jesus as divine actions in a fully human "mode of being." The grace of the Holy Spirit does not destroy the integrity of Jesus' human finitude any more than does the work of the Spirit among the patriarchs, prophets, and disciples, even if the nature or degree of this work is wholly unique in the person of Christ.

For Aquinas, the humanity of Christ is the created effect of the visible mission of the Son (a terminus according to being), by which he is made visible in person, and it is the recipient of the invisible mission of the Spirit. For Haight, by contrast, the human *person* of Christ is the visible sign that signifies the Spirit's presence. Much like the dove, the humanity of Christ retains its own proper supposit—its own finite human identity—but becomes the place, signifier, or "symbol" of the Spirit's activity. To my mind, the strongest exegetical arguments in Haight's favor support the role of the Spirit in Christ's saving mission but do not rule out the filial identity and Incarnation of the Son. As such, Haight's constructive aim to speak of Christ's human existence using the grammar of the Christian experience of grace can be fruitfully integrated into a Thomistic account. It is primarily his negative aim, to deny Christ's hypostatic identity in pursuit of religious pluralism, which stands at odds with Aquinas' approach. Somewhat ironically, Haight claims that "Logos Christology … tended to place other christologies in a shadow," whereas his Spirit Christology provides a basis for considering, interpreting, and appropriating other Christological approaches.123 And yet, while Aquinas' approach can account for the positive aims of Haight's Spirit Christology, Haight explicitly rules out the positive aims of much of the classical tradition.

Before turning to the second form of accidental union, it is worth pausing here to explore briefly how Aquinas' "Spirit Christology" bears on the question of Jesus' knowledge, which will occupy our focus in Chapters 5 to 7. In qq. 9–12 of the *Tertia pars*, Aquinas argues that Christ possessed divine knowledge and a threefold human knowledge: beatific, infused (i.e., prophetic), and acquired. Here, I would like to note how the crucial pneumatological elements of Thomas' Christology reveal connections between his ontological reflections on Christ and his focus on

Scripture's larger narrative of salvation history. Aquinas draws a connection between Christ's threefold human knowledge, his threefold office (*munus triplex*), and his fulfillment of the threefold law (*lex triplex*).124 He notes that "Wherefore as to others, one is a lawgiver [*legislator*], another is a priest [*sacerdos*], another is a king [rex]; but all these concur [*concurrunt*] in Christ."125 In this connection, he highlights the fact that, by his flesh, Christ belongs to the people of Israel and is born a son of Abraham and of David. It was to these two patriarchs that God's great promises were made (cf. Gen. 22:18; Ps. 132:11), and as prophet,126 priest, and king, Christ fulfills their roles in salvation history so that God's promises might flow out to all creation.127 Christ fulfills the moral precepts of the Old Law as prophet, the ceremonial precepts as priest, and the judicial precepts as king.128 But note that these titles describe Jesus' human nature: Christ as *man* fulfills the roles of the patriarchs.129 This brings us to the role of the Spirit, anointing and sanctifying Jesus' humanity, enabling him *humanly* to fulfill the roles of prophet, priest, and king that God entrusted to his chosen people, and thereby releasing them from bondage: "For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king; he will save us" (Isa. 33:22).130

Quoting Heb. 5:8, Aquinas connects Jesus' priestly office with his acquired knowledge: "Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered [ἔπαθεν]." Thomas references a gloss that says "through what he experienced," reflecting on the necessity of Jesus' authentically human experiences for his priestly mediatorial role.131 For Aquinas, Christ is the true mediator because, while he was God incarnate, he learned obedience in the way that we do, through the physical working of his senses and imagination in concert with his intellect. In addition, Aquinas maintains that Jesus is the prophet like Moses foretold in Deuteronomy 18, who through infused species (i.e., knowledge supernaturally infused in Jesus' possible intellect by the grace of the Spirit) taught the New Law: the supernatural end of the Old Law, which he brought about in his ministry and, ultimately, through his passion. Like Moses, Jesus' prophetic vocation was to redeem God's people, and by his saving work on the cross his teaching came to be written, not in stone but on the flesh of the heart by the indwelling of the Spirit (2 Cor. 3:3).132 Finally, Aquinas maintains that Christ's kingship is founded upon his possession of the beatific vision in his human soul.133 This is how "he that was born King of the Jews" shares in the Father's rule.134 Citing Rom. 2:16, Aquinas explains that because he is the Word incarnate, Christ as man receives the "whole Spirit," which flows from the Word and imparts to his soul the supernatural *habitus* of the light of Glory "under which" (*sub quo*)135 he sees the essence of God directly.136 This is divine knowledge possessed in a human manner in Christ's soul: the received is in the receiver according to the mode of the receiver. In this way, Christ, as man, holds a human royal office, but reigns therein as the divine king—and this can be traced to the invisible mission of the Spirit to his human soul by *virtue* of the divine Word to whom he is hypostatically united in person.

Aquinas' Spirit Christology can help us connect the narrative presentation of Jesus' distinctiveness—something akin to what Richard Bauckham calls a theology of divine identity—with a metaphysically informed Christology that reveals the presence and causality of all three divine persons within the words and actions of the Incarnate Christ.137 We will engage this task in greater detail in the final three chapters.

Unity by Intention

In positing the presence of God in Christ through Jesus' God-consciousness, Friedrich Schleiermacher offers one of the most prominent modern approaches to unity by intention. To put his approach in Thomistic terms: because Jesus' God-consciousness is a property of his human nature, the dignity that accrues to Christ by virtue of this "existence of God in him"138 must be an accidental quality derived from the "habitual grace" of Christ (rather than the grace of union). This unity of intention thus leads to a kind of unity by indwelling, such that God indwells the human Christ by virtue of his consciousness.

Aquinas also affirms that there is a unity of intention in Christ but conceives of it differently because it is grounded in Jesus' hypostatic identity. The doctrine of the two wills of Christ—referred to by the Greek word *dyothelitism*—was the last major piece of Chalcedonian orthodoxy to come into place in the early Christological councils.139 The two central elements of the doctrine are that the will belongs to the nature, not the supposit—willing is only proper to certain natures, and, from a Trinitarian perspective, the opposite would result in three wills in the Godhead—and that the will belongs to the perfection of human nature,140 so that had Christ not assumed a human will, his humanity would have been incomplete.141 The great champion of *dyothelitism*, Maximus the Confessor, made it clear that what is at stake is the true humanity of Jesus: "If the Word made flesh does not himself will naturally as a human being and perform things in accordance with nature, how can he willingly undergo hunger and thirst, labour and weariness, sleep and all the rest?"142 As he goes on to say, Christ "did not come to debase the nature which he himself, as God and Word, had made," rather, he came that it might be deified by uniting to himself "everything that naturally belongs to it, apart from sin."143 In line with Maximus, Aquinas affirms a twofold mode of operation in Christ that follows from an affirmation of his twofold mode of being.144 However, he explains that these two modes of operating are not simply divine and human modes—rather, one is divine, the other is a composite *theandric* operation.145 In the Incarnation, the Word retains his eternal divine operation, which he has in common with the Father and the Spirit (the "Extra-Calvinisticum"). But he also has a mode of operation in which he does divine things humanly and human things divinely: "inasmuch as His Divine operation employs the human, and His human operation shares in the power of the Divine."146 In this way, there is a synergy of divine and human action—and an instrumental unity between divine and human will—in the person of Christ.

Maximus distinguished between *Logos*, which signifies nature according to its defining principles, and *Tropos*, which signifies the mode according to which a nature is actualized. As such, he maintained that Christ shared the *Logos* of our nature, but a different *Tropos* according to the concrete act of existence of the Word. In particular, Maximus maintains that Jesus possessed a natural will (θέλημα φυσικόν), but not the *Tropos* of a gnomic will (γνώμη), which involves deliberation in light of ignorance and uncertainty and is intimately connected with the possibility of sin.147 Maximus' argument was mediated to Thomas by John of Damascus, who alters it slightly. Nonetheless, Aquinas affirms something similar, and, citing Eph. 1:4, he notes that doubt is not necessary for free choice, "since it belongs even to God Himself to choose."148 Jesus' natural will is perfectly attuned and surrendered to the divine will—"not my will, but yours be done" (Lk. 22:43)149—revealing to us the action of a human will set free to act in perfect concert with the will of God.150

To put this in Schleiermacher's terms, this is a human consciousness fully aware of its dependence on the divine. Schleiermacher rightly departs from most historical Jesus scholarship in his insistence that (to put it in classical terms) Christ does not share the same *Tropos* or economic mode of existence as we do, because his humanity (at least his human consciousness) is perfected by grace. If he is to be understood by historical analogy, it will be according to the highest experiences of "God-consciousness," rather than a universal post-enlightenment anthropology. Therefore, it seems to me that Aquinas' approach can accommodate many of Schleiermacher's constructive aims, whereas Schleiermacher explicitly denies the classical approach. Where Aquinas differs from Schleiermacher is that he sees this habitual grace flowing from the grace of union, because it is fitting to Christ's personal identity and saving mission. Christ's humanity is perfected in *virtue* of the Incarnation of the Word, whereas for Schleiermacher, the perfection of Christ's humanity itself *just* is the presence of God in history.

Unity of Operation

For a prominent modern example of unity of operation, I want to consider N. T. Wright's Christology. Wright might be said to account for Jesus' "divinity" by the fact that "as a part of his human vocation, grasped in faith, sustained in prayer, tested in confrontation, agonized over in further prayer and doubt, and implemented in action, he believed that he had to do and be, for Israel and the world, that which according to Scripture only YHWH himself could do and be."151 Jesus is said to have possessed this awareness "with the knowledge that he could be making a terrible, lunatic mistake."152 It is consistently the case that the most exalted terms Wright uses to speak of Jesus have to do with this "mission consciousness" (a concept reminiscent of Hans Urs von Balthasar's Christology).153 It is not always clear what Wright has in mind, but he does speak of Jesus slowly coming to view himself as possibly having a job to do; one that—if he succeeds—will see him exalted and glorified in quite an unprecedented manner. It is striking just how little Wright's Jesus knows, and Wright typically gives natural

explanations for moments when Jesus seems to possess extraordinary knowledge. For instance, Jesus' prediction of his own death "did not, actually, take a great deal of 'supernatural' insight, any more than it took much more than ordinary common sense to predict that, if Israel continued to attempt rebellion against Rome, Rome would eventually do to her as a nation what she was now going to do to this strange would-be Messiah."154 Even Jesus' own identity remained opaque to him. As we have seen, Wright maintains that

> Jesus did not, in other words, "know that he was God" in the same way that one knows one is male or female, hungry or thirsty, or that one ate an orange an hour ago. His "knowledge" was of a more risky, but perhaps more significant, sort: like knowing one is loved. One cannot "prove" it except by living it.155

Like others we have discussed thus far, Wright pursues his positive aims in part by denying what he sees to be the traditional alternative. However, his sense of what that alternative might look like is revealing. Jesus did not sit back and say "Well I never! I'm the second person of the Trinity!" nor did he "[wander] around with a faraway look, listening to the music of the angels, remembering the time when he was sitting up in heaven with the other members of the Trinity."156 Wright says that, "Chalcedon, I think, always smelled a bit like a confidence trick, celebrating in Tertullian-like fashion the absurdity of what is believed."157 He considers it a "de-Judaizing of the Gospels" that leads theologians to ignore the fact that the Gospels' incarnational claim is that "this is Israel's God in person coming to claim the sovereignty promised to the Messiah."158 Clearly, Wright wants to distance his approach from the ontological terms common to the classical Christian tradition—and he thinks doing so is necessary in order to do "serious history."

For his part, Aquinas understands the unity of operation in Christ not only in terms of mission consciousness, but in a more robust sense that he calls instrumentality,159 a concept that depends on his noncompetitive metaphysic and his attendant conviction that God is able to move interiorly in all rational creatures without overriding their freedom.160 This insight is applied to Christ through the language of *instrumentum Divinitatis*—which brings us to the second form of accidental union.161 Aquinas writes that "the humanity of Christ is the instrument of the Godhead—not, indeed, an inanimate instrument, which nowise acts, but is merely acted upon; but an instrument animated by a rational soul, which is so acted upon as to act."162 By applying the concept of instrumental causality to Christ's human nature, Aquinas upholds the *anhypostasis* of his humanity while affirming that it retains its active integrity and freedom.163 Unlike an inanimate instrument (an axe, for example) Jesus' humanity is a conjoined instrument (analogous to how the body is the instrument of the soul), such that its action is not distinct from the action of the principal agent (the Word), even while it retains its proper operation through its own form.164 The operation of the human nature is subordinate to and moved by the divine operation in such a way that its actions remain unified under a fully human will that acts freely. This

plurality of operations, each proper to its own principle, is not incompatible with the unity of the person, because "operation is an effect of the person by reason of a form or nature."165 And, as such, both operations concur in one action "inasmuch as one nature acts in union with the other."166

It should be evident how a competitive metaphysic undermines this picture, by forcing us to say that it was *really* his humanity or really his divinity that was operative at this or that moment. In fact, Aquinas argues that this is what led the monothelites into their problematic position: they failed to recognize that when something is moved by another, its action is twofold according to the principles of its own form and by virtue of the movement that originated in its mover.167 While the operation of an axe is to chop, its operation in the hands of a craftsman is to make benches, and such an operation is unified, for it is not properly attributed to either the axe or the craftsman independently of one another. Rather, each share in the proper operation of the other, even though the operation of the axe is subordinate to and dependent on that of the craftsman. So, by analogy, is the humanity of Christ to the divine hypostasis of the Word, except that in place of the passivity of the axe is the fully active freedom of the human operation. Paul Crowley puts it as follows:

> The operations remain specifically distinct, but united; working in relation with each other, they find their unity in the subsisting hypostasis of the Word. The Word acts as principal agent, or first moving cause, of the human nature of Christ. The human nature, while utterly integral and possessing a self-determining will, receives the grace of the Word and freely exercises operations proper to a human nature, in communion with the saving end of the Word of God. In this order of causality, therefore, the human nature is subordinate to the Word, but not passive to the Word. Precisely as a conjoined, animate and rational instrument of the Word, the human nature possesses dominion over the full range of operations proper to it as a human nature.168

It is precisely for this reason that the Fathers opposed Docetism so forcefully, because it is in and through the full operation of his humanity that Christ's divinity is made manifest: "In the second cause, the first cause operates."169 If his humanity becomes passive, then his saving work is undermined, and if it is somehow separate, acting on its own, then it is not the action of the person of the Word, the divine incarnate Son. Aquinas concurs. As Dominic Legge notes, "Thomas's appropriation of instrumental causality permits him to give a supreme importance and salvific significance to everything that the man Christ did and suffered" and he emphasizes the history of Christ's human life rather more than most of his contemporaries.170 Both unity of intention (the unity of Christ's wills) and unity of operation (the instrumentality of Christ's humanity) must stem from a hypostatic unity so that they are *theandric* and not just human. Christ's human actions constitute genuine revelation of God first and foremost because their principle of movement is the hypostasis of the Word.

Returning to Wright, then, if everything Jesus does comes from a position of inference, hope, and faith—knowing that "he could be making a terrible, lunatic mistake" but doing his best nonetheless—in what sense can we say that his every word and action is that of the divine Son? Either the Word must bypass his human intellect to direct his human will (resulting in Docetism), or his will must follow where his ignorance leads (resulting in Nestorianism). We will return to this issue in the final chapter. What is at stake here is not simply the ontological reality of Christ's humanity and divinity, but his actual life and actions in history. Aquinas' understanding of the instrumentality of Christ's humanity points us continually back to history itself, for it is the human life of Christ that reveals and unites us to God. Aquinas insists that Jesus was not a human supposit with a special calling. He is God himself, existing in a fully human mode of being, and profound ignorance is not compatible with the instrumental freedom of his humanity.

As I noted, I see a strong similarity between Wright's treatment of Jesus' mission consciousness and that of Hans Urs von Balthasar, who argues for an absolute identity between person and mission in Christ—his identity is his mission.[171] Von Balthasar calls this a "Christology from below," but it is one with "an eye open for the possibility that an answer may eventually come from a 'Christology from above'."[172] In other words, he presents first a "Christology of consciousness" that leads to a "Christology of being."[173] And it is here that his approach differs significantly from Haight, Schleiermacher, and Wright, each of whom denies that a Christology articulated in ontological terms might provide final coherence to their understanding of Christ.

Unity by Greatness of Honor

For the third mode of accidental union, we turn to the prominent twentieth-century idea of myth. Rudolf Bultmann was concerned to translate what he saw to be the core message of the New Testament out of a falsely objective form of expression and into an existential mode more appropriate to his contemporaries. For Bultmann, what is valuable is not the worldview of the New Testament authors or their particular concepts or modes of expression, but the call to commit ourselves to Christ in a particular way. This call must be demythologized, in order to shed its embeddedness in an outdated understanding of the world no longer palatable to modern people. As Bultmann famously wrote, "It is impossible to use electric light and the wireless and to avail ourselves of modern medical and surgical discoveries, and at the same time to believe in the New Testament world of spirits and miracles."[174]

Bultmann defined myth as "the presentation of the otherworldly in terms of this world, and the divine in terms of human life."[175] Aquinas wrote similarly: "we know God from creatures as their principle, and also by way of excellence and remotion. In this way therefore He can be named by us from creatures, yet not so that the name which signifies Him expresses the divine essence in itself."[176] Many of the enduring insights of Bultmann's program of

demythologization had been expounded by Aquinas in his treatment of analogy, though Bultmann's approach is anthropological and existential, while Aquinas' is ontological. It is no surprise to Christian theology that we present the divine in the terms of this world, but that does not mean that it can be reduced to the terms in which it is represented. The essentially Feuerbachian move of Bultmann to discount such analogical language as myth and reduce the divinity of Christ to the faith statements of the kerygma depends for its force on a conflation of technological development with philosophical progress and an absolutization of the reductive metaphysical claims of twentieth-century German historicism.177 Existential claims about the genuine decision evoked by the gospel do not carry within them sufficient reasons to reject ontology, any more than Bultmann's repeated claims that people today are incapable of adopting the "world picture" of the Bible prove that modern secularism offers a more faithful representation of reality.178 For Bultmann, what matters is that the honor due to God is shown to Jesus in the preaching of the kerygma, which in turn calls us to decision. We need not adopt the mythology of Scripture or necessarily concern ourselves with all of the events depicted—what matters is the existential import of the preaching of the resurrected Christ.

By contrast, Aquinas writes that "We may consider two things in a person to whom honor is given: the person himself, and the cause of his being honored." He applies this to Christ as follows:

> Since, therefore, in Christ there is but one Person of the Divine and human natures, and one hypostasis, and one suppositum, He is given one adoration and one honor on the part of the Person adored: but on the part of the cause for which He is honored, we can say that there are several adorations, for instance that He receives one honor on account of His uncreated knowledge, and another on account of His created knowledge.179

When it comes to Christ, the root of honor lies in that which is honored, rather in the perspective of those doing the honoring. It is a central pillar of the Christian faith that the honor due to Christ is reserved for the one God (Deut. 6:4-9, 1 Cor. 8:6).180 For all that Bultmann wanted to reach his contemporaries, there is good reason to think that people find existentially significant that which they have reason to believe is real.181 It is the cause of Christ being honored, rather than the honor itself, that holds the greatest significance, and the latter can only be sustained through the substantial personal presence of God.182

Unity by Equivocation

The fifth mode of accidental union might be seen most prominently in the work of those who posit the late development of high Christology, such that over time Christians came to worship and ascribe divine attributes to a purely human Jesus. A popular example of unity by equivocation comes from Bart Ehrman. For Ehrman, Jesus was a human person who, after his

death, was gradually elevated to the status of a divine being through the incremental growth of his followers' religious devotion. "The Christians exalted him to the divine realm in their theology, but in my opinion," writes Ehrman, "he was, and always has been, a human."183 Ehrman suggests that for most ancient people, humanity and divinity existed on two overlapping continuums.184 He argues that the Gospel of Mark views Jesus as a human person who was elevated to the level of divinity by an act of God. This supports his opinion that the earliest Christians viewed Jesus through the lens of exaltation rather than Incarnation.185

Of course, the questions raised by Ehrman are historical rather than doctrinal, and this is not the context to adjudicate those historical questions, except to say that Ehrman's methods have rightly been widely criticized and his arguments have been convincingly shown to fall far short of those offered by scholars such as Martin Hengel, Larry Hurtado, and Richard Bauckham. Hengel did much to dismantle older versions of the evolutionary hypothesis of Christological development and, in comparison to Hurtado's studies of early Christian devotional practices and Bauckham's exploration of Jewish monotheism, Ehrman's claims remain unconvincing.

While Ehrman is correct that there were various ancient views about intermediary figures, he wrongly ignores the significant differences between such figures and Christian views about Jesus. As Michael Bird argues, "Jesus was regarded as part of God's own identity but without thereby compromising the strict nature of Jewish monotheism. In the end, mighty angels and exalted persons serve God, but they do not share his rule, nor do they receive his worship, but Jesus does."186 One of the central ways that the Christian tradition carries forward this view is through the doctrine of the *communicatio idiomatum*. The purpose of this doctrine is to emphasize the unity of Christ while maintaining the qualitative dissimilarity of his natures.187 Aquinas explains that, because an operation is an effect of the person by reason of the nature, the predicates proper to each nature are attributed to the one person, but not cross-attributed to each other.188 This is a necessary implication of the fact that natures do not exist in the abstract; they only occur in reality as the natural determinations of persons, to whom their properties are attributed. This allows us to say things like "God is man," because we can rightly predicate words signifying a nature to the supposit of that nature.189 We can also affirm that "man is God" because "man" refers to any hypostasis of a human nature, and the divine Word is the hypostasis of Christ's human nature.190 The precision of this Christological language allows Aquinas to treat the natures of Christ as distinct grammatical subjects without suggesting that they exist as separate ontological subjects.191

Ehrman envisions Christ as a human supposit to whom supernatural predicates were applied over time, thereby nudging him up the spectrum from human to divine. And yet, from the earliest days, Christians have insisted that our beliefs about Jesus do not involve placing him somewhere on a spectrum between divinity and humanity. Affirming the divinity of Christ is not a matter of attaching divine properties to a human person. Doing so leads, at best, to monophysitism, the

mythology of a demi-god. Rather, the integrity of Jesus' humanity and divinity are preserved, and the relation between the two is upheld through the twofold communication of names to the one person of Christ.

Nestorianism is typically thought of in terms of dual personhood, but Aquinas helpfully shows that Nestorianism frequently shows up in places where explicit discussions of two persons are not in view. Rather, as we have seen, he has shown that Christologies relying on forms of accidental union result in Nestorianism because natures must always inhere substantially in a supposit. If they are only accidentally united to the divine supposit, then they must inhere substantially in a human supposit, resulting in two persons. Furthermore, when forced to account for the unity of Christ on its own, accidental union replaces elements of one nature with the other, thereby corrupting or transforming one or both natures. This is because accidental union relies on predicates of essence rather than being. If, on the other hand, these forms of accidental union are understood to flow from the substantial, personal union of divinity and humanity in Christ, then they uphold both the integrity of the two natures and the true unity of the person. For Aquinas, these modes of accidental union, when properly ordered within an incarnational Christology, are not about attributing divine predicates to Jesus' humanity, or transforming it into something else. Rather, they are about the perfection of his humanity by grace. Prioritizing ontology does not require us to ignore historical, narrative, or existential analysis. Rather, it provides each a fruitful place, outlining a coherent framework for the coordination of their diverse insights. Ideally, this might ease the stress that each of these modes of union is forced to bear, because they need not account for the divine identity of Christ, but rather for the instrumental perfection of his human nature in a way that is fitting to his personal identity and saving mission.

Conclusion

N. T. Wright has criticized the Christological doctrine of two natures, calling it a "de-Judaizing of the Gospels" that leads theologians to ignore the fact that the Gospels' incarnational claim is that "this is Israel's God in person coming to claim the sovereignty promised to the Messiah."192 Our exploration of this connection between narrative and ontological approaches to Christology reveals Wright's claim to be unwarranted. For Aquinas, as for many others, these two always go hand in hand. Belief in the full divinity of Christ is always a confession that Jesus is Lord, God in person come to claim the sovereignty of the Messiah. The story of redemption hinges not only on the actions of Christ but on his *identity*, which is why talking about his "hypostasis" is an integral part of announcing the good news of his coming as Messiah. Furthermore, the developed Christological grammar the Christian tradition need not be set over against the more narrative-oriented categories in which the earliest Christians rendered judgments about the identity of Jesus. We will say more on this in the chapters to come.

In the Christological terms outlined in this chapter, Docetism takes on a particular character, and the theological significance of Jesus' humanity comes into sharp relief. As Crowley puts it:

> To the degree that the human nature of Christ is realized, precisely according to its nature as a conjoined, animate and rational instrument of the divinity, that nature will be fully human. The converse is also true: To the degree that the human nature of Christ is perceived differently—separate or simply passive—that nature will be less than fully human. But the divinity of Christ can only be shown through a full humanity. Thomas' doctrine of instrumental causality retrieves the uncompromising significance, not only of the full humanity of Christ, but also of the divinity of Christ, by focusing on what together they accomplish in relation with each other: the saving work of God.193

The reason historical Jesus scholars' opposition to Docetism tends to result in Ebionitism is that their conception of Jesus as "fully human" appears to require that Jesus be a human supposit. As we have shown, such a conception rests on an ontological mistake, which serves only to deny the possibility of Jesus' full divinity—it does nothing to make him more human. For Aquinas, we can only affirm Jesus' full humanity by upholding his full divinity; the two go hand in hand because the integrity of his humanity depends on its status as a conjoined, animate, rational instrument of the divine person. Docetism results from separating Jesus' humanity from the divine person or rendering it passive in the actions of the Son of Man. Avoiding Docetism requires a noncompetitive grasp of the composite *theandric* agency of Christ, wherein the Word is the principle of action and humanity is its mode.194 To apply the insights from the previous chapter: "the creature and the Creator are both enacting the creature's life, though in different ways and at different depths."195 Though this action comes about in a qualitatively different fashion in Christ—God does not "enact" our life through a hypostatic union—it nonetheless does not corrupt the paradigm of the Creator/creature relation to do so.196

The doctrine of the hypostatic union is a sophisticated way of holding together these claims while insisting on the reality and integrity of Jesus' humanity. By contrast, anti-metaphysical Christologies "from below" show themselves to be an impediment to historians because of how they blur the lines between humanity and divinity, associating God with aspects of Jesus' humanity in a way that corrupts his human nature and renders it passive to his divinity. Historical Jesus scholars need not reject Chalcedon in order to clear a space for historical reconstruction. The fact that they have done so has limited them needlessly and polemically skewed their conclusions away from Christian orthodoxy. The Chalcedonian picture of Christ is fully compatible with historical study of Jesus.197 Furthermore, I want to suggest that the Chalcedonian framework will both encourage and enable our historical efforts.

1. Schweitzer, The Quest of the Historical Jesus, 3.
2. Ibid., 4. "He was still, like Lazarus of old, bound hand and foot with the grave-clothes … of the dogma of the Dual Natures" (ibid.).

3. "Chalcedon, I think, always smelled a bit like a confidence trick, celebrating in Tertullian-like fashion the absurdity of what is believed" (Wright, "Jesus and the Identity of God," 46). See also Strauss, The Life of Jesus Critically Examined, §146 (pp. 409–14), §151 (pp. 437–40); Wrede, "The Task and Methods of 'New Testament Theology,' " 68–116, at 69; von Harnack, What Is Christianity?, 204; Troeltsch, "The Dogmatics of the History-of-Religions School," 87–108; Bultmann, "The Christological Confession of the World Council of Churches," 273–90, esp. 287; Schillebeeckx, Interim Report on the Books "Jesus" and "Christ," esp. 140–3; Schillebeeckx, Jesus, an Experiment in Christology, 656 (cf. Runia, The Present-Day Christological Debate, 53–8); Hollenbach, "The Historical Jesus Question in North America Today," 11–22, at 19–20; Vermes, Christian Beginnings, 234; Wilson, Jesus, xiii; Allison Jr., The Historical Christ and the Theological Jesus, 82–5. See Weaver, The Historical Jesus in the Twentieth Century, 1900–1950, 72–5.

4. See especially the various Christologies "from below" discussed in this chapter.
5. Ian McFarland notes that the terminology of Christology from "above" and "below" likely originated with F. H. R. Frank in 1891 (Word Made Flesh, 5n11). Nicholas Lash argues convincingly that this above/below distinction is typically used to oppose Christologies "from above" and serves to obscure significant methodological and conceptual differences in "Up and Down in Christology," 31–46.
6. Not all of these disagreements result from misunderstandings. Some have understood and nonetheless chosen to reject the classical approach, in which case I am arguing that the classical tradition provides greater coherence than their alternatives.
7. These Christologies "from below" include especially the kenotic and historicizing Christologies discussed in Chapter 1 and the "consciousness Christologies" and non-Trinitarian "Spirit Christologies" discussed in this chapter.

8. See esp., Riches, Ecce Homo; White, The Incarnate Lord.
9. E.g., Allison, Historical Christ, 82–5.

10. For instance, while Edward Schillebeeckx is aware that this is not the case for the Chalcedonian tradition, he argues in favor of it: "Anhypostasis, as privation or loss of the human person, must therefore be denied, of course, in Jesus" (Jesus, 656–7). Certain advocates of kenotic Christology also defend this approach: "No real meaning could be attached to a human 'nature' which is not simply one aspect of the concrete life of a human person" (Mackintosh, The Doctrine of the Person of Jesus Christ, 207). It has become standard to use the terms anhypostasis–enhypostasis to refer to the lack of a human hypostasis in Christ (anhypostasis) and the uniting of his human nature to the divine hypostasis (enhypostasis), even though that is not quite what they meant in patristic usage. See Shults in "A Dubious Christological Formula," 431–46; Gleede, The Development of the Term ἐνυπόστατος from Origen to John of Damascus; Riches, Ecce Homo, 107–27.

11. Riches, Ecce Homo, 3. This is because unus is founded on esse (In III Sent. d. 6, q. 2, a. 2).
12. "Although [Christ's] human nature is a certain individual in the genus of substance, nonetheless, because it does not exist separately through itself, but rather in something more perfect, namely, in the person of the Word of God, it follows that it would not have its own personhood. And thus the union was made in the person" (ST III.2.2 ad 2). See ST III.4.2; ST III.17.2.

13. "The Symbol of Chalcedon," 62.
14. Boethius, Contra Eutychen, III.5-4 (p. 85).
15. "Nominalism (or the view that everything that exists is individual) reigned supreme in the English-speaking world. At least, all of the seventeenth-century English philosophers who are still well known today—Bacon, Hobbes, Locke—adopted some form of nominalism" (Thiel, The Early Modern Subject, 23). See ibid., 72.
16. Locke, An Essay Concerning Human Understanding, II.xxvii.13.
17. See early critical discussion in Lee, Anti-Skepticism, 121–2. See Thiel, Early Modern Subject, 163.

18. In other words, this is not about what distinguishes one individual from another, but what sustains the continuity of individual identity over time. Contemporary advocates of the Lockean account include John Perry, David Lewis, Sydney Shoemaker, and Derek Parfit.

19. Locke, Essay, II.xxvii.15.

20. Locke, Essay, II.xxvii.25.

21. Locke, Essay, II.xxvii.8. See also ibid., II.i.11, and II.xxvii.21. \

22. Locke, Essay, II.xxvii.26, II.xxviii.30.

23. See LoLordo, "Persons," 154–81.

24. See, e.g., Ralph Cudworth, The True Intellectual System of the Universe (1678), 159–60.

25. Ibid., 751.

26. Locke, Essay, II.i.8.

27. This is especially important for avoiding Leibniz's critique of an eternal regress: "it is impossible," writes Leibniz, "that we should always reflect explicitly on all our thoughts; for if we did, the mind would reflect on each reflection, ad infinitum, without ever being able to move on to a new thought" (Leibniz, New Essays on Human Understanding, 118).

28. Thiel, Early Modern Subject, 122.

29. Locke affirms the reverse is also the case, "That if the same consciousness … can be transferr'd from one thinking Substance to another, it will be possible, that two thinking Substances may make but one Person" (Locke, Essay, 2.xxvii.13). For further discussion of Locke's approach, see, e.g., Martin and Barresi, Naturalization of the Soul, esp. 12–29; Martin and Barresi, The Rise and Fall of Soul and Self; Stuart, Locke's Metaphysics, 340–80.

30. Schleiermacher, The Christian Faith, §4.3, p. 23. See McGrath, The Making of Modern German Christology, 19.

31. Vass, A Pattern of Doctrines 1, 193n78.

32. Schleiermacher, Christian Faith, §96.1, 585.

33. Greek for "two wills," dyothelitism became the official orthodox position at the Third Council of Constantinople in ad 681.

34. Christian Faith, §96.1, 586.

35. Schleiermacher, Life of Jesus, 100.

36. Rahner, "Self-Consciousness of Christ," 193–215 at 203–5.

37. See White, Incarnate Lord, 111; von Balthasar, Theo-Drama: Theological Dramatic Theory, 149–79, 207; JVG, 653.

38. Ward, Christ and the Cosmos, 37.

39. To offer just three examples of this pervasive tendency, Bentley Hart writes of the so-called enhypostatic union:

the doctrine, that is, that there is but one person in Jesus, that he is not an amalgamation of two distinct centers of consciousness in extrinsic association, and that this one person, who possesses at once a wholly divine and a wholly human nature, is none other than the hypostasis, the divine Person, of the eternal son. (That All Shall Be Saved, 189)

Wickham maintains that Cyril of Alexandria "meant to preserve a unity of consciousness in Christ" ("The Ignorance of Christ: A Problem for the Ancient Theology," 224). And, following Friedrich Loofs' misreading of Leontius of Byzantium on enhypostasis, Relton praises Leontius for anticipating the "modern understanding" that consciousness gives substantial existence to intellectual natures, and that "the Ego of the God-Man was the divine unlimited Logos" (A Study in Christology, 225). It is worth noting that scholars occasionally assume the opposite as well, which is equally inaccurate: "The Council of Constantinople in 680 CE drew out the consequences of this assertion, affirming that in Christ there are two centers of consciousness" (McCord Adams, What Sort of Human Nature?, 8). The council does not include any discussion of consciousness that, as we have seen, is a modern concept. It proclaims "two natural volitions or wills in him and two natural principles of action." Even some English

translations of Aquinas have anachronistically rendered terms like *considerationem* as "consciousness": "Christ is always engaged in the act of thinking according to His uncreated knowledge. But, since the two activities belong to Him by reason of two natures, this actual consciousness does not therefore exclude the added consciousness of created knowledge" (De ver., q. 20, a. 1 ad 6, trans. James V. McGlynn, S.J. [Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1953]). To the contrary, Aquinas explains that "Considerationem signifies the act of the intellect in considering the truth about something" (ST II-II, q. 52, a. 4 resp.). See Deferrari, s.v. "consideratio" (p. 216).

40. Ferrier, What Is the Incarnation?, 78.
41. Deprehensio et Triumphus super Nestorianos 42 (PG 86:1380 B). ET: Daley, " 'A Richer Union'," 246.

42. For examples of theologians who have made note of this problem, though without treating it in detail, see Pohle, The Divine Trinity, 224–7; Ferrier, What Is the Incarnation?, 78; Williams, "A Programme for Christology," 513–24 at 517; Sturch, The Word and the Christ, 269–74; Mongeau, "The Human and Divine Knowing of the Incarnate Word," 34; Pawl, In Defense of Conciliar Christology, 218ff; Hart, In Him Was Life, 98–9.

43. Scott M. Williams has recently argued that, while Aquinas did cite Boethius, he did not accept his definition on its own terms, but interpreted it in line with later interpreters who criticized Boethius' approach, especially Gilbert of Poitiers, William of Auxerre, and Richard of St. Victor ("Persons in Patristic and Medieval Christian Theology," 52–84, at 66). Joseph W. Koterski also argues that Aquinas finds the Boethian definition lacking and that he corrects it in ST III, q. 16, a. 2 ad 2 ("Boethius and the Theological Origins of the Concept of Person," 203–24). However, it seems that Michael Gorman is right to say that, pace Koterski, "in this place (and others) Aquinas means to explicate Boethius's meaning rather than correct it" (Gorman, Aquinas on the Metaphysics of the Hypostatic Union, 36). Whether Aquinas' explication is indebted to those interpreters highlighted by Williams is hard to say, though Aquinas' emphasis on subsistence points in this direction.

44. Gorman, Aquinas on the Metaphysics of the Hypostatic Union, 16. "Individual" signifies that this is a first substance, not a second substance, the latter of which means something like "nature" in Aristotle's usage (ST I.29.1 ad 2). Cf. Koterski, "Concept of Person," 203–24.
45. De Pot. q. 9, a. 1 resp.
46. ST I.29.1 resp.
47. This gives us good reason to affirm, for example, that a dementia patient is the same person they were before.

48. Henry Felton, The Resurrection of the Same Numerical Body, and Its Reunion to the Same Soul; Asserted in a Sermon Preached before the University of Oxford, at St. Mary's on Easter-Monday, 1725. In which Mr. Lock's Notions of Personality and Identity Are Confuted. And the Author of the Naked Gospel Is Answered (1725), 67. See De Pot. q. 9, a. 2 ad 2. This is not to say that a person is ontologically identical with their soul, which is hylomorphically distinguished as the intrinsic formal cause of their substantial existence. But neither is the person separable from their soul in reality.

49. "The problem is that, ontologically speaking, any process of human consciousness—while it truly exists or has being—cannot be said to be all that a person is, for it is only an 'accidental' characteristic of a substantial human being, albeit a quite important characteristic" (White, Incarnate Lord, 42).

50. Recall that Locke limits the concept by distinguishing it from the man and soul—meaning that he recognizes that his new conception of personhood is not sufficient to account for a human in its entirety. Also note that it grounds only diachronic identity and thus assumes synchronic individuation by some other means (i.e., existence).

51. ST III.2.3 ad 2. "Hence the suppositum is taken to be a whole which has the nature as its formal part to perfect it" (ST III.2.2 resp.).

52. See ST III.2.2. In DQ De Unione, a. 4, resp., Aquinas notes that esse cannot be recognized without a corresponding suppositum (and vice versa). "Now if there were two supposita in Christ, then each suppositum would have its own principle of being. And thus there would be a two-fold being in Christ simply."

53. It is often assumed that the "turn to the subject" is a distinctly modern development beginning with Descartes, and that premodern thinkers fail to grasp that human minds are self-knowing. In reality, Aquinas had a sophisticated theory of human self-knowledge and a robust conception of the human person as a self-aware agent. See Scarpelli Cory, Aquinas on Human Self-Knowledge; de Libera, "When Did the Modern Subject Emerge?" 181–220.

54. Jean Galot, without mentioning Locke, argues that, because it is through consciousness that we perceive ourselves as persons, it is tempting to confuse our perception of personhood with personhood itself. "The person is the subject and object of consciousness, but he is not consciousness itself. Becoming conscious of oneself is an activity which, although emanating from the person and redirected to the person, belongs to the realm of nature" (La Personne du Christ. ET: The Person of Christ, 45).

55. ST III.2.3 resp. Note that Aquinas uses "concrete" here not in the typical contemporary sense (wherein "concrete" denotes something not abstract), but in the scholastic sense (wherein concrete terms refer to the person of Christ, while abstract terms refer to one of the natures). See Pawl, In Defense of Conciliar Christology, 34–8.

56. "We shall then conclude that Christ is one subject, ontologically of two natures and psychologically of two consciousnesses" (Lonergan, De Constitutione Christi Ontologica et Psychologica, 7). See also, e.g., Galot, La Conscience de Jésus. Andrew Ter Ern Loke critiques two-consciousness models of the Incarnation on the grounds that they result in Nestorianism. Without defending his conflation of consciousness with personhood, he states simply that "there are good grounds for agreeing with scholars who think that each discrete range of consciousness would be a person" (Ern Loke, A Kryptic Model of the Incarnation, 49). This assumption plays an outsized role in the overall logic of his proposal. It is also key to his critical review of Simon Gaine (Journal of Theological Studies, 465–8).

57. ST III.2.3 ad 2.
58. So White argues:

"Jesus is one with God/the Logos only insofar as he is remarkably conscious of God" can readily be interpreted as "Jesus is a subject distinct from God/the Logos with whom he is united in virtue of his consciousness of God/the Logos." The second idea follows logically from the first once we realistically concede that a human being is not his or her consciousness, but is an entity who possesses human consciousness. (White, Incarnate Lord, 112)

To make the point explicit vis-à-vis Locke, we should say "a person is not his or her consciousness," noting again the substantialist rejection of Locke's distinction between the human being (soul/man) and the person.

59. ST III.3.2 resp.
60. ST III.2.2 ad 1.
61. See ST I.12, qq. 3 and 11. Ian McFarland puts this in stark terms: "although the one whom we see in Jesus is none other than the Son of God, what we see in Jesus is simply and exhaustively human flesh and blood" (The Word Made Flesh, 8).

62. "No created likeness is sufficient to represent the Divine essence" (ST I.56.3 resp.).
63. Williams, Christ the Heart of Creation, 26.
64. Apollinarianism has become known as the claim that in the Incarnation the Logos replaced the human mind (νοῦς) of Jesus. See the extant fragments of Apollinarius' writings in Apollinarius von Laodicea und seine Schule.

See cautionary comments about judging Apollinarius himself in The Case against Diodore and Theodore, 9–10. Cf. Grillmeier, Christ in Christian Tradition, vol. 1, 329–40.

65. Mascall, Via Media, 103.
66. ST III.4.2 resp. See Barnes, "Albert the Great and Thomas Aquinas on Person, Hypostasis and Hypostatic Union," 107–46. Therefore, the human nature of Christ did not exist before it was assumed by the Word (ScG IV.43). Alfred Freddoso compares Aquinas' position on this point with Scotus and Ockham in "Human Nature, Potency, and the Incarnation," 27–53.
67. ST III.7.
68. "The flesh of Jesus Christ has not received the Word of God as one of its predicates" (Neder, Participation in Christ, 6).
69. Williams, Christ the Heart, 25.
70. ST III.19.1 resp.
71. In particular, it is here that nominalism has a notable impact. For a discussion of the nominalism underlying modern historicism, see Beiser, The German Historicist Tradition, 5–6.

72. I am not arguing that nominalism always inevitably leads to the approaches outlined here, as counterexamples in late medieval thought are readily available. Rather, I am suggesting that the overall nominalist caste of modern thought has led to a state of affairs where a dominant approach, and many people's automatic impulse, is to reject knowledge of essences and interpret personhood in terms of empirical phenomena. Nominalism, as a metaphysic that points its adherents away from asking metaphysical questions, thus contributes to an uncritical tendency in this direction while also concealing the fact that it does so.

73. Mascall, Via Media, 118.
74. See, e.g., Flew, "Locke and the Problem of Personal Identity," 155–78; Mackie, Problems from Locke, 155–73; Williams, "Personal Identity and Individuation," 1–18.
75. Aquinas notes that natura comes from nascendo ("nativity"), first signifying the begetting of living things and then coming to signify the principle of their begetting, which was taken to be the intrinsic principle of motion. Since the end of generation is the essence of the species, he identifies nature with essence, which points to the idea that "Natura est unamquamque rem informans specifica differentia, quae scilicet complet definitionem speciei" (ST III.2.1). Here he follows both Aristotle and Boethius.

76. For further discussion see, e.g., Gorman, "Uses of the Person–Nature Distinction in Thomas's Christology," 58–79; Gorman, Metaphysics of the Hypostatic Union, 45, 73–100; West, "The Real Distinction between Supposit and Nature," 85–106. West explains that, while Giles of Rome asserted that a real distinction resulted in multiple res, and Scotus held separability as both necessary and sufficient for a real distinction, Aquinas believes that positing a real distinction between essence and existence, or between nature and supposit, does not entail that the two could ever exist apart from each other (ibid., 93). That is not, however, to say an essence need be united to its own proper esse.

77. ST III.2.1 resp.
78. ST III.2.1.
79. Gorman, Hypostatic Union, 34.
80. Peter Lombard, Sentences III, d. 6, c. 2.
81. See discussion of Aquinas' development on this question in West, "Aquinas on Peter Lombard and the Metaphysical Status of Christ's Human Nature," 557–86. Aquinas' historical research in Orvieto resulted in his recovery of texts from the councils of Ephesus, Chalcedon, and Constantinople II and III, which were otherwise unknown in the thirteenth century. See discussion in Morard, "Thomas d'Aquin lecteur des conciles," 211–365;

Geenen, "The Council of Chalcedon in the Theology of St. Thomas," 172–217; Barnes, Christ's Two Wills in Scholastic Thought.

82. He cites Constantinople III in his response (ST III.2.3 resp.). See also De Pot. q. 9, aa. 1–2. For his relation to earlier medieval commentators on this point, see Barnes, "Albert the Great and Thomas Aquinas on Person, Hypostasis, and Hypostatic Union," 107–46, esp. 114–19.
83. "And this, too, was condemned with the approval of the Council of Ephesus" (ST III.2.3 resp.).

84. This theory can be found in Hugh of St. Victor, for example. The kind of error Aquinas pinpoints here is a mistake in reason's effort to comprehend the faith. The conciliar documents, as definitions of the faith, do not define the terms "nature" and "person"—to do so is the task of reason as it seeks to comprehend the mysteries of the faith. Faulty metaphysical understandings of the relevant theological terms result in faulty theology, not because of any intention to err theologically, but through ignorance of the relevant metaphysical issues.

85. This position came to be known as Christological Nihilianism because it denies that Christ's humanity could be called "something" (aliquid), and a version of it had been condemned by Pope Alexander III in 1177. See discussion in Colish, "Christological Nihilianism in the Second Half of the Twelfth Century," 146–55. The terminology is somewhat unhelpful insofar as, like we noted above, a nature on its own is not a "thing." What it is intending to express is a discontent with accidental or partible views of Christ's humanity.

86. ST III.2.6 resp.
87. White, Incarnate Lord, 86. If it is not united substantially to the Word, then it will have its own finite supposit, resulting in multiple persons.
88. ST III.2.2 resp.

89. "Already-existing" from our temporal perspective. This is not to say that in God's eternity, there is a narrative to be told about the Word existing pre-, during, and post-Incarnation. As Herbert McCabe helpfully articulates, "From the point of view of God, then, sub specie eternitatis, no sense can be given to the idea that at some point in God's life-story the Son became incarnate." He continues, "Moses could certainly have said 'It is true now that the Son of God exists' but he could not have said truly 'The Son of God exists now.' " That proposition, which attributes temporal existence ("now") to the Son of God, is the one that became true when Jesus was conceived in the womb of Mary. The simple truth is that apart from the Incarnation the Son of God exists at no time at all, at no "now," but in eternity, in which he acts upon all time but is not himself "measured by it," as Aquinas would say. "Before Abraham was, I am," 50.

90. ST III.2.6 resp.
91. ST III.16.
92. ST III.18.
93. ST III.19.1.
94. ST III.25.1.
95. For an excellent Thomist response to these lines of thinking, see McCabe, God Matters, 39–51. See also criticisms in Murphy, God Is Not a Story.

96. In this connection, the way Aquinas structured the tertia pars is noteworthy—in a break from the theological manuals of his day, Aquinas offers a twofold structure: the mystery of the Incarnation (qq. 1–26) and those things done and suffered by the Savior (qq. 27–59). In an effort to allow Scripture to interpret Scripture, Aquinas prioritizes questions about the identity of Christ (that he answers by way of detailed engagement with Scripture), which stand as the principles for interpreting the history of his incarnate life. See discussion in Boyle, "The Twofold Division of St. Thomas's Christology in the Tertia Pars," 439–47. On the other hand, Aquinas' doctrinal works flow from his

commentaries on Scripture, so there is a real sense in which historical, exegetical questions are given a kind of priority in his thought. The key here is his theological approach to exegesis, which keeps these two poles from being mutually exclusive in the way that they often are today.

97. ST III.2.6 s.c.
98. See esp. Mackey, Jesus, the Man and the Myth; Mackey, The Christian Experience of God as Trinity; Dunn, The Christ and the Spirit; Dunn, Jesus and the Spirit; Dunn, Christology in the Making; Dunn and Mackey, New Testament Theology in Dialogue.
99. Haight, Jesus Symbol of God, 447.
100. Ibid., 455. He denies, among other things, the communication of properties (ibid., 456n60).
101. Ibid., 455.
102. Ibid.
103. Ibid., 456.

104. Legge, The Trinitarian Christology of Thomas Aquinas. See my review in Reviews in Religion and Theology, 526–8. This is contra Rahner, Balthasar, Weinandy, and others who have argued that Aquinas divorced Christology from the Trinity in his theology. See, e.g., Rahner, The Trinity, 30.

105. ST I.43.2 ad 3.
106. In I Sent, d. 30, q. 1, a. 2 ad 3. For a discussion of these themes of the inseparability and appropriation of Trinitarian operations among pro-Nicene theology, see Ayres, Nicaea and Its Legacy, 297–300.
107. Contra errores Graec. I, c. 14.
108. "This occurs … according to exemplar causality, as … in the infusion of charity there is a termination to a likeness of the personal procession of the Holy Spirit" (I Sent. d. 30, q. 1, a. 2). See also ScG IV.21, and discussion in Legge, Trinitarian Christology, 38–9 and Doolan, Aquinas on the Divine Ideas as Exemplar Causes, 156–90.
109. In I Sent. d. 16, q. 1, a. 1 ad 1; ST I.43.7.

110. "There is a termination according to being [esse], and this mode belongs uniquely to the incarnation, through which the human nature is assumed into the being [esse] and unity of the divine person" (I Sent. d. 30, q. 1, a. 2). See In Epist. ad Hebr. c. 1, lect. 1 (no. 52); ST III, q. 17, a. 2.

111. De Pot., q. 3, a. 15 ad 17; ST I.33.1; ST I.42.3. Cf. Emery, OP, "The Personal Mode of Trinitarian Action in Saint Thomas Aquinas," 31–77; Emery, The Trinitarian Theology of Thomas Aquinas, 71.
112. ST I.27.2 ad 3; De Pot., q. 9, a. 5 ad 23.
113. In Ioan. c. 16, lect. 4, §2107. See Legge, Trinitarian Christology, 116.
114. See, e.g., Liston, "Christology," 77.
115. ST III.7.1 ad 1.

116. ST III.7.2. Legge maintains, against those Thomists of the "substantial holiness" position (Toletus, Suarez, and others), that in order to avoid a confusion of natures, we cannot simply say that the hypostatic union divinizes Christ's humanity. The mediation of a created form is necessary, which is habitual grace: the invisible mission of the Spirit to Christ. At the same time, Legge disagrees with Jean-Pierre Torrell, who argues that habitual grace is only fitting, and not a necessary consequence of the hypostatic union. Legge agrees with Torrell that Christ's habitual grace is formally distinct from the grace of union, but he maintains that it is nonetheless entailed by it. He concludes,

both of these modes of divine presence in Christ are efficiently caused by all three persons of the Trinity, a fact that does not diminish in any way the reality of Christ's identity as the son, or the reality of the Spirit's presence in his humanity. As Thomas suggests elsewhere, the important thing is not to distinguish different actions belonging to

different persons, but to distinguish the divine persons within the one divine action. (Legge, Christology, 135–59, at 158)

117. In Matt., c. 12, lect. 1, §1000; Legge, Christology, 162–3.
118. ST III.7, aa. 10–11.
119. In Ioan. c. 14, lect. 4, §1915.
120. ST III.7.10 ad 1.
121. Legge, Trinitarian Christology, 167–8.
122. Legge, Trinitarian Christology, 105.
123. Haight, Jesus Symbol of God, 451.
124. For discussion of the three eschatological figures (prophetic, priestly, and royal) mentioned in the Dead Sea Scrolls, in particular in 1QRule of the Community, see Pitre, Jesus and the Last Supper, 64.
125. ST III.22.1. On Jesus' threefold office, see, e.g., In Epist. ad Rom., c. 1, lect. 2, §40; Ibid., c. 4, lect. 2, §352; Ibid., c. 9, lect. 2, §752; In Epist. ad Hebr., c. 3, lect. 5; ibid., c. 3, lect. 9; In Epist. ad Phil., c. 3, lect. 1. The concurrence of these three offices in one figure appears to be in line with widespread expectation in the first century of a priestly Messiah who would be the prophet like Moses foretold in Deuteronomy 18.

126. Aquinas uses "lawgiver" and "prophet" interchangeably: a prophet teaches the people how to live according to God's law.
127. ST III.31.2. Aquinas maintains that Abraham was a prophet and priest, David a prophet and king. See, In Matt., c. 1, lect. 1, §19.

128. See discussion in Levering, Christ's Fulfillment of Torah and Temple, 69.
129. "Because of the hypostatic union, these attributes in a real sense 'belong to' the divine Word as subject; but they are nonetheless attributes of Christ as man" (Levering, Torah and Temple, 70).
130. In Matt., c. 1, lect. 4, §99.
131. ST III.9.4 s.c. Aquinas' text has passus for "suffered" and the gloss provides expertus est.
132. ST III.42.4 ad 4.
133. ST III.58.4, ad 2.
134. ST III.36.8.
135. ST I.12.5.
136. ST III.10. Cf. ST III.10.2 resp.
137. See Bauckham, Jesus and the God of Israel, esp. 57–9.
138. Christian Faith §94, 385.
139. See Louth, Maximus the Confessor, 1–18.
140. "For everything that is rational by nature, certainly also possesses a will by nature" (Maximus the Confessor, "Opuscule 7" in Louth, Maximus the Confessor, 183).

141. Ibid., 181. Otherwise, Maximus notes, either "we melt down the two essential wills … and recast them by composition as one will … as in the myths," something like the Eutychian approach, or else "we preserve unblemished the natural will of the divine nature of the Incarnate Word … and remove and reject them from the nature of its humanity … [such that] the flesh endowed with a rational soul and mind, that is of our nature and substance, is not at all preserved sound and whole in the Word," not unlike the Apollinarianism (ibid., 181–2).

142. Ibid., 182.
143. Ibid., 184.
144. Barnes, Christ's Two Wills.

145. For his understanding of this principle Aquinas is indebted to John Damascene's On the Orthodox Faith (see esp. 3.13-3.19), which mediated to him Maximus' approach (esp. Ambiguum 5) to interpreting Dionysius. See discussion in Hofer, "Dionysian Elements in Thomas Aquinas's Christology," 409–42. For more on Dionysius' Christology itself, see Mahoney, "A Note on the Importance of the Incarnation in Dionysius the Areopagite," 49–53; Perczel, "The Christology of Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite," 409–46.

146. ST III.19.1 ad 1.
147. Opusculum III, 45D.
148. ST III.18.4 ad 1.

149 Some contend that "Yours" in this passage refers to the will of the Father, rather than Jesus' divine will, but the will is constitutive of nature, not person, so there is only one will in God. In other words, the will of the Father is the divine will of the Son.

150. For defense of dyothelitism against a number of contemporary objections raised by J. P. Moreland, William Lane Craig, P. T. Forsyth, H. R. Mackintosh, Wolfhart Pannenberg, Schleiermacher, and John Macquarrie, see Watts, "Two Wills in Christ?," 455–87.

151. Wright, "Jesus' Self-Understanding," 54.
152. Ibid., 59.

153. Wright argues that Jesus was conscious of a vocation "given him by the one he knew as 'father,' to enact in himself what, in Israel's scriptures, God had promised to accomplish all by himself," with the caveat that "awareness of vocation is by no means the same thing as Jesus having the sort of 'supernatural' awareness of himself, of Israel's God, and of the relation between the two of them" such as those who hold to a "Docetic" high Christology (JVG, 653).

154. JVG, 610.
155. Wright, JVG, 653.
156. Wright, Challenge, 164–5.
157. Wright, "Jesus and the Identity of God," 46.
158. Wright, "Whence and Whither," 133–4 (italics deleted). See NTPG, 137. See further comments critical of traditional Christology in Wright, "Response to Richard Hays," 64 and JVG, 613.
159. In Sent. III, dist. 18, q. 1, a. 1; De ver., q. 20, a. 1; De unione verbi, aa. 1, 4, and 5; ST III.19.1.
160. ST I.83.1 ad 3.
161. In Sent. III, dist. 18, q. 1, a. 1; De ver., q. 20, a. 1; De unione verbi, aa. 1, 4, and 5; ST III.19.1.
162. ST III.7.1 ad 3.

163. "The human nature in Christ is … a principle of action insofar as it has dominion over its own acts" (De unione verbi, a. 5 ad 4). See White, Incarnate Lord, 119–21, and related discussion in Tanner, Jesus, Humanity, and the Trinity, 24.

164. De unione verbi, a. 5 ad 5; ST III.19.1 ad 2.
165. ST III.19.1 ad 4.
166. ST III.19.11 ad 5.
167. ST III.19.1 resp.
168. Crowley, "Instrumentum Divinitatis in Thomas Aquinas," 451–75, at 473.
169. Farrer, Glass of Vision, 35. Cf. ST III.19.1; ST I.8.1.
170. Legge, Trinitarian Christology, 218.

171. Balthasar, Theo-Drama III, 149.

172. Balthasar, Theo-Drama III, 150. Here Balthasar is referencing the general distinction between a "historical" and "theological" Christology, or between a Christology that attends to Jesus' "overt function" vs. his "covert being" (149). He defines a Christology from above as one that "goes beyond all the anthropological facts and all the events of salvation history to date" and has to do with being (150). A Christology from below is thus the opposite of that, focusing on the anthropological and historical facts and asking about behaviors and actions.

173. Balthasar, Theo-Drama III, 163.
174. Bultmann, Kerygma and Mythos, vol. 1, 5.
175. Bultmann, Kerygma and Mythos, vol. 1, 22n2.

176. ST I.13.1 resp. In his review of The Myth of God Incarnate, McCabe writes that it is not at all clear whether a myth is always meant to be an untruth. Sometimes the authors merely seem to mean by "mythical" the same as "subject to the limitations of religious language." I do not think they have any very clear analysis or critique of religious language (they do not, for instance, distinguish between analogy and metaphor) and I do not find their use of "myth" here particularly helpful or illuminating, but if all they are trying to say boils down to the assertion that the doctrine of the incarnation is a religious or theological statement like any other, then, of course what they say is right though not very interesting. ("The Myth of God Incarnate," 350–7

177. Karl Barth claimed that Bultmann's existential way of speaking about God reduces theological propositions to affirmations of the inner life of man (Barth, Church Dogmatics 3/2, 445–6). Bultmann attempts to overcome Feuerbach in "The Problem of Natural Theology," 319ff; Bultmann, Kerygma and Myth, 199–200.

178. See Bultmann, "New Testament and Mythology."
179. ST III.16.1 resp.
180. ScG III.120.

181. Bultmann's approach is bound in as much with Heideggerian philosophy and with a Lutheran understanding of the relative importance of human imagining or arguing on the one hand and divine manifestation in freedom on the other as it is with strict considerations of literary history: Christology for Bultmann is most emphatically not and cannot be about anything for which we could supply "evidence." But subsequent scholarship has been uneasy with the philosophical over-determination of his readings; and theologians have not been comfortable with the reduction of Christology to the bare event of proclamation, the Word uttered out of an impenetrable historical silence and darkness. Surely theology claims something more, something about an embodied narrative that displays God's action rather than a naked demand for the obedience of faith? (Williams, Christ the Heart, 44–5)

182. ST III.25.
183. Ehrman, How Jesus Became God, 353–4.
184. Ehrman, How Jesus Became God, 4.
185. Ibid., 8.
186. Bird, How God Became Jesus, 24.
187. ST III.16.
188. ST III.16.5.
189. ST III.16.1.
190. ST III.16.1. "This word God is predicated of man not on account of the human nature, but by reason of the suppositum" (ST III.16.1 ad3).
191. See the debate between Thomas Joseph White and Thomas Weinandy on this topic: Weinandy, "Jesus' Filial Vision of the Father," 189–201; White, "The Voluntary Action of the Earthly Christ and the Necessity of the

Beatific Vision," 497–534; Weinandy, "The Beatific Vision and the Incarnate Son," 605–15; White, "Dyothelitism and the Instrumental Human Consciousness of Jesus," 396–422. See also Gaine, Did the Savior See, 44–5.

192. Wright, "Whence and Whither" in Jesus, Paul and the People of God, 133–4 (italics deleted). See NTPG, 137. See further comments denigrating the Christology of the Christian tradition in Wright, "Response to Richard Hays," in ibid., 64 and JVG, 613.
193. Crowley, "Instrumentum Divinitatis," 474.
194. "In many respects, [Aquinas's] defense [against Docetism] remains unsurpassed to this day" (Gondreau, "The Humanity of Christ, the Incarnate Word," 252–76, at 253). See Gondreau, The Passions of Christ's Soul in the Theology of St. Thomas Aquinas.
195. Farrer, Glass of Vision, 35.
196. ST I-II.10.4.
197. White makes a similar argument focused on Aquinas' doctrine of Jesus' knowledge, to which we will turn in Chapter 5. "A nuanced appreciation of Aquinas's doctrine of the human knowledge of Christ may permit us to assimilate many of the legitimate aspirations of modern historical-Jesus studies while still retaining a high doctrine of the infused knowledge of the Lord as the greatest of the prophets" (White, "Infused Science," 619). See also Coakley's discussion:

One has to surmount the challenge of modern historical-critical approaches to the biblical Jesus, yet also acknowledge that metaphysical discussions of the person of Christ need not be accounted incompatible with these, but seen as two (non-competing) perspectives on the same reality. If one drives a wedge between them it is exceedingly difficult to recover any convincing christology in the Chalcedonian tradition at all, let alone in Thomas' form. Thomas of course knew nothing of these modern historiographical developments; but, as we have seen, his probing account of the human sufferings and mental development of Jesus eschews all docetism and invites a creative metaphysical response. ("The Person of Christ," in The Cambridge Companion to the Summa Theologiae, 222–39 at 238).

End Excerpt.

Recall The Earlier Observation:

Dr. Stevenson's book provides not only ample inroads but also closure in the topics only briefly alluded to here. Recall again that these excerpts from Dr. Stevenson are given as a part of about three or four other sources simply to offer context on the range and depth given. Part of the goal in giving various excerpts from various sources and juxtaposing them alongside these and the other PDFs is simply to marginate and delineate the edges of what has already been soundly discussed rather than to try to do what only the full length essays and books can do (obviously) in order to allude to the fact that none of the topics are, at the end of the day, problematic for standard Creedal Trinitarian Christology.

Excerpts From Chapter Four's Cognition And Metaphysics:

Second, it is not only that what we know gets its intelligibility from its participation in God but also that human reason itself is a participation in the divine *Logos*: our rationality is what Aquinas calls a "participated likeness of the uncreated light, in which are contained the eternal

types." Key to this is the agent intellect, which Aquinas describes as an intellectual "light" that has the power to abstract the intelligible species from the phantasm. Not only does this call into question modern dichotomies between faith and reason or natural and supernatural revelation, it also emphasizes the weight that theism lends to the coherence of realism, and vice versa. In other words, it is not an accident that the denial of the existence of proper essences for things and the ontological dimension of truth has gone hand in hand with the lapse of religious belief in modernity. It is important to note, however, that the agent intellect is not the Platonic anamnesis, for Aquinas insists with Aristotle that nothing is in the intellect that is not first in the senses. Nor is it the Cartesian postulation of God to secure the existence of the universe. Thomas is not attempting to traverse a bridge between sense and intellect; he is interested in the nature of thought as it transitions from sense to intellect, and he sees an important connection between this and how reality itself transitioned from (divine) intellect to material existence in creation. The active power of the intellect is given by the one who gave formal existence to all things.

Third, central to the meaning of "participation" is the sense that to participate is to have a part, and not the whole, but it is to have that part truly. This holds true in both being and knowing. Receiving is the mode of having that is proper to creatures. This points to the fact that the limited nature of our knowledge both of God and creation does not result from a negative assessment of truth-as if the world were just chaos and thus largely unintelligible. As Étienne Gilson puts it, what "knowledge grasps in the object is something real, but reality is inexhaustible." Aquinas recognition of our limited knowledge comes from his understanding of the excess of intelligibility in the world, rather than its lack. There is too much truth, goodness, and beauty in creation for us to grasp it fully-it is our nature to grasp it in part. If truth is, at root, about being, then it is effusive and boundless. Unlike antirealist idealism, a participatory metaphysic does not draw a radical separation between physical and intentional being. If beings are capable of communicating their being according to the formal structure of their essence, and our mind is capable of cognizing external objects according to the uniquely sensible and intelligible modes of being proper to our senses and intellect, it is unnecessary to make the mind the sole ground of reality. At the same time, the more positive idealism of Kant, focused on the "ideal" categories of our thought, is countered by Aquinas' understanding of the agent intellect, without undermining the role of sensation in every act of intellection. As Spruit notes, the agent intellect plays a normative function as the source of intelligibility within the mind, but does not itself contain species, which would make phantasms superfluous. While a naïve realist insists that concepts conform to objects, and an idealist argues that objects conform to concepts, Aquinas argues for both. In grasping how things appear to us, we grasp something of the things in themselves, but we do so according to the active fashioning of our senses and intellect.

This leads us to the fourth point. Aquinas offers us a "realist" approach to knowledge, but it is by no means naïve. While the thing itself is the measure of truth, Aquinas does not think that phantasms move the intellect, as if the mind played no role in shaping our perception of the

world. There is both activity and passivity involved in cognition, which grounds both the partiality and objectivity of knowledge. Aquinas' realism is not incompatible with a recognition that each of us is shaped by specific traditions of reasoning and habitual ways of inhabiting the world. We are habituated into patterns of thinking and acting, and those predilections both draw our attention to certain aspects of reality and not others, and they determine how we understand them. Participation allows us to understand this in terms of mode of being-to grasp something in part, according to *esse intentionale*, is not to create something out of thin air, nor is it to grasp it falsely. If being can be communicated according to the same formal structure in qualitatively different modes, then truth can be grasped, even if only partially and slowly.

End Excerpt.

Excerpt From Chapter Five's Brief Christological Prelude:

Before we begin, it will be helpful to state the patristic conundrum concisely by considering two theological principles that impact how we might understand Christ's knowledge to relate to his two natures. First, as we have seen, knowledge belongs to a person only by reason of their nature, which means that in the Incarnation we cannot attribute knowledge to the hypostatic union itself. We cannot say that there is a single knowledge on the part of the *person*, but that the person of Christ has knowledge in each of his natures. Nonetheless, there must be a certain degree of correspondence between these two distinct operations (i.e., divine and human knowledge). If Jesus' human will is an active, free instrument of his divinity, it cannot act out of ignorance. Doing so would either result in an antipathy between his divine and human wills, yielding a duality of persons, or it would render the human will passive, resulting in Docetism. Therefore, without positing a knowledge on the part of the union, we nonetheless have to inquire about the unified action of the person of Christ with reference to his twofold knowledge, a conception that requires a correspondence between the two natures that nonetheless maintains their qualitative difference. We cannot avoid enquiring about a kind of union in the order of knowledge in addition to hypostatic union in the order of being. In the Chalcedonian paradigm, we are forced to forgo easy answers that simply apply this or that element of knowledge to Jesus' divinity or humanity, with no consideration of the relation between the two. As we will see, a key question here is the nature and extent of this correspondence necessary to uphold the unity of personhood.

Second, the doctrine of divine simplicity entails that, if Jesus was fully God, then he must have possessed divine omniscience, along with every other divine predicate, which God possesses in the simple unity of his being. In one sense, then, the question of Jesus' divine knowledge appears relatively straightforward for those of orthodox Trinitarian persuasion, the affirmation or rejection of it tantamount to the avowal or refusal of his divinity. And yet, a further implication of divine simplicity is frequently overlooked. Because divine knowledge is identical with the

divine essence, it cannot be possessed by a human mind. The act of divine knowing simply is the very essence of God; therefore, it cannot belong to another nature. This fact, in part, drove early thinkers such as Eunomius and Apollinarius toward monophysitism. As they saw it, human knowledge involves ignorance (*agnoia*), which, as the ancient Greeks argued, is the root of moral evil and, thus, is incompatible with Christ's sinlessness. 1º In their thinking, if divine knowledge could not belong to Jesus' human mind, then his divinity must have *replaced* his human soul or mind. The later Christological councils were primarily concerned with denying these trends and reaffirming Jesus' full humanity, including his mind and will-affirmations which made the question of Jesus' human possession of divine knowledge acute for the later tradition.

End Excerpts.

A Second Excerpt From Chapter Five:

All of this suggests that the occasional caricatures of patristic Christology as dehumanizing of Jesus are rather far off the mark. The same goes for those who see classical Christology simply advocating "divine knowledge" in Jesus. In the end this is what the defenders of Chalcedon argued against. Furthermore, interpretations of Mk 13:32 that emphasize Jesus' "ignorance," in some broad sense, over against a wide array of other passages that speak to his extraordinary knowledge (e.g., Mk 2:8-12; Mt. 9:4-8; 11:27; Jn 1; 8:19; 10:38; 14:6-10) are not inherently more "historical," however well they fit the metaphysical or theological presuppositions of contemporary historians. Arguably, a non-theological reading of the passage would restrict itself to eschatology, which is the evident focus of Jesus' statement. But as soon as Christological implications are raised, there is no reason that the Chalcedonian reading must be ruled out, unless we are committed to Ebionitism as the only possible historical approach. For the church fathers, Jesus' humanity is not a philosophical problem, but its status as an instrument of the Word poses a theological conundrum. What are the limits of the grace that can be afforded to a human nature in its sanctifying union with God, and in what way does that grace transform the knowledge proper to humans?

Because Aquinas insists that "grace does not destroy nature but perfects it," he considers the revelatory illumination of Christ's human mind to make him more fully human, not less so. The grace of knowledge is granted to Christ's human mind by virtue of the hypostatic union in the form of infused species and beatific vision, and, as we will see in the chapters to come, this knowledge is instrumental in maintaining the unity of his personhood and the hypostatic synergy of his two wills. While "ignorance" in a broad sense is incompatible with such a picture, that does not mean that Christ did not know certain things in qualitatively distinct modes, some of which he would not have possessed with an explicit conscious awareness in his human mind.

One benefit of thinking in terms of *qualitative* modes of knowing rather than a *quantitative* spectrum between *ignorance* and *omniscience* is that it helps us see that, even if we took this passage according to what many contemporary exegetes consider to be its literal sense, it does not have the Christological implications they frequently discover therein. If Jesus simply does not know the day or hour, then there is a single instance in which Jesus' human mode of knowledge does not extend to encompass the full depths of his divine knowledge. As Origen put it, "there is nothing strange if, out of all things, it is only this he does not know, that is the day and hour of the consummation." In fact, Aquinas already affirms that there are things Jesus does not know in his human mind, even in the beatific vision:

> Now it is impossible for any creature to comprehend the Divine Essence ... seeing that the infinite is not comprehended by the finite. And hence it must be said that the soul of Christ nowise comprehends the Divine Essence.

Maintaining that Jesus (*qua* human) did not, in any sense, know the precise details of God's foreordained eschatological inbreaking into human history-surely a unique category of knowledge- does nothing to prove that Jesus was simply "ignorant" and, therefore, not divine, as Barth Ehrman appears to argue. Neither is it proof of Trinitarian subordinationism, as Allison claims, because it pertains to the supernatural revelation afforded to Jesus' human mind by grace. It tells us nothing about his "divine knowledge," which is identical with the divine essence and thus shared equally with the Father and the Spirit from all eternity. Only if one imports a Monophysite Christology into the passage — by denying Jesus a distinctly human mode of knowing and directly attributing his ignorance to his divinity — does it deliver what Ehrman and Allison take it to mean. Ultimately, the Christological reasons for insisting that Jesus did know the day and hour, if only inexpressibly through his vision of God, rest not on ontology but on Jesus' Messianic office and his role as eschatological judge of all. The argument is primarily intertextual, it is not simply metaphysical. Allison's suggestion that the patristic authors sought to resolve a competition between Jesus' humanity and divinity in favor of his divinity is revealing, because his advocacy for a "historical" approach to these texts veils a dogmatic agenda to resolve this perceived competition in favor of Jesus' humanity. The patristic and medieval solution is instead to insist that divinity and humanity do not exist in a competitive relationship, an idea which depends for its coherence on the doctrine of divine simplicity.

Patristic exegesis assumes a theistic metaphysic and strives to understand the gospels within a canonical hermeneutic. There is nothing inherently ahistorical, let alone Docetic, about this approach. By comparison, the arguments of Ehrman and Allison belie Monophysite or Ebionite dogmatic assumptions. There is no reason why they should not be able to advance such readings, but neither is there reason to accept that what they are doing is "his-tory" while the church fathers simply advanced predetermined dogma.

End Excerpts.

Excerpt From Chapter Eight On The Beatific Vision:

Through the possession of the beatific vision in his human soul, Christ's two wills maintain an unbroken instrumental unity that allows his human life to express his divine personhood perfectly. This direct vision of God provided him with the means to teach divine things in a human way, such that his words and actions genuinely constitute divine revelation (see Jn 3:34). The eschatological nature of this knowledge is consistent with his Messianic vocation, and its apocalyptic aspect places him in continuity with an influential line of Jewish thought, while also highlighting his superiority over the prophets of Israel who foretold his coming. It is by virtue of his direct vision of God that Christ enacts YHWH's divine kingship on earth, fulfilling the promise that His kingdom would be established forever through a descendent of David. The value of this argument for our purposes is not to prove the Messianic claims of the Christian tradition, or to establish Jesus' divinity by historical means. Rather, it is to illustrate the fact that there are philosophical and theological categories of human thought and intention that far outstrip those commonly employed in historical Jesus scholarship. This discussion shows the frailty of arguments, which suggest that Jesus' extraordinary knowledge either undermines his humanity or removes him from his first-century Jewish milieu. It also reveals the dogmatic aspect of many concepts implicitly assumed by historians: concepts of divine causality, the relationship between nature and grace, virtues such as humility, the intelligibility of the divine essence, and the deifying impact of God's presence on creatures.

Most importantly, I have argued that the denial of Jesus' possession of a certain kind of *knowledge* (i.e., the beatific vision) fundamentally undermines claims about his divine *personhood* and messianic office. *Pace* van Driel, to deny Jesus such knowledge, as many of the historians we discussed in Chapter 1 have done, is to rule out the possibility of his divine personhood. Claims about what Jesus did or did not know are not theologically neutral, nor do they stem from genuinely historical arguments. Rather, they are assumed on the basis of precommitments to alternative metaphysical and theological frameworks. Here it is impossible to ignore the manifest influence of naturalism. To state whether or not Jesus "knew he was God" requires a vast array of philosophical and theological judgments, which should be supported by philosophical and theological arguments. Fortunately, these forms of reasoning provide an expanded range of tools to enable the historian in their work. Homogenizing the varieties of knowledge witnessed to in ancient sources blinds historians to the unique claims being made therein by limiting the scope of possibility to the horizon created by naturalistic metaphysics. They need not affirm the veracity of these claims, but to deny them from the outset is to overstep their purview as historians.

End Excerpt.

Observation:

Dr. Stevenson's book provides not only ample inroads but also closure in the topics only briefly alluded to here. These excerpts from Dr. Stevenson are given as a part of about three or four other sources simply to offer context on the range and depth given. Part of the goal in giving various excerpts from various sources and juxtaposing them alongside these and the other PDFs is simply to marginate and delineate the edges of what has already been soundly discussed rather than to try to do what only the full length essays and books can do (obviously) in order to allude to the fact that none of the topics are, at the end of the day, problematic for standard Creedal Trinitarian Christology.

Source:

The Consciousness of the Historical Jesus: Historiography, Theology, and Metaphysics
Austin Stevenson B.M. M.A. Th.M. Ph.D. (Cambridge)
Author: https://www.austin-stevenson.com
Amazon: https://www.amazon.com/Consciousness-Historical-Jesus-Historiography-Metaphysics-ebook/dp/B0CPPGFTHB/
Bloomsbury: https://www.bloomsbury.com/us/consciousness-of-the-historical-jesus-9780567714398/

End.